Abstract 11
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Title: Complementary Medicine & Spirituality: Preferred Modes of Health Care Among Indian Immigrants In The United States

Objectives (of project and/or presentation): The purpose of this study was to explore the health seeking behaviors and the use of complementary and alternative medicine among Indian immigrants in the United States.

Introduction OR Rationale: About five percent of immigrants to the United States are from India (Zong, Jie & Batalova, 2015). The use of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) are quite common among Indians and upon migration to the U.S, they may continue to use CAM therapy for routine care, and access modern health care services for emergencies only (Rao, 2006). This can result in a lack of screening for certain diseases, which may then delay diagnosis and treatment of that disease. The health seeking behaviors of Indian immigrants and their frequency of accessing preventative screening were not found in literature.

Methods: This cross-sectional descriptive study was initiated after obtaining the West Chester University (WCU) Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. Participants are being recruited using snowball method (word of mouth). Twenty in person interviews are planned and data collection is near completion. Data on demographics, current health and lifestyle, prevalence of chronic illness, factors that affect access to health care as well as health beliefs and attitudes are collected.

Results OR Practice Implications: The findings from this pilot study will guide evidenced based practice for Indian immigrants. Knowledge about the patient/family preference will help nurse clinicians to provide optimum care to clientele of Indian origin. Prevalence of CAM therapy may alert nurses to verify drug interactions and resources can be provided to meet their spiritual need. It is also important to identify the role that spirituality has with health care behaviors so that health care professionals are able to create effective therapeutic regimes when caring for these individuals. This will enhance patient experience, promote excellence in nursing, and increase patient/family satisfaction.

Conclusions: Preliminary analysis indicates practice of CAM therapy among the majority of those interviewed. Data collection is expected to be complete by mid-June. The results will be available at the time of the conference.

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