

Breast cancer screening adherence among migrants: a matter of communication strategy?

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BACKGROUND: Migrants' engagement to cancer screening programs is a relevant issue for universalistic health systems. Increasing breast cancer screening coverage among migrant and refugee women is the focus of the **public-private multidisciplinary team** composed of **professionals from Hospital, Primary Care, Public Health settings, and a non-governmental organization**. The team worked in two steps, planning:

1. Health Promotion (HP) meetings addressing women in refugees' reception programs
2. web-based intervention, involving 10 stakeholders among intercultural mediators (IMs) and community health promoters

OBJECTIVES

- To identify communication tools enabling migrants' participation to breast cancer screening
- To increase health literacy and cultural competence among the multidisciplinary team

METHOD

3 virtual meetings enabled a **participatory approach** supported by **storytelling** and **role-play** to identify the major barriers to access to screening and public health messages. Participants worked on **critical words** and **concepts**, highlighted during HP meetings, accounting for literacy, HL, language skills, communication techniques and different perspectives about health and prevention



RESULTS

Lack of knowledge and different approaches to health decrease the perception of cancer risk

Other barriers, like work and family duties, influence the adherence

Fear, shame about the exam and linguistic issues are further hampering factors

Audio and video messages to diffuse via WhatsApp, in Italian and native plain language, supported by simple and clear illustrations, resulted to be useful tools to explain the screening procedure

CONCLUSIONS

- The strategic use of a participatory approach enabled the team to **define suitable communication strategies** for cancer screening programs
- The multidisciplinary team **improved communication skills and awareness** of the role played by Health Literacy and cultural competence