

YWCA of Greater Atlanta

Eliminating Barriers Associated with Detecting Breast Cancer Early in Underserved Women

YWCA of Greater Atlanta's ENCOREplus program is on a mission to reduce breast cancer mortality and morbidity rates for medically underserved African American and Latina women in Metro Atlanta. The program was created to increase breast cancer awareness and early detection by improving access to screening and quality breast health care for low-income and uninsured women. Through our work, we provide awareness, education and mammography screenings, primarily targeting African American and Latina women living within zip codes identified as having large numbers of households that are 200% or more below federal poverty guidelines in Dekalb and Fulton Counties. Although women of color are diagnosed with breast cancer less frequently than their Caucasian counterparts, African American women have an almost 45% higher mortality rate than white women.

Key activities offered through the program include: 1) Group culturally specific workshops (in Spanish and English) and individual outreach to educate women on how increased attention to individual risk factors and early detection can exponentially save a life; 2) Coordination of free clinical breast exams and mammography screening appointments with community partners; and 3) Facilitating access to follow-up and support services for patients with abnormal results.

Our evaluation methods consist of collecting program data and results through measurement tools including: (1) Pre/post-tests and surveys to determine changes in participant knowledge and behavior to detect breast cancer early; and (2) Medical Registration Form to register eligible participants for a free mammogram, monitor participant screening appointments, match screening results, and case manage follow-up and diagnostics.

Expected program impact includes: 1) Increased knowledge of life-saving breast cancer information and practices; 2) Positive changes in behavior resulting in regular annual mammograms; 3) Increased breast cancer survival rates among high risk underserved women; and 4) Decreased health disparities resulting from reduced morbidity and mortality rates for underserved women.