

Shop Talk Movement: An evidence-based approach to increase colorectal cancer awareness and screening in beauty salons and barbershops in SC

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Introduction:

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is the second leading cause of cancer death and the fourth most commonly diagnosed cancer in the United States and in South Carolina (American Cancer Society, Cancer Facts and Figures 2007). Overall, CRC mortality rates in South Carolina are higher than the national average. The American Cancer Society estimates approximately 2,230 new CRC cases and 790 deaths in South Carolina this year (American Cancer Society, Cancer Facts and Figures 2007). A majority of South Carolinians (56.7%) are diagnosed at advanced stages of CRC, and both the incidence and mortality of CRC is elevated among African Americans in South Carolina (Daguisse, V., 2006). Focused efforts are therefore needed to address and ultimately eliminate this racial health disparity.

The program is entitled, "Shop Talk Movement." This health communication campaign addresses the specific geographical, cultural, and professional nuances of beauty salon stylists, barbers, and clients in South Carolina. The overarching goal is to implement an effective strategy to increase public awareness of, and demand for, colorectal cancer screening. This program will build on the body of research by identifying and understanding the salient processes involved in the diffusion of health information in barbershops and salons.

96% of African-American women surveyed were either unaware of CRC, or did not consider themselves to be at high risk for the disease, 70% of African-American women over the age of 45 fail to seek or obtain CRC screening (National Women's Health Resource Center, 3/16/2006)

Purpose:

The project has three specific aims:

- 1) Develop targeted messages to appeal to the interests and values of stylists, barbers, and clients utilizing a variety of communication methods,
- 2) Train stylists & barbers to infuse CRC education during natural conversations with clients,
- 3) Evaluate the Shop Talk program methods and achievement of goals.

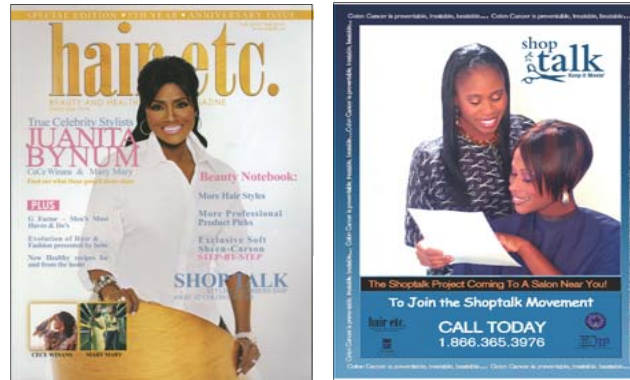


Figure 1. Promotional ads in March 2008 hair etc.

Theoretical Framework:

The Two-Step Information Flow Model (see accompanying figure) provides a theoretical framework for understanding the social dynamics and communication network found in predominantly African-American barber shops and beauty salons in South Carolina. In these communities, the barbers and stylists are often viewed as opinion leaders on a wide variety of topics, including health issues.

It is well known that barbers and stylists are trusted, and hold influential positions in their clients' lives. The "status" of the barbers and stylists in this context is not necessarily due to their level of knowledge on an issue/topic; rather it is due to their position within the social network, in this case, within the African-American community. Delivery of healthcare information via the stylists (i.e., the opinion leaders) has huge potential to effectively disseminate information about CRC prevention throughout the community, and statewide. By providing accurate information regarding CRC prevention and control and screening, stylists in beauty salons and barber shops are in turn empowered to inform and influence their clients, who will take this knowledge to their families and friends (Littlejohn-Blake & Darling 1993).

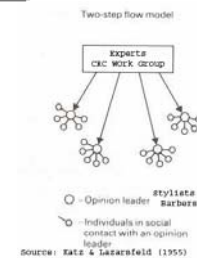


Figure 2. Two Step Information Flow Model

Shop Talk Training Sessions:

All the training sessions will take place in partnership with local cancer professionals and trained salon professionals. The format for the training will be highly interactive, infusing both health and beauty topics. Health experts as well as stylists and barbers will participate in the development of training materials and format, to ensure cultural and industry appropriateness. The training session will be facilitated by a board certified cosmetology instructor, Ms. Charmaine Green.

Each session will be 8 hours. Each participant will receive continuing education units, as well as certification to participate in the American Cancer Society's *Look Good Feel Better* program, providing beauty essentials to cancer survivors. Participants will officially join a network of stylist and barbers championing cancer prevention in their communities.

Training Dates:

- August 25, 2008 in Greenville
- September 8, 2008 in Columbia
- September 15, 2008 in Charleston



Evaluating Impact:

The main impact of Shop Talk is to increase CRC knowledge and promote CRC screening behavior among clients of participating barbershops and beauty salons. As part of program delivery, participants will be asked to sign "promise" cards and provide contact information for follow-up. In order to evaluate the impact of the program on CRC knowledge and self-reported screening behavior, clients who have completed program "promise" cards will be contacted by phone or via e-mail to complete a brief survey to assess their knowledge, intention to be screened, and screening behavior (as applicable among age-appropriate clients).

References:

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