



Rural Asthma Program (RAP) in Beaufort County Schools; Issues in Recruitment and Enrollment

Caroline Chila, Diana Reindl, PhD, CHES¹

University of South Carolina Beaufort, Department of Nursing and Health Professions



Motivation

Asthma has high prevalence and significant morbidity among adolescents. In South Carolina, rural youth with asthma are more likely than urban children to have emergency department visits and to be hospitalized for asthma (SCRHR, 1999). Schools are a logical venue for interventions based on the fact that many school-based asthma interventions have shown to improve asthma and quality of life (NAEPP EPR-3, 2007).

Background

Overseen and administered by staff from the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), the objective of the overarching study is to measure the impact of two interventions designed to help adolescents with uncontrolled asthma to reduce symptom frequency. This study provides an evaluation of the recruitment efforts for the overarching study to understand whether the target population was reached.

Results

Figure 1. Student Makeup of Beaufort County Schools

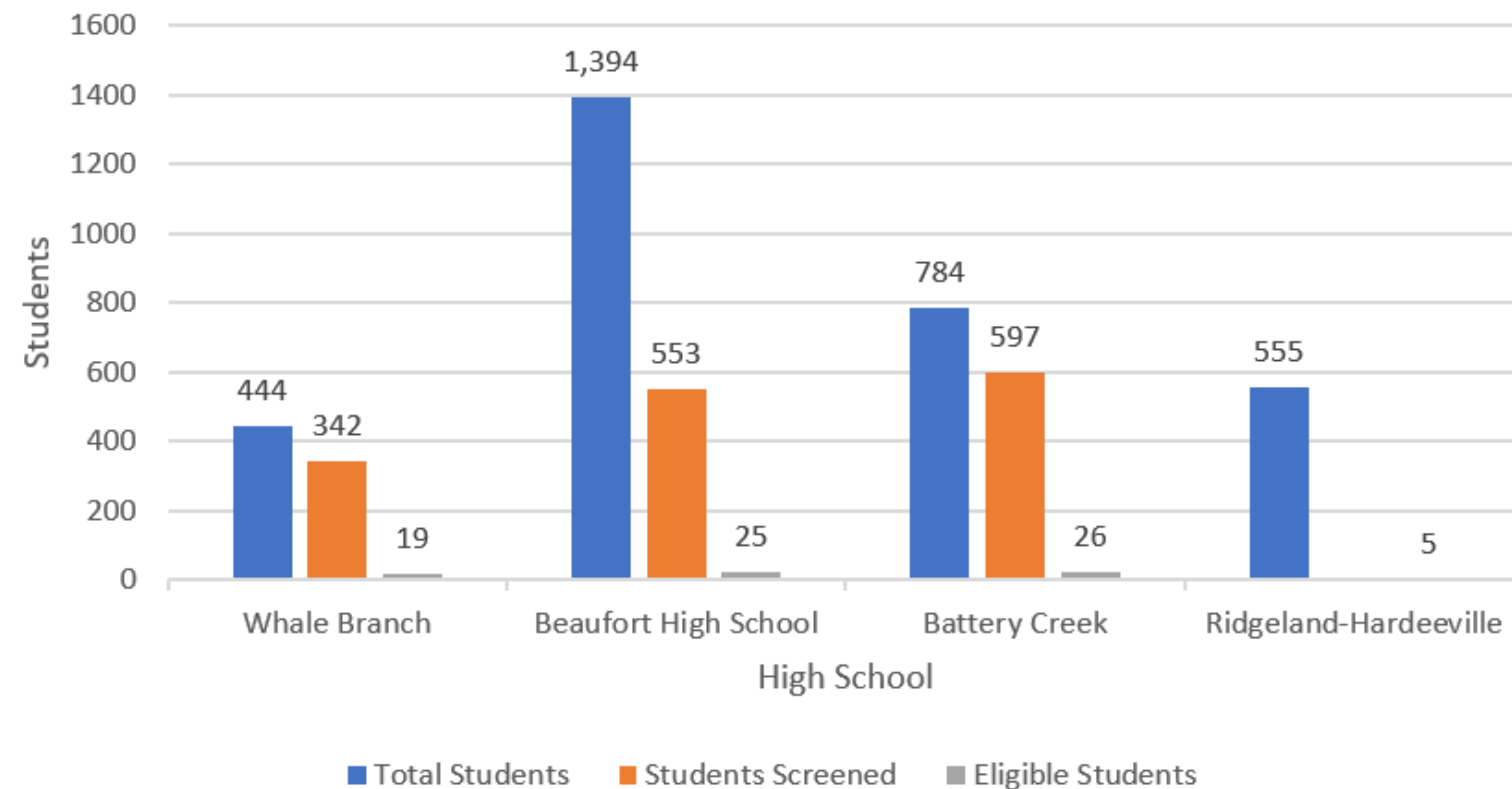


Table 1. Major Qualitative Theme from Research Analysis on Recruitment

1. Post-recruitment interview findings suggest no issues in program adherence for research analyst (RA). RA indicated high levels of confidence upon conducting enrollment activities. RA suggested that future recruitment of RAP include extensive training measures for staff to ensure implementation fidelity validity.
2. Lower levels of confidence for RA in conducting program activities. RA suggested that the primary investigator communicate the program goals and objectives more clearly in future years of RAP.
3. RA indicated a death among the student body at one of the high school sites. This external factor has been identified as a possible barrier to recruitment of target population. The emotional well-being of students at the time may have influenced students' willingness to participate in RAP.

Methods

A post-test, secondary analysis of data from MUSC online database is accessed to determine the number of students enrolled from each high school site. A survey to address staff experiences with the enrollment process was administered to all research staff involved with enrollment.

Conclusion

This issue warrants evaluation as it serves to explore in depth errors within recruitment reports. As such, improvements can be made for future planning purposes. Results of year one concluded RAP was not successful in reaching the target population goal of 426 rural high school teenagers with uncontrolled asthma. Findings suggested issues in program training for staff. Staff members reported decent levels of confidence when conducting enrollment activities and high adherence to activity instructions. Issues were more prominent in the team's ability to reach the population of interest. Further research is needed to assess such issues to improve future recruitment efforts of RAP.