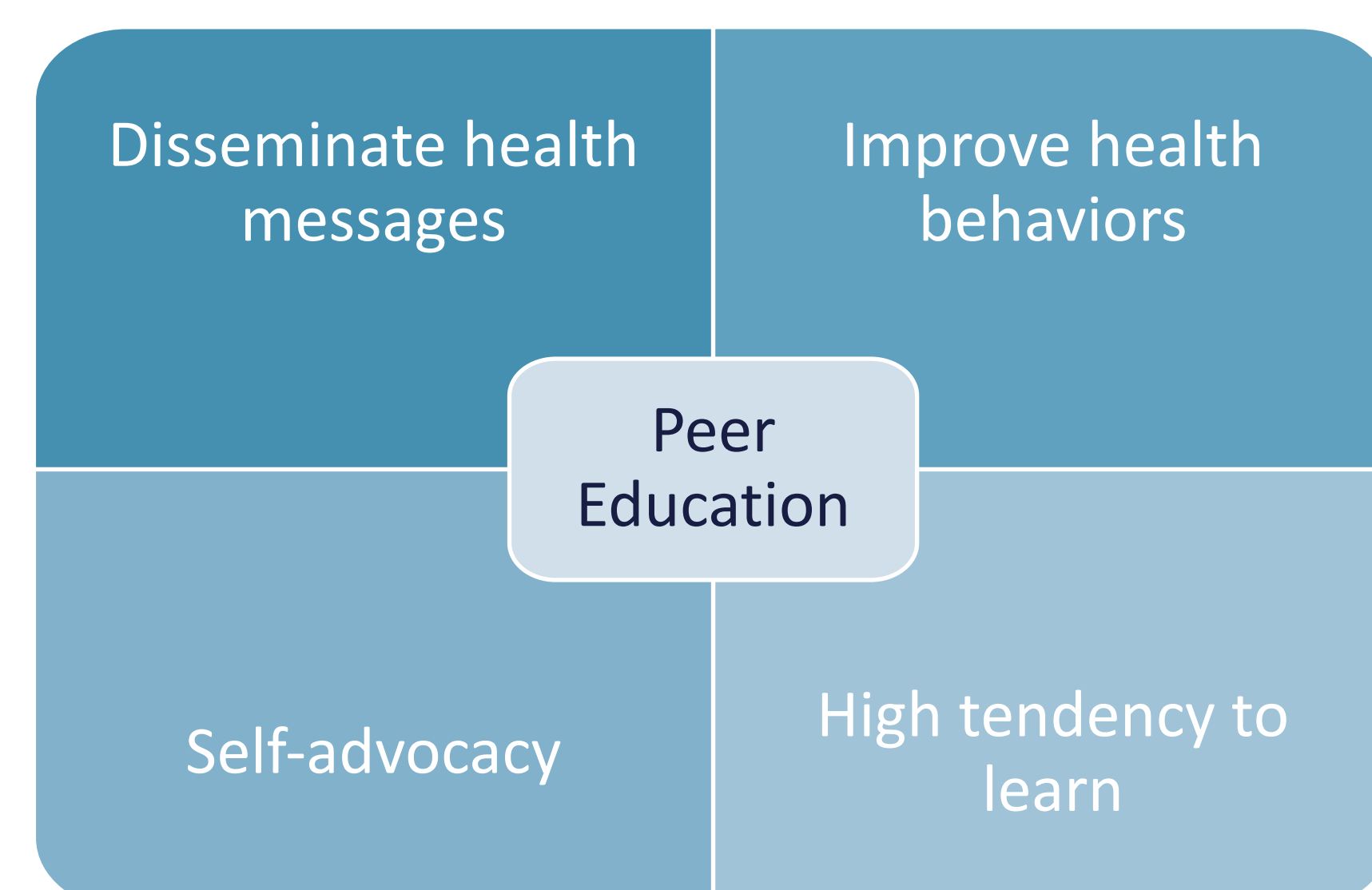


Background

- The human papillomavirus (HPV) is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the United States
- Nearly 14 million new infections occurring each year
 - Half of these cases occur in teens and young adults ages 14-25 years
- HPV infections lead to variety of HPV-related cancers, including cervical cancer
- The HPV vaccine was developed and has the potential to prevent most HPV-related cancers
- Low vaccine rates continue to exist among teens
 - United States: 51.1% of teens were up to date
 - Pennsylvania: 54.1% were up to date
 - Philadelphia: 71.5% were up to date
- While, Philadelphia has higher HPV vaccine rates, barriers exist in the city which prevent teens from receiving the vaccine
- Peer education has been used to promote the HPV vaccine uptake among teens in Philadelphia



Methods

Focus Groups

- One focus group was conducted at the College of Physicians
- 9 total participants consisted of high school students in the after-school STEM program

Procedure

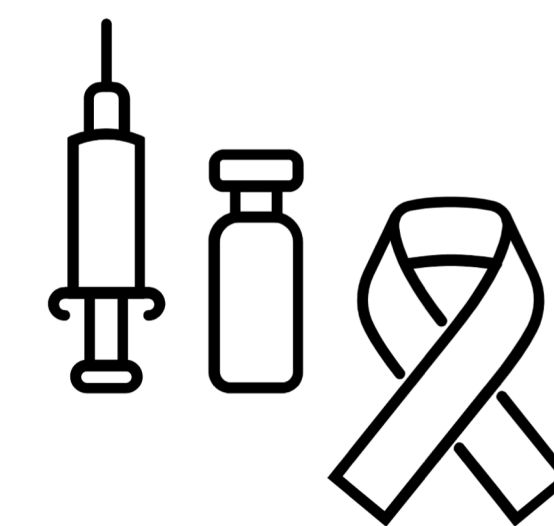
- Demographic surveys were distributed before the focus group discussion
- A focus group guide was developed and used during the discussion. The questions were divided into three categories: (1) Knowledge on HPV vaccine; (2) Thoughts on peer education; (3) Type of social media campaign
- Educational resources were provided after the focus group was completed

Data Analysis

- Demographic surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics
- The focus group was moderated, audio-recorded, and transcribed verbatim by an MPH student. The MPH student coded the transcript to identify key themes, where quotes were used to illustrate key findings.

Results

Knowledge of HPV Vaccine



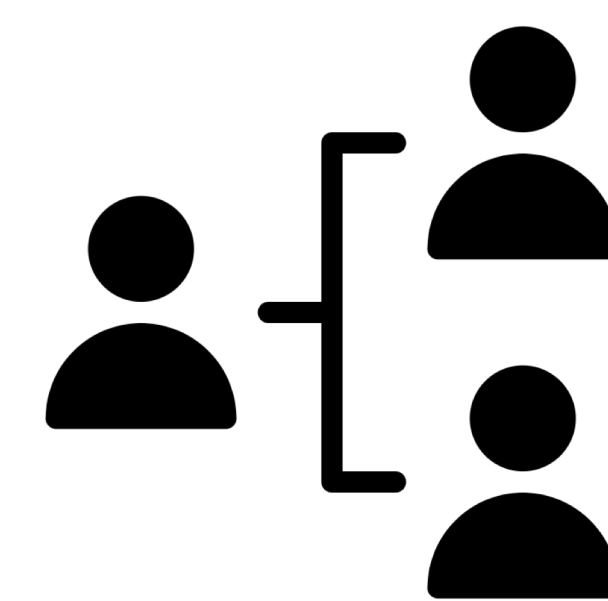
Limited Knowledge

- “That’s kind of how I really saw the effects of HPV. But besides that, I don’t really know much about it.”
- “To prevent cervical cancer or something like that.”

Barriers to Vaccine Uptake

- “If you have no insurance, eventually you end up like not getting the HPV shot.”
- “We have a lot of misconceptions towards vaccinations. Sometimes some people think, if this happens to one person, they think it will happen to them also.”

Peer Education



Qualities

- “Must be able to listen and not judge the person. Even though, you have differences, you don’t have to judge. You have to like give your honest truth about the situation.”

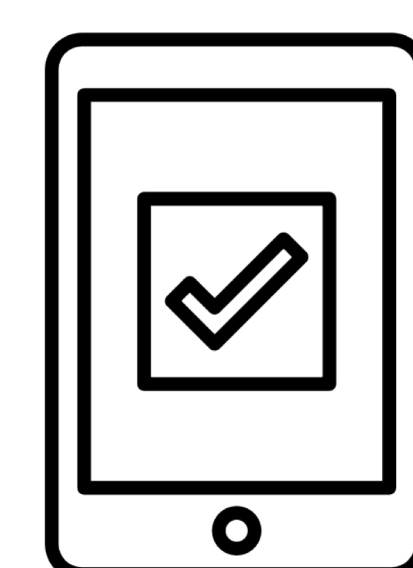
Learning from Peer Educators

- “I think like a lot of people are underestimating how peers can impact each other. We only have to look up to people who are like experts...they’re not able to relate to us.”
- “I feel like both of you don’t have enough education about it for y’all to be talking about it and to learn from each other. It’s like talk to adults, an expert.”

Interest

- “I do wanna be a peer educator. But the thing is that I don’t know that if I become one, my conversation would be so interesting.”

Social Media



Vaccine Uptake Using Social Media

- “I’d feel like more of HPV information on social media, they’re going to be conscious about their health and maybe, run to the health center and get their shot.”
- “I feel like you should not spread that information on social media...cause people are not going to be honest with you on social media.”

Thoughts on Social Media Campaigns

- “Make it like an Instagram page that a lot of people are able to access...not having total paragraphs, scientific papers up there, but it’s something that’s like English to everybody to understand.”

Discussion & Next Steps

- The students expressed limited knowledge on the HPV vaccine
- Thoughts on peer education and social media varied
 - Indicating that peer education and social media may not be effective in promoting HPV vaccine uptake in teens
- The results will be further used to inform a future research grant proposal on the HPV vaccine and peer education
 - Will be helpful in developing potential social media campaigns on this topic.

Acknowledgments

A special thank you to Amy Leader, DrPH, MPH, Rosemary Frasso, PhD, MSc, MSc, CPH, John McAna, PhD, MA, and the students from the College of Physicians.