

CONSENT, THE PIVOT IN RESEARCH IN GHANA; BREAST CARE INTERNATIONAL BEST APPROACH

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Background

Breast cancer is becoming a major public health challenge in Africa and most countries do not have cancer registries, nevertheless, the World Health Organisation estimates that the incidence rate of breast cancer in Africa has steadily increased over the years. According to 2018 Globocan report; Ghana recorded 4,645 (20.4%) new breast cancer cases. Although, it is acknowledged that early detection reduces mortality, 80% of newly diagnosed breast cancer patients delay presentation. Early detection and prompt treatment has been the focus of Breast Care International (BCI). Since its inception, in 2002. BCI has developed a well-structured outreach program that reaches a significant portion of the population with the goal of receiving the consents of the masses to enhance research and other projects such as bio-banking.

Objective: To explore the effectiveness of informed consent that promotes education, treatment and research in breast cancer for further evaluation and treatment.

Methods

Using the Ghana Breast Health Study as a case study, BCI collaborates with opinion leaders, organized groups and local community to explain the project purpose and importance, role of individual, stakeholders and community; and increase their knowledge on consent. A consent form is provided by the sponsor with the study protocol or created by the site investigator. The consent form is personalized by each site, adding local contact names and numbers. The consent is approved for use by Institutional Review Board. The investigator or designated study personnel informs the participant about the study purpose, risks, and potential benefits. The patient is allowed time to read the consent form, ask questions, and consider participation. Participant or representative signs and dates the consent form. The sponsor and/or Institutional Review Board may require additional signatures. The participant is given a copy of the consent and taken to the phlebotomy unit for sampling.



Results

The BCI method has improved the knowledge, attitudes, and involvement of individual, organized group and opinion leaders regarding consent for a project.

Conclusion

A short community-based education on consent might influence huge participation in a project in Ghana.