

Center for Immigrant Health & Cancer Disparities

Towards Equity in Health

What's New at CIH&CD:

Since moving to Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC), the Center for Immigrant Health & Cancer Disparities (CIHCD, pictured right) has hit the ground running.

State Department Visit – In June, we hosted fourteen oncology clinicians and researchers from North Africa, the Near East, and South and Central Asia, as part of the US Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. During the session, participants learned about the projects and research being conducted by CIHCD and also shared their expertise.

Mohamed El-Shinawi, M.D.: We were honored to host Dr. Mohamed El-Shinawi, Associate Professor of General Surgery at Ain Shams University in Cairo, Egypt in July. Dr. Shinawi collaborates on several projects in the United States. While at MSKCC, Dr. Shinawi met with the faculty and staff of the Living Beyond Cancer survivorship program, the Evelyn H. Lauder Breast Cancer Center, the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, and the Integrative Medicine Service. Dr. Shinawi also gave a talk to the Prevention, Control and Population Research Group about breast cancer awareness among women in Egypt.

Lisa Diamond, M.D., M.P.H.: We are very happy to welcome our newest faculty member, Lisa Diamond, M.D., M.P.H.. Dr. Diamond's research focuses on understanding how patient – provider language discordance affects the quality of care delivered to patients with limited English proficiency. Dr. Diamond completed medical school at the George Washington University School of Medicine, has a Master of Public Health (MPH) degree from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, and was a Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholar at Yale University School of Medicine.

Interns: A big thank you to our summer interns, who are helping us with numerous CIHCD projects.: **Amy Burth**, New York Medical College MPH candidate; **Emily Soukas**, NYU undergraduate; **Jaime Gopeesingh, M.D.**, NYU MPH candidate; **Jocelyn Howard**, Columbia University undergraduate; **Rebecca Litt**, Connecticut College undergraduate; **Simranjit Singh**, NYU undergraduate; **Sonia Taneja**, Yale University undergraduate; **Susan Hayes**, MPA NYU Wagner candidate; **Caroline Haas**, Dalton School, and **Yogita Patel**, who currently works for Dow Jones Newswires. Your help is immensely appreciated!

If you or anyone you know would like to volunteer with CIH&CD, please contact Julia Ramirez at ramirej1@mskcc.org, or call (646) 888-0300.

CIH&CD Project Updates

The Cancer Portal Project is excited to announce that two abstracts based on Portal data were recently published: [Are Our Severely Ill Patients Hungry?](#) for the 2011 [ASCO Annual Meeting](#) and [Doctor, What Do I Have?](#) for the [Journal of Clinical Oncology Supplement](#). This month's Integrated Cancer Care Access Network meeting was a success, and we are grateful to those who shared their experiences, thoughts, and ideas. The Portal program continues to enroll patients at 11 participating hospitals, and has three new hospital sites joining the program this summer. We have also rolled out a pediatrics branch of the program.

FOOD (Food to Overcome Outcomes Disparities) has seen great progress in its efforts to provide food to the 61% of our Portal patients with cancer who are hungry. Four



hospital-based pantries (Bellevue, Woodhull, Brooklyn, and Lincoln) should be running by early fall, with others in development, and our food voucher and delivery programs are set to launch.

We are enthusiastic about partnering with God's Love We Deliver (GLWD) for the grocery delivery arm of FOOD. GLWD will deliver weekly grocery bags containing 5 nutritious lunches and dinners per week, and will offer nutritional counseling to our patients.

FOOD's web-based provider training curriculum will go live this summer. It will educate health care providers and others involved in patient care on how to recognize and address food insecurity.

Thank you to the group of 18 volunteers from Deloitte Consulting who elected to spend their annual, firm-wide day of service, or Impact Day, setting up our newest food pantry, at Brooklyn Hospital. Deloitte volunteers spent the day assembling regulation-grade shelving and 40 bags of food staples as a "start-up" kit for cancer patients accessing the pantry.

If you are interested in donating to the FOOD project, sponsoring a pantry, or volunteering with us, please contact Julia Ramirez at ramirej1@mskcc.org. For a copy of the minutes from our FOOD Project Meeting, held in late May, or to join the FOOD Advisory Team, please contact Julia Ramirez.



The **South Asian Health Initiative (SAHI)** is a community based participatory research program founded in 2004, housed at CIH&CD. SAHI engages in diverse community-engaged research and education activities to address the compelling health disparities in the South Asian population, with key areas of focus on cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, and socioeconomic determinates of health.

SAHI also addresses the poor health care access faced by many South Asian communities, and works to bridge community members with the health care system.

Health Fairs – In May we held two successful health fairs in Queens, at the Vaisakhi Mela and Bangaldeshi Mela. We provided services to over 70 participants, most of whom had no ongoing source of health care. Because our health fairs typically identify numerous community members with diabetes and other risk factors for cardiovascular disease, we have developed a new referral partnership with the Preventive Cardiology Program at Queens Hospital Center.

STEP (Supporting Taxi Drivers to Exercise through Pedometers) – In June we completed our pilot study with over 70 participants. We are now analyzing our data to determine the impact of the pedometer intervention, and developing strategies for next steps.

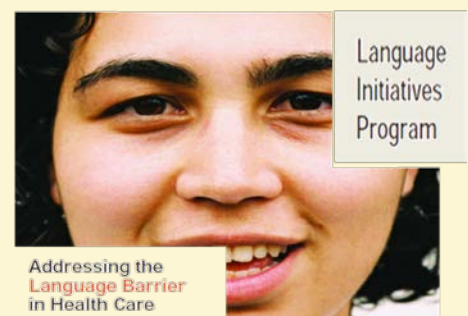
Smokeless Tobacco Goldstein Study – This focus group study, in partnership with the South Asian Council for Social Services, evaluates the knowledge, attitude and belief systems of users of smokeless tobacco products (paan with tobacco and/or gutka).

SAHI Conference – We are currently working to obtaining financial support to host the first annual SAHI Conference to take place in Fall 2012. If you are interested in joining the Steering Committee or would like to share your research at the conference, please contact us.

The Language Initiatives Program continues to develop programs and deliver services to facilitate linguistically and culturally responsive care and research.

Program for Medical Interpreting Services and Education (PROMISE)- PROMISE received a generous grant from the Robin Hood Foundation. PROMISE will train bilingual unemployed individuals in medical interpreting (including immigrants, veterans, and the disabled), and will assist them in job placement. The first program of its kind in NYC, PROMISE seeks to alleviate poverty and contribute to diminishing ethnic and racial disparities in health care.

Pouring on the Calories – We started a cross-sectional survey of subway riders to evaluate their understanding of the "Pouring on the Calories" advertisements used



In the NYC subway system. The study assesses riders' comprehension of the obesity campaign. Our research assistants are interviewing subway riders in English and Spanish in different locations in New York City. Results to be reported upon completion of the interviews.

Language Discordant Focus Group Methodology Pilot – We are currently conducting a pilot study of focus group translation methodology. The pilot is being conducted in Mandarin to try to determine the most efficient yet accurate means of translation.

National Standards of Training in Medical Interpreting – We were pleased to attend the national membership meeting of the National Council on Interpreting in Healthcare (NCIHC) in New Orleans, where the newly developed national standards for training medical interpreters were presented and discussed. We were happy to be part of the feedback conversation and to discuss the standards with our trainers in New York.

Enhancing Medication Safety (EMS) for Patient with Limited English Proficiency Goes Live! – Enhancing Medication Safety is a distance learning module for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to address the language barrier in the pharmacy setting and learn cross cultural, cross linguistic skills. EMS was developed in collaboration with the American Pharmacists Association (APhA) and the National Health Law Program (NHLP). For more information on how to enroll, go to [APhA's website](#).

AMBER staff had a very busy spring. In May and June we conducted seven workshops, six for adults and one for teens, for over 100 women and girls with our project partners: Arab American Family Support Center, Noor Al-Islam Mosque, Arab American Association, St. George's Coptic Church and the Arab American Friendship Center.

We assisted twenty women to get their mammograms and organized our first van screening in Staten Island at Noor Al-Islam Mosque with Project Renewal. We are currently providing intensive assistance to twelve women with breast cancer, including two who are newly diagnosed, to help them complete their treatment. We also published our first paper about the AMBER project in the *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, *A Community Intervention: AMBER- Arab American Breast Cancer Education and Referral Program*.

Thank you to all of our project partners and to The Greater New York City Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure for your continued support. This program is supported by a grant from the Greater NYC Affiliate of Susan G. Komen for the Cure, Inc.



GET INVOLVED WITH CIH&CD!

The Center for Immigrant Health & Cancer Disparities at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center attracts a dynamic and diverse workforce. We welcome new talent and energy for the various roles and projects at the Center. If you would like to work on challenging, interesting projects, and have a significant public health impact, the Center provides the right environment.

We also welcome interns and volunteers to contribute to the various projects. CIH&CD offers a variety of opportunities for high school, undergraduate, and graduate students to participate in agency activities as volunteers or interns. CIH&CD internships offer exciting exposure and insight into the field of public health as it relates to the health of immigrant populations.



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