

**KEEPING CANCER IN CHEC**  
Bridging Communities  
through Education, Health  
Care, and Research

COMMUNITY REPORT 2016



## CELEBRATING THE FIRST YEAR OF OUR PARTNERSHIP

It has been an active and exciting year for the Chicago Cancer Health Equity Collaborative (ChicagoCHEC). ChicagoCHEC is an initiative funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) across the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University (NU), the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), and Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU).

The goal of ChicagoCHEC is to establish the infrastructure in order to:

- 1) Create strong connections that will build long-lasting bridges across the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center of Northwestern University, the University of Illinois at Chicago and Northeastern Illinois University.
- 2) Establish community partnerships that will develop an innovative community-driven foundation to support meaningful cancer research, education, training and community engagement across the Metropolitan Chicagoland area.

At the end of our first year, we can report that we have met our goal of establishing the infrastructure that now allows us to launch a number of programs and support community activities that will help reduce the burden of cancer in low-income, racial/ethnic minority, and underserved communities.

We are indebted to our institutional leaders, faculty members, research and administrative staff, students/trainees and our community partners for their active participation and support.

In this report, we will highlight a few of our key accomplishments across the four core areas of this partnership: *community engagement, research, training and education, and policy and advocacy.*

### PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS



Melissa Simon MD MPH  
Robert H. Lurie  
Comprehensive Cancer  
Center of  
Northwestern University



Robert Winn MD  
University of Illinois  
Cancer Center  
University of Illinois  
Chicago



Christina Ciecierski PhD  
Northeastern Illinois  
University



Moira Stuart PhD  
Northeastern Illinois  
University

# RESEARCH

## CHOOSE TO CHANGE STUDY

Reducing tobacco use in partnership with community health centers

## WECANCONNECT

Using mHealth to connect physically disabled cancer patients with matched disabled survivors

## MI GUÍA

Using e-Health to improve symptom burden and quality of life among Hispanic Breast Cancer patients

## PROSTATE CANCER DISPARITY IN CHICAGO-AREA AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN

Developing cell models for prostate cancer risk & treatment in African American Men

## REDUCING COLORECTAL CANCER DISPARITIES ON SOUTH SIDE OF CHICAGO

Increasing capacity among community health networks for CRC programs

## COMMUNITY-ENGAGED OBESITY INTERVENTION DEVELOPMENT FOR PUERTO RICAN & MEXICAN MEN

Evaluating an obesity prevention program for Latino men

We are committed to supporting cancer research with a health equity lens that integrates community organizations as equal partners in addressing research questions.

On a yearly basis, ChicagoCHEC will fund three projects through the ChicagoCHEC *Incubator and Catalyst Grant Program*. These grants are intended to foster cross-institutional collaborations among investigator teams from NU, UIC, NEIU, and community partner organization(s).

In our first round of funding, we received a total 8 proposals, initiated from our three institutions and ten partner organizations. These projects included early-stage investigators from a broad range of academic disciplines.

Six research projects have been funded in the first year:

- Cycle 1: Choose to Change, WeCanConnect, MiGuía
- Cycle 2: Prostate Cancer Disparity in African American Men, Colorectal Cancer Disparities on Chicago's South Side, Obesity Intervention Development for Puerto Rican & Mexican Men
- These projects include collaborators at Near North Health Services Corporation, ALAS-WINGS, Project Brotherhood, Access Living, The Puerto Rican Cultural Center, and ACCESS Community Health Network



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## Research Incubator

Incubator and catalyst funding for partnership building, research proposal development, pilot projects, and research projects.

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We are committed to engaging, mobilizing, and supporting community capacity building efforts to improve health outcomes among Chicago's underserved communities.

At the center of this partnership, we have convened a diverse Community Steering Committee (CSC), composed of key community members and leaders, to guide our strategic efforts to foster respectful and meaningful collaboration across the four core areas associated with the partnership.

We have identified, recruited and trained experienced Community Health Educators (CHEs) to work closely with local community organizations in cancer prevention, awareness and outreach, and to provide meaningful input about cancer reducing strategies implemented in Chicago to the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) National Outreach Network.



TOP: ChicagoCHEC 2015 Townhall launch

MIDDLE: Inflatable colon, African Festival of the Arts

BOTTOM: Research Fellows with Jose López

## COMMUNITY STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Henrietta Barcelo (Co-Chair), Instituto Health Sciences Career Academy  
Joanne Glenn (Co-Chair), W.O.T. Foundation Inc.  
Emily Cambry Jr, BLUE1647  
Dolores Castañeda, Community Member  
Luisa Echevarria, Univision Chicago  
Marcus Evans, Illinois State of Illinois, Legislative District 33  
Kristina Hamilton, American Lung Association In Greater Chicago  
LauraJane Hyde, Gilda's Club Chicago  
Stephanie Logan, Patient Advocate  
Jose López, Puerto Rican Cultural Center  
David Ernesto Munar, Howard Brown Health Center  
Linda Rae Murray, former Chief Medical Officer, Cook County Health & Hospital System  
Kirsten Peachey, The Center for Faith and Community Health Transformation  
Fred Rachman, Alliance of Chicago Community Health Services, L3C  
Judy Panko Reis, Access Living  
Brian Richardson, Chicago Department of Public Health  
RoseMarie Rogers, Patient Advocate  
Regine Rucker, Chicago Public Schools  
Joanna Rudnicka, Amber Coalition, Polish-American Breast Cancer Program  
Esther Sciammarella, Chicago Hispanic Health Coalition  
Juan Salgado, Instituto del Progreso Latino & Instituto Health Sciences Academy  
Esther Wong, Chinese American Service League  
Carmen Velásquez, Founder and former Executive Director of Alivio Medical Center  
Kyle Westbrook, City of Chicago, Office of Mayor Rahm Emanuel  
Tom Wilson, Access Living

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SNAPSHOTS

### JANUARY 2016

First **ChicagoCHEC Community Steering Committee** meeting

### APRIL 2016

Ms. Henrietta Barcelo, Instituto Health Sciences Career Academy and Ms. Joanne Glenn, W.O.T. Foundation, Inc. **selected as CSC Co-Chairs**



### JUNE 2016

CSC partner Tom Wilson from Access Living presented at the **National Academies of Medicine**



### SUMMER 2016

CSC mentorship and training of Research Fellows  
Engagement in community events: the Chicago Community Trust's On the Table conversations, Lurie Cancer Survivors' Celebration Walk & 5K, HopeFest 2016, African Festival of the Arts, The Importance of Diversity in Clinical Trials 2.0



### OCTOBER 2015

Northeastern Illinois University, Northwestern University, and the University of Illinois at Chicago awarded **\$17.4 million National Cancer Institute U54 collaborative grant** to launch the Chicago Cancer Health Equity Collaborative (ChicagoCHEC)

### FEBRUARY 2016

**8 ChicagoCHEC Incubator & Catalyst Grants applications** received for research and partnership development proposals, with 10 new community partners

### SPRING 2016

CSC members participated in **activities across the partnership:** hired project staff; reviewed ChicagoCHEC proposals for funding; interviewed and selected candidates for the ChicagoCHEC Research Fellows Program

### SEPTEMBER 2016

First Annual **ChicagoCHEC Symposium & Community Report**

### 2017 AND BEYOND

Ongoing community conversations, capacity building, community resource mapping, cancer education and outreach

## TRAINING & EDUCATION RESEARCH

We are committed to training, educating, mentoring and supporting a diverse workforce that includes students (undergraduates and graduates), early stage investigators, junior faculty members, researchers, and health care professionals.

These groups can bring varied perspectives and experiences to advance the nation's goal of reaching cancer health equity.

We have developed programs that will support and coach individuals along their career trajectory, providing opportunities to successfully launch and advance their careers.

This past year, our efforts focused on establishing the following program.

### The ChicagoCHEC Research Fellows Program

This program is a comprehensive, learning experience for students from Northwestern, Northeastern Illinois University, University of Illinois at Chicago, and City Colleges of Chicago (CCC). This program is focused on the development of academic, technical and professional skills in preparation for careers in social, behavioral and biomedical research, and health care. Immersive basic science and applied research experiences, interactive group projects, journal clubs and mentoring helped the Research Fellows on their journey to become researchers and health care professionals.



TOP: Research Fellows, staff, community members, and faculty celebrate graduation day.  
BOTTOM: Research Fellows mentor Gear Up high school students.

### RESEARCH FELLOWS PROGRAM KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 69 students applied to this program (February 2016)
- Students attended a pre-interview workshop covering topics such as interview etiquette, “what to expect” from the interview process, preparation for interview questions
- Trained reviewers utilized a holistic application review process for diversity and inclusion (March 2016)
- 23 students invited for in-person interviews (April 2016)
- Representatives from each institution & community partners reviewed applications utilizing holistic scoring rubrics (February-April 2016)
- 12 students selected to participate in the first year of the program
- CSC members participated on the review of the applications, interviewing and final selection of candidates (February-April 2016)
- Cohort of 3 post-baccalaureate senior fellows supported coordination of program activities (June-August 2016)
- Several students joined ChicagoCHEC research project teams

## POLICY & ADVOCACY

### Smoke-free NEIU

As of July 1, 2015, smoking is prohibited on all Northeastern Illinois University locations, to include all areas, both indoors and outdoors, in University-owned vehicles and in privately owned vehicles while parked on University property.

ChicagOCHEC-associated professors supported this legislative change by utilizing data from several key documents that provided evidence on the negative health and environmental effects of tobacco smoking on campus. This data revealed that over 70% of NEIU students reported being bothered by smoking on the NEIU campus. Additional supporting evidence indicated that 87% of all litter found on the main campus was tobacco-related.

### Lung cancer screening policy

Karriem S. Watson, DHSc, MS, MPH, of University of Illinois at Chicago, provided leadership to a recently published policy position paper to encourage lung cancer screening in high risk populations. Dr. Watson and colleagues recommend “a shared decision making model and integration of evidence-based tobacco treatment in the context of LDCT-based lung cancer screening for eligible, informed adults.”



## PREVIEW OF CHICAGOCHEC 2017 KEY ACTIVITIES

### POLICY AND ADVOCACY

- Establish a ChicagOCHEC Policy Council that will be tasked to develop and implement a cancer policy agenda. It will be aimed at impacting, administrative, regulatory, and legislative policies at the local, state and national levels.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Ongoing community conversations, capacity building, community resource mapping, cancer education and outreach

### NEWLY FUNDED PROJECTS

- **Smoking Cessation among LGBT Patients:** Reduction program tailored for LGBT patients
- **Cross Cultural Comparative Effectiveness Partnership Model - Lung Cancer:** Partnership to address training, research and community engagement to examine lung cancer outcomes in Cuba
- **A Health Policy Initiative:** Development of two-course core sequence in Cancer Health Policy Studies to establish the foundation for a Minor in Health Policy Studies at NEIU.



**THE  
UNIVERSITY OF  
ILLINOIS  
AT  
CHICAGO**



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We welcome questions and comments from our readers. Please direct correspondence to [info@chicagohec.org](mailto:info@chicagohec.org).

Further information can be found at <http://chicagohec.org/> Twitter @ChicagoChec

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