



CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

Award ID:
PP120089

Project Title:
Cancer Genetic Risk Assessment, Counseling, and Screening of High-risk Individuals in Greater San Antonio and South Texas: Education and Implementation

Award Mechanism:
Evidence-Based Prevention Programs and Services

Principal Investigator:
Tomlinson, G. E.

Entity:
The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

Lay Summary:

When determining one's risk of cancer, a family history of cancer can be a strong clue, particularly if more than one family member has been diagnosed with the same type of cancer, or if cancer in a family member has occurred at a particularly young age. By taking a good family history, health-care providers can determine who is at high risk of cancer based on their family history. For some individuals, a blood test can determine if a person carries a genetic tendency to develop cancer. For those individuals at highest risk, many interventions have been tested and proven to decrease the risk of cancer or to detect cancer at an early stage so it can be successfully treated. Using several different methods we will identify individuals at high-risk of cancer because of a family history. We will use a short questionnaire for women undergoing mammography to identify those who may have a family history of breast or ovarian cancer. We will use a similar questionnaire in primary care clinics to identify men and women who may be at risk of breast, colon, or other types of cancers. Those individuals who have a positive family history will be contacted by a specialist who will gather additional information to determine if a formal genetic evaluation is needed. We will also work with multiple church and community groups to spread the word about cancer risks and benefits of cancer screening and early-detection in cancer-prone families. For individuals at highest risk, we will recommend appropriate screening procedures which, depending on the type of risk, may include mammography, MRI scan, or colonoscopy. We will provide funds for those unable to pay for such screening tests. In San Antonio and South Texas there are few professional resources to work with families that may have an increased risk of cancer and need additional screening services. This project will fill this gap by providing specialists in the area of cancer genetic risk and counseling. In addition, this project will provide education to physicians-in-training as well as established clinicians, so that our medical community will collectively achieve a higher level of understanding of cancer risks and appropriate interventions to reduce risk. This program will service the greater San Antonio area at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio and through our primary community partner, the CHRISTUS Santa Rosa Health System. In addition, our services will extend to Laredo and Harlingen, sites of our regional campus locations.