



CANCER PREVENTION & RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF TEXAS

Award ID:
PP130071

Project Title:
West Texas Cancer Survivors Network - Phase II (WTCSN - II)

Award Mechanism:
Health Behavior Change Through Public and Professional Education and Training

Principal Investigator:
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Entity:
Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center

Lay Summary:

This resubmitted proposal, for the West Texas Cancer Survivors Network Phase II (WTCSN-II) is an extension of our current WTCSN grant, funded by CPRIT to address the educational needs of cancer survivors in HSR1 in terms of diet, nutrition, physical activity and quality of life (QoL). The present application involves expanding the service area of our previous WTCSN to the 67 counties outside HSR1, but still within the TTUHSC service area of West Texas, and to use new, more focused strategies to further improve the quality of life and health behaviors of cancer survivors in the Network. We expect this expansion will lead to improved health for cancer survivors and the prevention of cancer recurrence or progression in the long run. Based upon the existing infrastructure, this project will be able to immediately initiate recruitment to WTCSN – II. Survivors already enrolled in WTCSN will be grandfathered into WTCSN – II.

The first component will expand through the addition of new partners and development of a referral strategy to capture more cancer survivors into our network. New partners will include the federally funded Area health Education centers (AHEC's), Texas Agri-Life Extension, and the Association of Community Cancer Centers. Through these additional partners, we will enhance our outreach to rural cancer survivors in all of West Texas. WTCSN–II will also leverage partnerships established in prior WTCSN to build new partnerships with their counterparts in West Texas. This will enable us to serve a much larger geographic area and link all of the cancer survivors in West Texas in a single group that can benefit together from our outreach program. The major impact of this project will be the improvement in lifestyle behaviors for better health and better health-related QoL. Our own preliminary data from the WTCSN have indicated a positive impact on QoL of our network in the current funding period. Recent evidence from the cancer literature indicates that improved health behaviors in diet, physical activity, and QoL can enhance the prevention of cancer recurrence or progression, and even survival.

The second component of this project is to introduce the concept of Survivorship Care Plans (SCP) in the enrolled membership of the WTCSN-II. SCPs are now recognized as an important part of the long-term management of cancer survivorship by health care providers and their care teams. The SCPs are also a key element of the 2012 Texas Cancer Plan, and is recommended by both the American Cancer Society, the Institute of Medicine, as well as other cancer survivor advocacy organizations. The promotion of the

use of SCPs is a significant addition to our WTCSN-II educational mission and we will be able to reach many Texas cancer survivors in a more comprehensive way within our healthy lifestyle and QoL approach that has already proven successful in our previous grant period. Additionally, the adoption of SCPs by survivors and their providers are also a sustainability strategy for the continued discussion of healthy lifestyle choices in this population.

The third component of our project will focus on the development and delivery of healthy lifestyle messages and interventions that will be tailored to 4 parameters of the cancer survivor's experience: 1) stage of cancer survivorship, 2) type of cancer, 3) whether overweight or obese, and 4) improving level of physical activity. Baseline information from participants will tell us about the 4 parameters for each survivor; and outreach, education and health messages will be tailored to those distinct parameters. We will pilot test this tailored message approach to determine its effectiveness in rural cancer survivor populations. The significance of this program is that it has never been attempted in a general population of diverse cancer survivors, and that its impact could be far-reaching on Texans' cancer recurrence and survival.

In summary, this project has the potential to not only impact more Texas cancer survivors in an enlarged geographical footprint, but to focus the message even more acutely than ever before to directly address interventions that will enhance cancer survivorship in all aspects that can be achieved in an outreach project. We will also conduct enhanced data gathering and evaluation of all intervention approaches in order to provide an evidence base of what is successful and what needs improvement. By the end of the project we hope to not only enhance everyday living for those with a diagnosis of cancer, but to also leave a lasting impression on public health delivery of sound, evidence-based advice on how to participate in their own long-term survival of cancer.