

**OFFICE ON WOMEN'S HEALTH
NATIONAL CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE IN WOMEN'S
HEALTH**

**DHHS SECRETARY'S PRIORITY INITIATIVES
ON PREVENTION IN WOMEN'S HEALTH**

The National Centers of Excellence in Women's Health program (CoE) provide a comprehensive, effective model addressing the major women's health priorities of the DHHS. The health outcomes of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer risk, and HIV/AIDS all disproportionately affect minority and low income women. The CoE model addresses the health care and prevention needs of underserved, minority and vulnerable populations, for these conditions. Developing a model of care that serves the most vulnerable women in our society serves to improve the health care of all women.

Prevention, an important component of health care at the CoEs, is achieved through clinical practice, patient and provider education/training/outreach, research, and improvements/changes in leadership programs to advance and retain capable women who will contribute to the overarching mission of integrated, comprehensive health care. The CoEs are champions of comprehensive care for women across the life span organized around five core components; all of the Secretary's priority areas are covered by the ongoing services of the CoEs, and all CoE programs address the overlap issues and needs of women at risk for several of these conditions/problems.

The programs of the CoEs focus on an integrated approach to prevention, early diagnosis and treatment while forging collaborations

to ensure the advancement of new knowledge in approaches to care for women and gender biology, and to promote increased knowledge of women's health issues in the community. Primary care, with the highest quality specialty care for women, is the focus of clinical care. The CoEs report the following major specific initiatives in the Secretary's four women's health priority areas:

Cardiovascular Disease

◆ Boston University CoE

The CoE clinical practice cares for a population at high risk for cardiovascular disease, based upon an estimated prevalence of risk factors, including obesity (20-40%), hypertension (30 - 60%), hypercholesterolemia (20 - 30%), smoking (35%) and low physical activity (70%). All women are provided with individualized cardiovascular assessment and counseling, and prevention strategies to reduce their risk.

The CoE is involved in research on the study of sex and racial disparities in post-AMI mortality and procedure rates. Sex and racial disparities in outcomes following admission for AMI have been reported for decades. In 1999, blacks in the Medicare population were still less likely to receive cardiac catheterization or revascularization and more likely than whites to die within 30 days or 1 year. Despite higher rates of post-AMI revascularization, white men had no better survival at one year than white women.

Another research study involves sex and race disparities in pre-AMI diagnosis. In spite of differences in age (women were older) and comorbidity (blacks were sicker) that would typically make a CHD diagnosis more likely, women and black patients were

substantially less likely to have recognized CHD. Further exploration of the relationships between sex and race and the presence of atypical symptoms and heart disease could lead to earlier recognition and treatment – and improved outcomes – for all.

Over a 5-year period, the BU CoE will implement an exercise intervention and evaluate its effects on psychological distress, fitness, body composition, and quality of life (QOL) among stage I and II breast cancer patients. The BU CoE will also evaluate the pathways which may mediate exercise effects on QOL and assess exercise adherence factors randomly assigned to exercise intervention or a control. Assessments will consist of a graded exercise test assessing cardiovascular fitness, body composition analysis, strength testing, and a psychosocial survey assessing psychological distress and QOL.

The CoE collaborated on a study entitled “sexual assault while in the military: violence as a predictor of cardiac risk?” The BU CoE found that obesity, smoking, problem alcohol use, sedentary lifestyle, and hysterectomy before age 40 were more common in women reporting a history of sexual assault while in the military than in women without such history. The BU CoE concludes that an association between myocardial infarction and prior sexual assault history may be mediated in part by known cardiac risk factors.

Reducing Cardiovascular Risk Through Exercise is a joint Northeast Missouri Health Council (CCOE) and Boston University (CoE) Community Outreach Project. The program will enroll women for a 2 year longitudinal follow up program, with the goal of developing an individual exercise program, and then providing

follow up to continue to encourage women to incorporate the program into a lifelong behavioral change.

An undergraduate curriculum review was conducted to assess for strengths and gaps in gender-specific curriculum. The undergraduate curriculum is targeted to increase the gender-specific information on cardiovascular disease presented to medical students, developing new curriculum for the course directors.

Cardiovascular risk assessment and risk reduction in women is a target of the Women's Health Training Institute. In the past 5 years, over 1,000 health care providers in Massachusetts have been trained in this area by the BU CoE.

◆ University of California at Los Angeles CoE

Heart Gram: This educational tool, developed by the CoE, educates women on the signs and symptoms of heart attack. The Heart Gram is widely used on an ongoing basis in UCLA clinical areas, specialty departments, and community clinics and organizations.

Prescription for Patient Education Cardiovascular Disease packets: The Iris Cantor-UCLA Women's Health Education & Resource Center Prescription for Patient Education allows physicians and other health professionals to "prescribe" health information for their patients. The Prescription is currently being utilized in internal medicine and specialty areas at UCLA and UCLA-Santa Monica Medical Center as well as in community resource centers who have used it as a model. The informational packets in the area of cardiovascular disease include:

- Cholesterol

- High Blood Pressure
- Cardiovascular Disease

Women's Health Forum 2002: This UCLA CoE-sponsored event will bring together community partners, legislators, and University of California dignitaries to highlight three women's health issues, while raising awareness of the concept of comprehensive women's health and the UCLA CoE. A panel of faculty experts will address the issues of heart disease, mammography, and domestic violence. The Forum will be held in October 2002 and is expected to become an annual event.

MenoPaws Education, Support, and Exercise Program: This 11-week program combines guest speakers, social support, and exercise for menopause-age women. A special addition to the program is the presence of UCLA Medical Center animal-assisted therapy dogs to provide extra support and motivation. Cardiovascular disease was one of the major educational areas targeted in the MenoPaws program as it relates to strategies for prevention, hormone replacement therapy, and postmenopausal illness. The program also included a 6-week walking component to get the participants started on an exercise program they can continue. Regular exercise is key to the prevention of cardiovascular disease. The Program is offered annually.

◆ University of California, San Francisco CoE

Research on the diagnosis and treatment of women with heart disease is a specialty offered at UCSF Women's Health. Specialists provide consultations to women with heart disease and women at risk for heart disease. Community education on heart disease is provided at CoE sponsored women's health conferences. Continuing Medical Education classes are convened to bring

providers up-to-date information on cardiovascular issues regarding the emerging research findings.

◆ **MCP Hahnemann University (doing business as Drexel University)**

The following lectures are given to students on a regular basis: Cardiovascular Disease in Women, Estrogen Replacement in Women, and Menopause and Cardiovascular Diseases.

The University curriculum includes comprehensive teaching units on: Menopause and CAD, Estrogen Replacement Strategies and CAD, and Health Promotion and CAD Screening.

A Menopause and Andropause program is being planned for a grand rounds seminar series.

The CoE clinical care center at Drexel University embraces a mission statement that recognizes the interdisciplinary nature of women's health. Central to our mission statement is the application of research of sex- and gender-based biology to the comprehensive clinical care of women. The Center for Polycystic Ovary Syndrome, founded in September 2000, embodies this mission: an internist, gynecologist and a psychologist diagnose and treat women with PCOS, a disease in which sex hormones have a significant impact on cardiovascular risk.

The CoE conducts annual health fairs with CVD health screening for women.

◆ **Harvard Medical School CoE**

The Center for Cardiovascular Disease in Women (CCDW) at Brigham and Women's Hospital is housed within the Connors

Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology. The CCDW is dedicated to developing new sex- and gender-specific strategies for prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of coronary heart disease (CHD) in women through clinical intervention, research, education, community outreach and advocacy focusing on high-risk populations, including women of color, low-income women and elderly women. The CCDW emphasizes comprehensive evaluation and treatment of cardiac risk factors, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking, excess weight, and stress. The CCDW has completed research to assess preferences of patients with heart failure regarding quality of life. The results were published in the Journal of Heart Lung Transplant, September 2001. The HMS Center of Excellence Evaluation and Outcomes Director is the CCDW Director.

The CCDW staff conducted focus groups among diverse women with CHD and women with known risk for developing CHD to determine the needs and preferences for cardiology care in women. Focus group participants had acute knowledge of CHD and understood how to manage associated risk factors. However, behavior modification, including consumption of a diet low in saturated fat and high in fruits and vegetables and incorporating exercise into daily activities, was cited as the greatest barrier in altering risk for CHD. As a direct outcome of these focus groups, the CCDW staff developed educational materials for women with, and at risk for CHD, including an educational prescription pad for patients that outlines risk reduction strategies and a medications document that outlines purpose and use of CHD medications.

The CCDW staff worked collaboratively with the Boston Heart Party to develop a computerized risk assessment for CHD in women. The telemedicine intervention for women with CHD is

designed to remotely connect health care providers with women who have experience myocardial infarction in a simulated cardiac rehabilitation program.

In partnership with the Boston Public Health Commission and Brigham and Women's Hospital Office for Women, Family and Community Programs, CCDW staff are adapting the Sister Talk program, a CVD risk prevention program for women, for Boston cable.

The HMS Center of Excellence in collaboration with the Boston Public Health Commission and Boston Neighborhood Network is developing a serial, interactive cable television show and community discussion groups focused on reducing risks for cardiovascular disease in women of color. The show includes risk reduction strategies related to hypertension, diabetes, obesity, hyperlipidemia, smoking, and stress.

The HMS CoE, through the HMS Fund for Women supported research investigating "Effect of Dietary Soy on Lipid Levels, Brachial Artery Function, Biochemical Markers of Bone Turnover, Inflammatory Markers of Atherosclerosis and Menopausal Symptoms on Postmenopausal Women."

The Healthy Heart Initiative is a CVD initiative designed to develop and evaluate strategies for nutrition and physical activity education with the goal of increasing heart healthy behaviors. The target populations for this initiative are African American women living in the Boston neighborhood of Roxbury and Latina women living in the Boston neighborhood of Jamaica Plain. The program objectives include:

- Assess the feasibility of purchasing food for a high quality, heart health diet in the target communities;
- Engage target populations in the development of a culturally appropriate, low cost, heart healthy menus and strategies to increase physical activity; and
- Work in partnership with the target communities to engage neighborhood residents and businesses and disseminate information about heart healthy lifestyles.

The Brigham and Women's Hospital Women's Health Guidelines for CVD were developed to provide physicians with clear clinical pathways to determine the risk for CHD in individual women, to identify modifiable risk factors for CHD, and to develop strategies for prevention and treatment of these risk factors.

◆ University of Illinois at Chicago CoE

The College of Pharmacy working with the CoE runs an anticogulation clinic in the Wellness Center that is a JACHO model for anticoagulation clinics nationwide.

A CoE research committee member from the College of Medicine has funding from NHLBI to study: 1) the effects of isoform specific PKC activation on the development of cardiac hypertrophy and to define cellular targets of PKC that are responsible for the development of CH; 2) to define cellular mechanisms that underlie the development of diabetes cardiomyopathy.

A CoE collaborator with the College of Nursing is funded by NIAAA/NIH to study the gender differences in the effects on heart function associated with alcoholic cardiomyopathy.

A CoE collaborator with the College of Nursing is studying sex differences in myocardial function in a rat model.

A member of the CoE Steering Committee with the College of Nursing is working on several funded projects: 1) Women's Cardiovascular Health Network (CDC funding) to identify behavioral, policy and environmental factors that influence physical activity levels in low-income minority/ethnic women age 20 to 50; 2) to identify the determinants of physical activity in African American and Hispanic women to direct the development of physical activity interventions (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funding); 3) to test the efficacy of a 48-week home-based walking intervention for low-income community, midlife African American women (NIH funding).

A CoE collaborator with the College of Nursing receives NIH funding for Recognition of Myocardial Infarction: Reducing Delay which is studying the identification of cognitive and socioenvironmental variables that affects patients' symptom interpretation, and their delay in seeking early treatment for acute myocardial infarction (AMI). An educational intervention will be developed to facilitate early recognition of AMI symptoms among individuals at risk for AI.

◆ Indiana University CoE

The IU CoE has a women's cardiology clinic staffed by a female cardiologist. In addition, educational outreach on issues concerning cardiovascular health and disease, exercise, weight, hypertension, and other related issues are regularly presented to lay women and as CME presentation to physicians and other health care professionals.

◆ Magee-Womens Hospital CoE

The Heart Check program started on site then expanded to Magee Womancare Centers, then neighborhood clinics and will be expanding to additional University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Health System (UPMCHS) sites in 2003. The CoE minority health team member conducts the neighborhood clinics.

Cardiovascular Disease will be the topic of the CME Telemedicine Series in Gender-Based Medicine. The goal of the "Gender-Specific Medicine Education Series" is to promote awareness of gender-differences by providers in the medical and behavioral health management of women.

CoE Community Outreach presented "Healthy Lifestyles for Seniors" at a Pittsburgh HUD facility emphasizing strategies to lower fat in the diet, maintaining exercise and relationships. Womancare consumer classes promoting a healthy lifestyle include: "The Joy of Mid-Life: A Guide to Healthy Living" and "A Taste of Health".

The CoE administrative director, is a member of the advisory board for "Working Hearts" which is a new community-wide organization to advance a heart health agenda.

◆ University of Michigan CoE

The CoE has assisted with promotion of the newly organized UM Women's Cardiovascular Health Program. The Program focuses on prevention of cardiovascular disease in women with known risk factors or who are otherwise concerned with their cardiovascular health. The CoE assists with health education, outreach events, and clinic and research collaboration.

◆ University of Puerto Rico CoE

With funding by the American Heart Association, the CoE is involved in a pilot project to develop an epidemiological profile of Hispanic females aged 35 to 80 regarding prevalence of major risk factors for cardiovascular disease by health status, demographic characteristics, and menopausal status. The long term goals are to provide statistical data on cardiovascular diseases and other conditions affecting women's health in Puerto Rico in order to promote cardiovascular and women's health on the University campus.

◆ Tulane Xavier Universities of Louisiana CoE

The Tulane University Section Head of Cardiology is interested in developing a Women's Preventive Cardiology Clinic in collaboration with TUXCOE, therefore TUXCOE administration is currently conducting planning meetings regarding the development of a Cardiovascular program at the Total Women's Health Care Center (TWHCC). In the meantime, the Cardiology Department has agreed to create a dedicated Women's Cardiology clinic in the Cardiology clinic. Already that department has been providing a substantial amount of care to pregnant patients with cardiology concerns and women with heart valve disorders.

The Xavier University Clinical Trials Unit has several active studies targeting African Americans related to CVD, specifically heart failure, high blood cholesterol, hypertension, and diabetes.

The TUXCOE Research Seminar series includes CVD-specific topics such as "Long-term Research on Cardiovascular Risk in a Biracial (black-white) Community: The Bogalusa Heart Study" and "Hormones and Heart Disease."

The Director of the Tulane Center of Excellence in Cardiovascular Disease and TUXCOE affiliate, initiated long-term studies on the natural history and development of atherosclerosis. Recently he has made many internationally renowned advances in cardiovascular health, including identification of a large number of previously unconfirmed myocardial infarction risk factors, as well as the appearance of initial atherosclerosis in very young individuals. The study continues to follow large numbers of patients, both at Charity Hospital and in the small town of Bogalusa, Louisiana, as part of his landmark NIH-funded Bogalusa Heart Study.

TUXCOE developed and implemented the Heart to Heart Program, which provides women with an opportunity to individually meet with the TUXCOE Care Coordinator for 15-30 minutes at the TWHCC so as to learn about the risk of heart disease as well as how to protect the heart from disease. This service is provided free of charge.

TUXCOE submitted a training series grant proposal to NIH's Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health (BIRCWH). Specifically the research topic of interest will be a comprehensive study of CVD in women, including clinical services, epidemiology, behavioral factors, etc.

TUXCOE submitted 2 proposals to NIA concerning CVD and bone health, one of which is pending review by the funding agency.

◆ University of Washington CoE

The CoE is opening a CVD Clinic this summer, run by a Cardiology Fellow.

The CoE has hired a nursing student to create patient education materials for Russian, Latino and Asian patients on CVD and related issues. These materials will be translated and posted on the CoE web site.

The CoE is currently talking to the American Heart Association to see how CVD education can be include in the ROSE (Rural Outreach Student Educator) Project. Currently student-educators are teaching rural residents about osteoporosis.

◆ University of Wisconsin CoE

The Director of Cardiovascular Medicine at UW is a national leader in this field, one of two women division heads of Cardiovascular Medicine at an academic medical center in the US, and gender-specific issues in heart disease are infused through all the clinical programs. She authored a book on Women's Cardiovascular Disease published this past year.

UW CoE Research Director was awarded NIH funding to investigate early determinants of atherosclerotic disease in men and women with type 1 diabetes; this is important because diabetes erases the gender-benefit in heart disease (i.e., women get coronary heart disease a decade later than men unless they have diabetes.)

A Women's Health fellow with the CoE is involved in a clinical trial evaluating the impact of vitamin E and simvastatin on endothelial dysfunction in men and women.

A Postdoctoral fellow with the CoE, is studying metabolic disturbances in a monkey model of polycystic ovarian syndrome, a condition known to be associated with accelerated cardiovascular disease in women.

The CoE collaborated with the Society for Women's Health Research and the International Society for Heart Disease Research on a scientific meeting on Sex and Gender Issues in Cardiovascular Disease in Madison, WI on July 23, 2002.

The CoE Director worked with the Minneapolis GRECC to produce a video conference on Current Concepts in Hormone Replacement Therapy; research reviewed included HRT and cardiovascular disease.

The CoE houses the Madison chapter of the Witness Project, which is a community-based education program around breast and cervical cancer that has begun in the last year to incorporate health education about cardiovascular risk reduction.

The CoE collaborates with the Wisconsin Women's Health Foundation on Women's Health Roundtables around the State of WI; cardiovascular disease is one of the six foci for health education.

Diabetes

◆ Boston University CoE

The CoE clinical practice cares for a population at high risk for diabetes, based upon an estimated prevalence of risk factors, including obesity (20-40%), and low physical activity (70%). All

women are provided with individualized assessment and counseling, and prevention strategies to reduce their risk. Approximately 20% of all visits are diabetes-related.

Reducing Cardiovascular and Diabetes Risk Through Exercise: Joint Northeast Missouri Health Council (CCOE) and Boston University (CoE) Community Outreach Project. The program will enroll women for a 2-year longitudinal follow up program, with the goal of developing an individual exercise program, and then providing follow up to continue to encourage women to incorporate the program into a lifelong behavioral change.

The components of the program include:

- 1) initial training of providers and health educators,
- 2) adapting existing materials for the patient training,
- 3) adapting existing materials for the patient follow up program,
- 4) networking with existing nutrition and exercise programs in the community documenting patient progress.

Diabetes risk reduction, diagnosis, and management in women is a target of the Women's Health Training Institute. In the past 5 years, over 800 health care providers have been trained in Massachusetts in this area.

◆ **University of California at Los Angeles CoE**

The UCLA CoE is a community partner for the FDA Take Time To Care About Diabetes Campaign. During 2002 and 2003, the UCLA CoE will distribute campaign materials to individuals, community organizations, and community clinics, as well as partnering with the regional FDA representative to schedule

presentations on the campaign to the community.

An educational packet on diabetes, *Prescription for Patient Education in Diabetes* includes information on diet, exercise, medications, and complications. See Cardiovascular Disease information above for description of the Iris Cantor-UCLA Women's Health Education & Resource Center Prescription for Patient Education.

◆ **University of California, San Francisco CoE**

UCSF Diabetes Education and Treatment Center provides services for all people with diabetes. The co-location of the Center at the Mount Zion campus provides accessible services to women receiving care at the Women's Health Center.

◆ **MCP Hahnemann (doing business as Drexel University) CoE**

The University curriculum includes comprehensive teaching units on: PCOS and Insulin Resistance, Diabetes Management in an Adolescent Woman, and Obesity and Insulin Resistance

The CoE's community outreach activities include screening migrant Mexican workers for diabetes.

◆ **Harvard Medical School CoE**

Joslin Diabetes Center offers comprehensive care for women with diabetes, including reproductive health care. They also provide community education on diabetes and diabetes prevention.

The HMS Center of Excellence sponsors several diabetes prevention activities including outreach to middle school children and an annual Diabetes Prevention Dinner and Program for

women and their families at risk for diabetes. The program focuses on advice on and demonstration of healthy eating, exercise and risk reduction strategies.

The HMS CoE, through the HMS Fund for Women's Health, is currently supporting the following research projects: "Risk of Diabetic Nephropathy in African American Females" and "Weight, Insulin Omission and Eating Issues in Women with Diabetes."

◆ **University of Illinois at Chicago CoE**

The Maternal Fetal Medicine Gestational Diabetes Clinic is housed in the Center for Women's Health, the CoE clinical care site.

◆ **Indiana University CoE**

Women with diabetes are cared for in the CoE clinical care center. Educational outreach to lay women and professionals concerning diabetes in women is presented frequently, both through conference presentations and at health fairs. The CoE is developing an educational program on diabetes for women who attend the CoE clinic. One of the gynecologists who sees patients in the CoE clinic has a large patient population of women with PCOS and provides dietary and medical intervention to treat their insulin resistance aggressively in an effort to prevent the development of diabetes. Efforts at weight management are targeted to diabetic and pre-diabetic women. The CoE is participating in the HHS initiative on diabetes and women.

◆ **Magee-Womens Hospital CoE**

The Center for Diabetes and Pregnancy at Magee-Womens Hospital provides social services, nutrition counseling, and diabetes education in addition to Maternal-Fetal Medicine consultation to

the CoE for women planning pregnancy, during pregnancy, and postpartum who have underlying diabetes or develop diabetes during pregnancy. Several research projects are in process or under development at the center.

The consumer education class, "Winning by Losing Weight Management," is a 10-session interactive food and fitness program that is offered on site to community members. The goal of the program is the reduction of adult onset diabetes through dietary modification.

◆ **University of Michigan CoE**

A CoE representative is a steering committee member for the UM Minority Health Research Program. The program is based at the UM Medical Center, but operates from a community-based health center in the adjacent city of Ypsilanti, MI. The Ypsilanti health center will serve as a new site for health promotion activities, multidisciplinary clinical services, community-based research activities, and health education. One of the primary foci of the program for the first two years is the prevention and maintenance of diabetes in the local community (disproportionately African-American), so most of the activities from 2002-2004 will have this focus.

◆ **Tulane Xavier Universities of Louisiana**

TUXCOE is participating in a multi-center, NIH-funded Bypass Angioplasty Revascularization Investigation 2 Diabetes Study, which is a 5-year intervention trial in patients with type 2 diabetes. The study has 2 major goals. The first is to determine if early cardiac revascularization provides additional cardiac benefit in diabetic patients that are also receiving optimal diabetes, blood

pressure and cardiac risk factor modification. The second goal of the trial is to determine if insulin sensitizing drugs (metformin or rosiglitazone) provide better cardiovascular outcomes than insulin providing diabetes medications (insulin or sulfonylureas). It is hoped that the study will eventually attempt to examine the etiologies for increased cardiovascular disease in diabetic women.

TUXCOE places great emphasis on diabetes throughout all facets of their health education programs. Examples include dietetic programs such as the "Health Eating, Healthy Women Series", diabetes-specific sessions in the Women Wellness Wednesday Program, the diabetes health module for presentation at various health fairs and events, and a Women's Endocrinology Clinic.

◆ University of Washington CoE

The CoE will work with the University of Washington Medical Center (UWMC) Patient & Family Education Services and a UWMC interpreter about creating a Diabetes Care Binder, based on the Cancer Care Binder currently in use. This binder at first will be aimed at Latino patients to help them manage diabetes.

The CoE has posted a diabetes case module for medical professionals on the web site. It can be found at <http://depts.washington.edu/uwcoe/profed/diabetes/index.html>.

◆ University of Wisconsin CoE

The CoE Co-Director is currently acting director of the Maternal Fetal Medicine Division of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, which runs a high-risk pregnancy clinic where pregnant women with diabetes receive comprehensive, state of the art care.

The CoE Research Director heads the WI Diabetes Registry and is investigating bone mineral density in type 1 diabetic women.

The CoE Center Director's research found that diabetes was significantly increased in women and men who reported childhood physical abuse. Data was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Gerontological Society of America in November 2001.

Two postdoctoral fellows are studying different aspects of obesity (one the impact of dietary fat on body composition and the other a clinical trial of a treatment for obesity) – this is relevant to diabetes because the vast majority of type 2 diabetes is related to obesity.

CoE affiliate researchers with NIH funding are investigating different aspects of placental metabolism in women with diabetes.

At the monthly CoE Women's Health Forum, one of the topics in 2002 was Management of Diabetes in Pregnancy. This was presented by one of the CoE Women's Health Fellows.

One of the modules in the curriculum for the Internal Medicine Residents for the coming year will be Women's Health and Diabetes. It will emphasize the need to adjust insulin across the menstrual cycle, issues with young women who have diabetes and eating disorders, and the interaction of diabetes and heart disease in women.

A parish nurse affiliated with the CoE developed a diabetes support group at a local church.

One of the CoE Women's Health Fellows will be specializing in Endocrinology; her training includes considerable work in diabetes

management and she is studying polycystic ovarian syndrome, which is associated with diabetes.

Cancer

◆ Boston University CoE

The CoE clinical practice provides comprehensive cancer screening and prevention services, including clinical screening examination of the pelvis, breast, and skin. Mammography, cervical cytology, colon cancer screening tests, smoking cessation counseling and management, are included for all patients.

The clinical program incorporates the Breast Health Center into the comprehensive care model, making services easily accessible to the patient population. Made possible through the Avon Breast Health Initiative, the BU CoE has expanded breast health services provided at the Breast Health Center at the Women's Health Group.

In the first 15 months of the Initiative, the Breast Health Center provided clinical preventive and diagnostic services to 1,018 women. Rates of timely diagnostic care increased from 64% in January – June 2000, to 83% from March 2001—January 2002. This 19% increase in timely diagnostic care reflects the benefit of the multidisciplinary program that the BU CoE has established through the Initiative.

The breast screening initiatives in the CoE have leveraged dollars from a number of sources to promote screening for both breast and cervical cancer. These include awards from the Komen Foundation, Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Department of Public Health.

The CoE has leveraged \$460,000 over 2 years from the Avon Foundation to support breast cancer services for the clinic's population of underserved women, and to provide these services within the context of comprehensive primary care. This model of care allows the CoE to address in a comprehensive fashion the diagnostic and management skills towards their patients' breast problems, while also being able to address comprehensive health needs. The population of women in need of breast screening services are also at high risk for unrecognized diabetes and cardiovascular disease. This model allows for the provision of specialty care for all conditions in an efficient and organized fashion.

The BU CoE is a member of the Boston REACH 2010 coalition to eliminate breast and cervical cancer disparities among African American women.

Inadequate follow-up rates for pap smears and breast care are seen from the following data collection:

Pap smears: In a low income, predominantly minority population, the rate of follow-up for abnormal pap smears was low, only 53%. Women 30 years or older were more likely to receive follow-up than women younger than 30. Race, source of referral, insurance status, and cervical abnormality were not associated with follow-up rates. Even though race was not associated with a difference in follow-up rates in this sample, it is possible that such a difference exists in a more economically diverse population. Community-based interventions to increase follow-up rates in young women may be of benefit.

Breast abnormalities: In this referral group of predominantly low-

income minority women, 36% did not adhere to appropriate follow-up care for a breast abnormality. Younger age, lack of private health insurance, and neighborhood health center referral were associated with inadequate follow-up. These factors may contribute to the observed disparities in breast cancer outcomes of African American women.

Over a 5-year period, the BU CoE affiliated researchers will implement an exercise intervention and evaluate its effects on psychological distress, fitness, body composition, and QOL among stage I and II breast cancer patients. The researchers will also evaluate the pathways which may mediate exercise effects on quality of life (QOL) and assess exercise adherence factors. Women (N = 140) drawn from Boston University Medical Center's Women's Health Group and the surrounding communities will be randomly assigned to either a 1-year exercise intervention or a control condition with assessments at baseline, 3, 6, and 12 months. Assessments will consist of a graded exercise test assessing cardiovascular fitness, body composition analysis, strength testing, and a psychosocial survey assessing psychological distress and QOL for which women will be compensated \$40 per assessment.

The intervention will also utilize cognitive-behavioral techniques such as contingency planning, goal setting, and self-monitoring to promote exercise adherence. The education-standard of care control group will be provided with general information regarding healthy lifestyle management (i.e., effects of exercise, diet, and stress management), but will not receive a formal exercise prescription nor undergo the intervention experience in solidifying and acting on this information. Beyond comprehensively testing the efficacy of a low cost exercise intervention to promote physical and mental health, the project will also generate information which may be

useful for promoting exercise among persons of low income who are at relatively greater risk for cancer mortality.

The BU CoE is involved in a study to research the Health Care Needs of Sexual Minority Women with Breast Cancer. This study explores the hypothesis that women's adjustment to breast cancer is related to the quality of their social support resources. The proposed scientific behavioral study of sexual minority women with breast cancer and their "trusted others" to whom they turn for support will enable the researchers at BU to accomplish three specific aims:

- Examine sexual minority women's perceptions of breast cancer care in relation to their sexual orientation.
- Determine the roles of sexual minority women's trusted others and their perspective of breast cancer care.
- Examine factors associated with positive adjustment to breast cancer in sexual minority women with breast cancer.

This novel approach to breast cancer care will adopt a qualitative retrospective research strategy of sexual minority women with breast cancer, including those of different race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status, and their trusted others.

The CoE collaborated with a multi-disciplinary team on research of cervical cancer screening rates in Haitian communities in the Greater Boston area. Haitian women had a high rate of cervical cancer screening, similar to other immigrants and non-immigrants who live in the same neighborhoods. The differences in cervical cancer incidence and outcomes in women of different races/ethnicities may be explained by differences in health care delivery

and health care beliefs and practices. Interventions designed to increase Pap smear rates should target women at highest risk rather than women of specific races/ethnicities.

In partnership with Brandeis University, members of the BU CoE are involved in a project, *Reducing Racial Disparities in Cancer* by helping the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) design a Medicare demonstration to reduce racial/ethnic disparities in cancer.

Members from the BU CoE, in collaboration with the Schneider Institute for Health Policy (SIHP), are involved on a project, *Reducing Racial Disparities in Cancer* to help the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) design a Medicare demonstration to reduce racial/ethnic disparities in cancer. SIHP is particularly interested in learning about programs and initiatives including:

- Ongoing primary prevention programs addressing cancer risk factors such as smoking, diet, exercise, alcohol use, and weight management that serve elders of color (African American, Latino, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and American Indian/Alaskan Natives);
- Ongoing programs to increase use of cancer screening for breast, prostate, colorectal, and other cancers that serve elders of color (African American, Latino, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and American Indian/Alaskan Natives);
- Media and other social marketing and community-level programs aimed at elders of color and intended to promote positive lifestyle choices for primary prevention and participation in screening efforts;

- Interventions in health care systems, provider organizations, and program oversight to reduce racial/ethnic disparities in access to high quality cancer prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up;
- Programs intended to increase the cultural competence and/or cultural humility of health care practitioners and others involved in cancer primary prevention or health services for elders of color and communities of color more generally.

The BU researchers will conduct a cross-sectional study of women presenting for medical services at the Women's Health Group, where 38% of patients are African American. The main outcomes of interest are measurements of subjective perception of cancer risk and differences between subjective and objective assessment of risk. The BU CoE will correlate outcome variables with reported screening practices, stratified by race, to determine association of risk perception and screening behavior by race.

The CoE completed a focus group analysis study on the attitudes of primary care physicians towards cancer prevention trials. Recruitment to cancer prevention trials requires a joint effort from specialists and primary care providers. This is particularly true for successful recruitment of low-income and minority women, who tend to be underrepresented in clinical trials. The BU CoE researchers therefore conducted a focus group with seven Boston-based primary care providers from a variety of practice settings, serving low-income and minority women. The focus group was used to discuss knowledge, attitudes and beliefs regarding primary care providers' role in recruitment to prevention trials in general and to the Breast Cancer Prevention Trial (BCPT) in particular. Investigators conducting cancer prevention trials must address the concerns of primary care physicians to optimize recruitment of

subjects—especially low-income and minority women—into trials.

The CoE completed an evaluation study to find ways to improve follow up care to minority women with breast abnormalities. Significant delays in evaluating abnormal breast screening studies may contribute to racial disparities in breast cancer outcomes. More intensive case coordination, not routinely covered by health insurance, is necessary to ensure adequate follow-up of at-risk populations.

The CoE has been working to improve mammography screening rates in Haitian neighborhoods in the Greater Boston Area. Women living in Haitian neighborhoods reported high rates of mammography possibly due to outreach and free screening available to Massachusetts' women. Future efforts in understanding the difference in mortality and morbidity of breast cancer in this population may need to focus on follow-up and therapy. The results will help identify the sub-group of women at higher risk for not receiving a mammogram, and develop effective intervention focused both on mammogram screening, follow-up, and therapy.

Women living in Haitian neighborhoods reported high rates of mammography, possibly owing to outreach and free screening available to Massachusetts women. Haitians and other minority groups of women had lower screening rates compared to White women. Women without a provider's recommendation or discussion about mammogram, who had not had a breast-self exam in the past two years, and who has not heard of mammogram had lower mammogram use. Campaigns to promote mammography should address culturally tailored health education if they are to attract more women of color.

The CoE studied inadequate follow-up of breast abnormalities in low-income women. In this referral group of predominantly low-income minority women, 36% did not have adequate follow-up for a breast abnormality. Younger age, lack of private health insurance, and neighborhood health center referral were associated with inadequate follow-up. These factors may contribute to the observed disparities in breast cancer outcomes of African American women.

The role of primary care physicians (PCPs) in cancer prevention trials was studied by the CoE. PCPs are unlikely to encourage enrollment of 80-year-old women to a breast cancer prevention trial (BCPT). Additionally, PCPs who perceive a loss of patient trust, a loss of control in patient care, or are less knowledgeable about a BCPT are less likely to enroll their patients in one. Thus, trial investigators must not only educate PCPs about cancer prevention trials, but work to ensure a continued, strong PCP-patient relationship if successful recruitment is to be achieved.

The Clinical Training Institute has over the past 5 years trained over 5000 health providers on cancer prevention issues, including 350 providers receiving extensive clinical training using standardized patients.

Outreach assistance is provided at Boston Medical Center and 15 affiliated community health centers to increase the number of low-income and minority women accessing screening services, follow-up diagnostic care and to educate women about participation in clinical trials. This is conducted by the outreach/case coordinators through the Women's Health Network (WHN), the Avon initiative and specifically to African American women through the REACH Boston 2010 case coordinator.

◆ **University of California at Los Angeles CoE**

Breast Cancer Packet for Newly Diagnosed Women: This educational resource kit was developed in partnership between two UCLA CoE components, the Iris Cantor-UCLA Women's Health Education & Resource Center and the Ted Mann Family Resource Center to provide materials to women who have recently received a diagnosis of breast cancer. Materials included provide information on breast cancer treatment issues, nutritional information, coping strategies, family support, and resources. The Packet is currently utilized within oncology areas at UCLA as well as in the UCLA Community Cancer Clinics. *Prescription for Patient Education Cancer Prevention Packet:* Educational packet on cancer prevention including information on screenings, nutrition, and lifestyle factors such as smoking and sun exposure.

Ted Mann Family Resource Center: A component of the UCLA CoE, the Ted Mann Family Resource Center provides many programs that educate and support cancer patients and their families, including a lecture series, newsletter, support groups, educational materials, and a retail boutique specializing in products for patients who have physical appearance changes caused by cancers and their treatments.

LA County Office of Women's Health Cervical Cancer Screening Initiative: The UCLA CoE is a community partner for the LA County Office of Women's Health Cervical Cancer Screening Initiative, a program to provide cervical cancer screening and education to underserved communities.

Cervical Cancer Handbook for Vietnamese Women: This UCLA CoE developed Handbook, currently nearing the final stages of development, is written in Vietnamese and will raise awareness of

cervical cancer and promote screening for this population. Distribution in 2003 will target organizations that serve the Vietnamese community. It will also be used by the LA County Office of Women's Health as a resource for their Cervical Cancer Screening Initiative.

In data obtained in 1998, 33% of Asian American women reported not having had a Pap test within the past three years. Vietnamese women in California are only half as likely as women in the general population to have had cervical cancer screening. Studies have shown that Vietnamese women are unfamiliar with the purpose and procedure of cervical cancer screening due to linguistic and cultural barriers, demonstrating a significant need for education targeted to this community.

Women's Health Forum 2002: This UCLA CoE- sponsored event will bring together community partners, legislators, and University of California dignitaries to highlight three women's health issues, while raising awareness of the concept of comprehensive women's health and the UCLA CoE. A panel of faculty experts will address the issues of heart disease, mammography, and domestic violence. The Forum will be held in October 2002 and is expected to become an annual event.

Breast Health Monthly Reminder Stickers: These stickers remind women to do their monthly self-exam and schedule an appointment for their mammogram and annual exam. Stickers are widely used by community organizations for health fairs and other events

◆ **University of California, San Francisco CoE**

The UCSF nationally designated Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Carol Franc Buck Breast Care Center are flagship centers for breast cancer research, education, and clinical care. The Carol Franc Buck Breast Care Center has led several initiatives to improve breast cancer screening and follow-up, in addition to a program for women classified as being high risk of developing breast cancer.

The Bay Area Breast Cancer Translational Research Program is a Specialized Program of Research Excellence (SPORE) sponsored by the National Cancer Institute with the goal of improving diagnosis and therapy of breast cancer.

The Radiation Oncology Department offers technologically advanced systems for the management of abnormal Pap smears and in the treatment of women with ovarian cancer and other gynecologic malignancies.

The Dysplasia Clinic offers care for women and men with abnormal Pap smears, genital warts, vulva disease/pain, and anogenital dysplasia.

The Gyn Oncology Program meets the needs of patients with cancers of the reproductive system. Care is coordinated with the Breast Care Center to provide women with breast cancer additional gynecologic services.

◆ **MCP Hahnemann University (doing business as Drexel University) CoE**

The University curriculum provides comprehensive teaching units

on: Endometrial Cancer, Breast Cancer and a Women's Health Seminar Series. The series includes: End of Life and Cancer: Analysis of Health Care, Trigger Video: HBO Production "Wit". In addition Women's Health Day Focus Topic is Women with Cancer.

◆ **Harvard Medical School CoE**

The Gillette Centers for Women's Cancers are located at two sites within the HMS CoE: the Dana Farber Cancer Institute/Brigham and Women's Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital. The Gillette Centers were opened in November 1997 to provide multidisciplinary care to breast and gynecological cancer patients. The Dana Farber Cancer Institute established a new clinic dedicated to supporting survivors of women's cancers. The clinic will provide the medical, psychological and lifestyle-based support to manage the long-term consequences of surgery, chemotherapy or radiation for patients with a history of breast or gynecological cancers.

The HMS Center of Excellence is a member of the REACH Boston 2010 Breast and Cervical Cancer Coalition; a coalition focused on eliminating breast and cervical cancer disparities among black women. This program focuses on education, outreach, education and provider training to address systemic factors that contribute to disparities. The CoE Center Director is responsible for the overall evaluation of this five-year project.

As part of its efforts to develop Women's Health Guidelines, Brigham and Women's Hospital developed guideline on Cervical Cancer Screening and Breast Health. The HMS CoE provided assistance to ensure the patient materials are culturally appropriate.

The HMS CoE , through the HMS Fund for Women's Health, is currently supporting the following research projects:

- “Matrix Metalloproteinases in Women with Breast Cancer: Urinary Excretion and Signaling Pathways,”
- “Is Mental Illness a Barrier to Early Detection of Breast Cancer?”
- “Analysis of Breast Carcinomas Using Single Nucleotide Polymorphism Microassays”
- “Caring for Women at the End of Life: The Nature and Effects of Caregiving Relationships for Older Women with Late Stage Cancer.”

◆ University of Illinois at Chicago CoE

In the interests of reaching women at the neighborhood level, the CoE has begun an outreach project designed to provide breast cancer information through beauty salons in Austin, a mainly African-American area of Chicago. The project works to establish mutually beneficial partnerships among service providers and beauty salons to provide health education, personal risk assessment, referrals for health screening, and access to comprehensive medical services at the UIC Medical Center.

During Breast Cancer Awareness month nurses from UIC's Oncology Department offered free breast cancer risk assessments at the University of Illinois Hospital.

CoE research committee members and collaborators in the Department of Biopharmaceutical Sciences has several grants in the area of breast cancer: 1) (NCI/NIH) Microdetection assay for the

drug resistant breast tumors: study to determine whether tumor cells from therapy-resistant patients display coordinate expression of drug-resistance genes that can be detected by their molecular and cellular structures; 2) (DOD) Role of Drug-induced Fas Ligand Expression in Breast Tumor Progression: project to examine novel factors other than induction of drug resistance genes that may contribute to chemotherapy failure, 3) (US Army's Medical Research and Material Command) breast cancer detection funded ; 4) (US Department of Veterans Affairs) breast cancer detection; 5) (Susan Komen Foundation) Use of liposomes for drug delivery in breast cancer treatment.

A CoE research collaborator in the Department of Medicinal Chemistry and Pharmacognosy is funded by an NIH program grant to study chemoprevention of cancer including breast cancer (Natural Inhibitors or Carcinogenesis) and funding by the Susan Komen Foundation for research in the area of breast cancer.

A CoE research collaborator in the College of Nursing is funded by NCI/NIH to determine the prevalence of long-term effects of cancer and describe their impact on the quality of life and cancer screening behavior of African Americans.

◆ Indiana University CoE

The IU CoE clinic is home to the Breast Clinic at Wishard Memorial Hospital, which provides all services involving breast cancer, from routine screening mammography to surgery. Two cancer support groups, composed of inner-city women including those of color, are held weekly in the CoE clinic and are very successful and popular.

A Bilingual Outreach Coordinator provides educational

information and help navigating the system to Hispanic women in the community, through presentations at community centers, churches, and on Hispanic radio and TV.

The CoE is collaborating closely with the IU Cancer Center and the Cancer Information Service coordinator (this individual covers Indiana and Michigan and is based at IU) to provide educational outreach to all women throughout the city for all forms of cancer and to educate women on the importance and value of participating in clinical trials for cancer.

The CoE offers smoking cessation programs targeted to women and girls, including the CoE Evaluation Director's recently completed award-winning "Escape from Nicotinia," a CD-ROM game for girls in the 8-15 age group.

The CoE Research Director has developed CD-ROM and video tools to educate African American women on the need for screening mammograms and what to expect. The CoE has just completed a Spanish language video to bring the same messages to Hispanic women.

The Cancer Center is co-sponsoring the funding of a pilot research grant on breast cancer in a current proposal for pilot projects. The CoE collaborates with Ovar'Coming Together, which provides our students, staff, and faculty with information on ovarian cancer from the standpoint of victims, survivors, and their families.

◆ Magee-Womens Hospital CoE

A major focus of the Magee Women's Cancer Program is ovarian cancer, which is the most common gynecologic cancer and the fifth

leading cause of cancer-related death in the US. The CoE affiliated Ovarian Cancer Screening Center combines the latest medical and scientific knowledge with the most advanced surveillance and diagnostic methods.

The benchmarking project, led by the CoE administrative director, is developing a plan for ensuring that high quality breast cancer treatment is available to women who obtain care anywhere throughout the systems' network of community and specialty hospitals. A set of quality indicators will be developed based on the literature and expert opinion, use cancer registry and medical records data to establish a baseline performance level for the system as a whole and for comparing larger and smaller hospitals within the system, and make recommendations for procedures for ongoing monitoring of key indicators and for targeted quality improvement activities.

A bi-monthly "Woman's Cancer Case Presentation" publication focusing on collaborative strategies will be disseminated to participating professionals as a post-activity educational tool. The publication will be supported by the Public Relation and Marketing Department and will be available on the Magee Web site and by e-mail.

Fighting Spirit is an on line publication that celebrates, promotes, and instills the "fighting spirit" to newly diagnosed patients, patients undergoing treatment, survivors, and family members. The idea for this concept was incubated at Carnegie Mellon University and Magee to insure that the publication has clear and concise explanations of breast cancer-related issues, research, treatment options and survivorship. The project is supported by a CoE telemedicine grant.

The CoE telemedicine grant included the Multi-Institution Women's Cancer Tumor Board project that uses videoconferencing and electronic linkages to establish liaisons with health professionals for multidisciplinary collaboration in women's cancer care. Management decisions about women's breast and gynecologic cancer treatment are complex and require collaboration among multiple specialists including radiologists, pathologists, and surgeons.

Health Advocacy for New Americans (HANA) has been a program that the Magee CoE has been involved with since February 1996 to increase breast cancer awareness in the Russian speaking Pittsburgh community and this year expanded to cervical cancer and wellness in general including cardiovascular health and diabetes. Success of the program was based on the retention of the participants, language accessibility with free services for interpreters, and educational literature in Russian.

◆ University of Michigan CoE

The majority of activities and initiatives related to cancer are coordinated by the UM Comprehensive Cancer Center, a member of the UM CoE family. The UM CoE itself assists the Cancer Center by maintaining a library of women-specific cancer education materials, teaching breast self-exam in the Women's Health Resource Center, distributing self-exam instruction cards, and coordinating cancer education outreach events and programs.

◆ University of Puerto Rico CoE

The Multidimensional Empowerment Intervention Model for Women Living with Breast Cancer study is specifically designed for women with breast cancer to measure its impact on short and

long term psychosocial, immune functions, and lifestyle variables on the 5 year survival. The study seeks to establish a cohort of women with breast cancer to be followed longitudinally. It is a project sponsored by the CoE Disparities in Women's Health activity with funds from the Research Centers for Minority Institutions Program. The CoE assists with health education, outreach programs, and clinical/research collaboration.

◆ Tulane Xavier Universities of Louisiana

In addition to running a Breast Health Clinic as part of the TWHCC, TUXCOE is involved with the Tulane Cancer Center in a weekly research series on a variety of research topics including breast cancer and reproductive cancers. This series is co-chaired by the TUXCOE Leadership Core Director. Additionally, the Tulane Continuing Education Department sponsors a series of conferences in Women's Health and conferences with a significant portion of the schedule dedicated to Women's Health.

TUXCOE, in collaboration with the Louisiana Office of Public Health, has submitted a grant to MCHB/HRSA to create a LA Comprehensive Women's Health Initiative to ensure preventive health care for women, both insured and uninsured, throughout the state, focusing on breast and cervical cancer screenings in addition to CVD and diabetes.

◆ University of Washington CoE

Planning for the Breast Health Service Line is ongoing. The Seattle Cancer Care Alliance (SCCA) is up and running. See the web site at <http://www.seattlecca.org>.

Last year the UW hosted the Schick Xtreme III Tennis Challenge and raised \$1.4 million for research. See the web site at <http://www.uwbreastcare.org/>.

◆ University of Wisconsin CoE

A CoE affiliated researcher directs multiple clinical trials in lung cancer and emphasizes special issues related to women with lung cancer. For example, she is studying women's preferences for chemotherapy of equal efficacy if one is less likely to result in hair loss.

A member of the CoE Research team, directs an NIH-funded research program investigating the basic biology of prolactin in mammary tissue; this work may lead to a new class of drugs for the treatment of breast cancer.

UW CoE partners with the Wisconsin Women's Health Foundation in awarding the Judith Stitt Woman Faculty Scholar Award; the first award given in 2000 supported a study on the susceptibility of certain genetic profiles to breast cancer given certain environmental exposures. The second award given in 2002 will support research on mammography and MRI detection of breast cancer.

The Fourth Annual Elizabeth Karlin Women's Health Conference, "The Real Scoop on Mammography: Evidence, Politics, Practice," will be held November, 2002. This conference is produced annually by the CoE.

One of the 12-module curriculum for the Internal Medicine Residents (developed and maintained by CoE faculty and fellows) is on management of a breast mass.

The UW CoE houses the Witness Project, a community-based health education program for African American women focusing on breast and cervical cancer screening.

The CoE's Center Director and Co-Director collaborated with a CoE affiliated researcher to found the Association for Research in Women's Lung Cancer, which has now had two meetings.

HIV/AIDS

◆ Boston University CoE

The Women's Health Group (clinical care providers for the CoE) provides HIV risk assessment for all patients, pre-and post-testing counseling and testing. In addition the Group coordinates care of all HIV positive patients with Boston Medical Center's Diagnostic Evaluation Unit (DEU). The DEU is a team-oriented, multidisciplinary clinic for people with HIV infection who do not have primary care physicians. The goal of the clinic is to provide comprehensive evaluation, staging, and triage to primary care physicians for these individuals. The DEU provides consultation and collaboration with the CoE on all patients who are HIV positive.

The CoE participates with the RISE Program (Raising Infants in Secure Environments), a randomized controlled study funded by the Casey Family Foundation. Project RISE provides substance abuse and mental health services to parents and their infants in a family-focused treatment model that integrates a broad range of systems and services. The BU CoE has worked collaboratively to develop a system to refer mothers after postpartum visits for primary care.

◆ University of California at Los Angeles CoE

Iris Cantor-UCLA Women's Health Education & Resource Center materials: The IC-WHERC provides extensive consumer education materials on HIV/AIDS, including information on prevention, treatments, HIV during pregnancy, social support for persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, and a listing of free and low cost testing sites within the greater Los Angeles area. *Prescription for Patient Education: HIV/AIDS packet:* This packet contains educational materials on HIV/AIDS including treatment, support, and nutritional issues.

◆ University of California, San Francisco CoE

UCSF Women's and Children's Specialty HIV Program provides culturally sensitive care for HIV-infected women and their children. Women and their children receive care from a multi-disciplinary staff comprised of experts in infectious disease, obstetrics, gynecology, pediatrics, psychology, nutrition, pharmacy, and social work. Women have the opportunity to enroll in clinical trials and have access to extensive legal and housing services.

◆ Drexel University CoE

"Listen Little Sister": In academic year 2001 – 2002, this grant enabled the development and implementation of a successful feasibility study that was designed to assess if a newly created intervention could promote healthier lifestyle behaviors and prevent acquisition of STI's and HIV in pre-teen girls, while providing a women's health education program for their mothers. There were a total of 125 participants including community volunteers who were trained as co-facilitators in this all-day Health Fair / Workshop. An abstract of this program was accepted at the International AIDS Conference in Barcelona, Spain, 2002.

Pediatric HIV: Collaboration with the Family Clinic of St. Christopher's Hospital for Children on Programming for affected and infected children and their families. Programming includes support of gay teen outreach initiatives and sexual negotiation interventions.

The University curriculum includes comprehensive teaching units on: High Risk Adolescent Practice, Anticipatory Guidance and the Adolescent, and the Elderly and Sexually Transmitted Disease Screening.

The CoE has received a grant to develop a model for a comprehensive sexual health curriculum. This grant is enabling us to develop and incorporate curriculum so that health professionals can more effectively screen for / prevent acquisition of STI's and HIV. The end product will be a model curriculum that can be used by other medical schools which seek to address sexual health education as part of a comprehensive health care delivery approach.

◆ Harvard Medical School CoE

The HMS Center of Excellence Committee to Advance the Health of Minority and other Underrepresented Women includes representation from Fenway Community Health Center, which provides care to the largest number of women with HIV/AIDS in the city of Boston. The Director Of Women's Health at Fenway is working with the Center of Excellence to describe the ideal model of care for women; one that would be inclusive of women at risk for and with HIV disease.

The HMS Center of Excellence, through the HMS Fund for Women, is supporting a research project "The Role of

Organizational, Clinic and Provider Characteristics in Quality of Care for Women with HIV/AIDS.”

◆ **University of Illinois at Chicago CoE**

A CoE research collaborator in the Department of Pharmacy Practice is working with the CORE Center on an HIV/AIDS vaccine and with the CDC on the training of pharmacists to educate HIV/AIDS patients in central US.

A CoE research collaborator in the College of Nursing has two HIV/AIDS research projects: 1) Mother/Daughter HIV Risk Reduction Intervention (NIH/NIMH) to examine over a two-year period the effectiveness of Mother/Daughter HIV Risk Reduction Intervention in increasing daughters' self-reported HIV risk reduction behavior; 2) STD Prevention for at Risk African American Women to test the effectiveness of a 12-month intervention to prevent STD reinfections among young, low-income African American women; test for wider dissemination a model of an effective HIV prevention intervention in Malawi, one of the poorest countries in Africa, where one in seven adults is HIV positive.

◆ **Indiana University CoE**

A Women's HIV/AIDS clinic at IU Hospital is a satellite clinical care center of the CoE. The CoE Bilingual Outreach Coordinator will be providing outreach to the Hispanic community to educate women about HIV/AIDS/STDs and about the benefits of clinical trials. The CoE is developing a CD-ROM this summer on HIV/STDs targeting young women (in English and Spanish) that should be ready for “launch” by the end of August. A new collaborative project beginning at the CoE's “colleague” institution, Moi University of the Health Sciences in Eldoret, Kenya, will

target the issues of stigma surrounding the diagnosis of HIV/AIDS and that will raise community awareness and tolerance.

◆ **Magee Womens Hospital CoE**

CoE affiliated physicians provide specialty gynecologic care for HIV-infected women in Pittsburgh. Women with HIV/AIDS have greater numbers of invasive infectious gynecologic conditions such as pelvic inflammatory disease and progressive human papilloma virus.

Research led by the Magee CoE Center Director focuses on STD/HIV prevention through the development and testing of topical microbicides. These agents can be used to protect women from HIV during sexual intercourse.

◆ **University of Michigan CoE**

The CoE, collaborates with community organizations who do focus on HIV/AIDS such as the HIV/AIDS Resource Center and Ozone House, a local shelter and day program for teens at risk and runaways. The collaboration consists of promoting activities, partnering on grant submissions, supplying Ozone with a full library of health education materials that are teen-specific, and funding teen outreach programs.

◆ **University of Puerto Rico CoE**

The Maternal Infants Studies Center (CEMI) provides multidisciplinary medical services to HIV+ and HIV- women participates in HIV clinical research related to women, and trains health care professionals. Current projects under development include HIV vaccines and HIV drug combinations for women and

men. The CoE assists with health education, outreach programs, and clinical/research collaboration.

The CoE collaborates with Schools and Programs of the Medical Sciences Campus in the organization and presentation of conferences and seminars for continuing education. The most recent conference is the "Sexual and Reproductive Health: Challenges in the Face of HIV/AIDS" Conference. This activity presented HIV/AIDS related issues such as epidemiology of the disease, reproductive rights, legal and ethical issues, domestic violence, prevention, sexuality, family planning, living with HIV, and HIV and the elderly. The speakers included medical and legal professionals, as well as educators. The CoE medical consultant was a speaker on domestic violence and HIV risks and the CoE Center Director was moderator of the plenary sessions. Other CME conferences presented by or in which the CoE actively participated include topics on domestic violence, cancer, cardiovascular disease, depression, diabetes, among others.

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May 2003**

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