Spring Greetings!

This issue of the Healthy Lives, Healthy Communities Newsletter brings a number of changes.

First, after more than 30 years at Fred Hutch, I am easing into retirement. Much of this is planned to happen with the closing of the Community Networks Program Center (CNPC) grant. Although I will still have a minimal presence at Fred Hutch, I will be spending more time in Vancouver, Canada with my family.

Second, as the CNPC grant ends, I would like to thank all of the community advisory board (CAB) members for working with us for the past many years. We are planning two events to commemorate our success. We will have a final CAB meeting on April 21st where we will acquaint you with a summary of all of the accomplishments the CAB has made. We are also planning a meeting with decision-makers, clinic systems, and community-organizations to discuss the importance of continuing health disparities work in the Valley on May 12th. More details will follow on those.

These announcements do not mean Fred Hutch is leaving the Valley. Dr. Linda Ko from Fred Hutch has submitted a grant to continue the work on youth obesity in the Valley. She is also working with Dr. Adam Drewnowski from the University of Washington on a study on diet in the Valley. In addition, many of you provided letters of support to Dr. Marian Neuhouser and I for a large project on chronic diseases in the Valley; we will hear about that project in early summer. Dr. Rachel Ceballos continues the Spanish-language cancer support groups, and has also submitted a grant proposal for diabetes support groups.

So, although my presence will be diminishing, we look forward to many years of support on health disparities research in the Valley. I give my heartfelt thanks to all of you—none of this would have been possible without your participation and guidance.

Thank you for all you do!

Sincerely,

Beti Thompson, PhD
Through our Education & Outreach projects, we strive to strengthen existing partnerships with communities, providers and systems of care to conduct health promotion and education activities to increase awareness and knowledge to reduce the burden of cancer and other diseases.

Cervical Cancer Educational Materials Project:
Although cervical cancer incidence rates have declined 45% and mortality rates have declined 49% in the U.S. since 1980, this preventable disease remains a serious health threat. Incidence rates in Hispanic and American Indian/Alaska Native women are higher than in women from other racial/ethnic groups. Cervical cancer mortality and incidence rates also vary with socioeconomic status and geographic location.

Researchers have identified certain types of human papillomavirus (HPV) that are transmitted through sexual contact as the cause of essentially all cervical cancers. Cervical cancer is preventable and curable if detected early. Important strategies to reduce cervical cancer deaths include screening with the Pap test, or with both the Pap test and a DNA test for HPV (cotesting). Another strategy is the use of the HPV vaccine to prevent infection with the HPV types that cause the most cervical cancers.

In order to help women in the Yakima Valley gain an understanding about HPV and its relation to cervical cancer, we have been working on a project to develop culturally relevant educational materials. We conducted focus groups with community providers and then conducted focus groups with women in the community to learn about gaps and barriers in cervical cancer information. We used this information to guide the content development for three different educational materials about cervical cancer prevention.

Between January and February, we conducted a randomized control trial with 160 women to test the best method for increasing knowledge and awareness about cervical cancer prevention. Women were randomized to review one of the following materials: 1) fotonovela, 2) radionovela, 3) short video, and 4) fact sheet about flu vaccine (control arm).

We are currently working on data entry and analysis. Stay tuned for results in the coming months!

RESEARCH PROJECT UPDATES
Through our Research projects, our goal is to understand why health disparities exist, help determine the precursors to chronic diseases, and build the capacity of community-based researchers to investigate, educate, and treat local populations in order to improve early detection and survival rates.

Cervical Cancer Screening Project:
In partnership with the Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic (YVFWC) and the Breast, Cervical, and Colon Health Program (BCCHP), we were able to recruit 443 women who have not had a Pap test in over 3 years to a research study to increase cervical cancer screening.

The purpose of the study was to learn which type of intervention would be most successful at encouraging women to have their Pap test. Each woman was randomly assigned into one of three intervention arms: (usual care; N=147) the low intensity (video) intervention arm (N=150); or the high intensity (video + promotora) intervention arm (N=146).

All of the data have been collected and analyzed and we learned that the culturally tailored, home-based promotora-led intervention was most successful at encouraging women to receive cervical cancer screening. The key components of the successful intervention,
as identified by study participants, were the use of promotoras, use of Spanish language, and that the promotora went to the participants’ home to complete the educational intervention.

**Health Fair Pilot Project:**

In the last issue of the newsletter, we gave you some background information on the Health Fair Pilot Project. We have now completed data collection and have started to review data before we begin data analysis.

The purpose of the project was to test the effectiveness of community health fairs on cancer knowledge and screening behaviors. It has also been a test to see how many participants (Hispanic and non-Hispanic whites) we could keep as active participants throughout the three-year study. Each year baseline and follow-up surveys were collected and health fairs were completed in the intervention county only.

Although we don’t have results to share with you yet, we are very excited to report that Sunnyside Fred Hutch staff recruited a total of 499 participants. At the end of Year 1, 370 participants completed both baseline and follow-up; at the end of Year 2, 309 participants completed baseline and follow-up; and at the end of Year 3, 293 participants had completed baseline and follow-up surveys for all three years. That is a 79% retention rate! This speaks to the determination and persistence of our Sunnyside Fred Hutch staff and the high level of interest in participating in research among our community members!

**For Healthy Kids! Pesticides Exposure Project:**

A total of 100 families (60 farm worker families and 40 non-farm worker families) participated in pesticide exposure study to learn more about how people are exposed to pesticides and other chemicals during different agricultural seasons. Last summer we were able to re-contact 91 of the 100 families to provide them with their personal results from the study. Their responses to receiving their individual levels of pesticide exposure was overwhelmingly positive. We are now preparing to call the 91 families we met with this summer to invite them to an informational forum to learn about the latest changes in pesticide usage, training, and exposure in the Yakima Valley. Speakers from the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture will be giving two short presentations to the families who attend the informational forum.

**Developing & Validating a Dietary Instrument for Latinos:**

We know that dietary patterns are important in characterizing behavioral risks for chronic diseases but no one dietary survey captures diets across all ethnic groups. Dietary surveys currently being used are generally based on traditionally non-Hispanic White diets. In this study we proposed developing and testing a culturally tailored dietary survey to accurately capture foods consumed by Latinos. After 15 one-on-one interviews, we drafted our first Latino dietary survey. A total of 10 adults were recruited for the first test run of the survey. The participants completed the survey then a 4-day food record. The survey was compared to the 4-day food record to test if foods reported by participants on the survey were actually eaten during a 4-day period (including weekdays & weekend days). This process was completed three times (among 20 families); each time tweaking the survey to include foods that were missing and removing foods that were never eaten by the families. The second version of the survey closely matched the foods being reported on the 4-day food record (less than 10% incongruence). After a few more tweaks, the third and final version was tested in January 2016. We are now entering the data and should know very soon if our culturally tailored dietary survey is ready to test on a larger scale.

**TRAINING UPDATES**

Through our Training Program, our goal is to train students and junior investigators, especially underrepresented minorities, in community-based participatory research to reduce cancer disparities.

We are happy to report that our two most recent interns, Adriana Ramos and Brenda Cueva started programs at
If you have questions, or are interested in more information, please contact us.

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**Announcements**

**Save The Date:**
We are partnering with the University of Washington Latino Center for Health to host a conference on Aging and Health Disparities on Thursday, May 12, 2016. More details coming soon. If you would like to be added to the mailing list to receive updates, please email Kathy Briant at kbriant@fredhutch.org.

**Support Group Pilot Project:**
Cancer survivor support groups are underway! We are looking for women who:
- Are Hispanic/Latina cancer survivors
- Speak Spanish
- Are at least 18 years old
- Live in Franklin, Benton, Walla Walla or Yakima Counties
- Have been diagnosed with cancer of the breast, cervix, ovary, uterus, or endometrium
- Have completed primary treatment

Participants will receive up to $75 in gift cards. To learn more, or to sign up to participate, please call Genoveva Ibarra at 509-837-5681 or toll-free at 1-866-809-6846.