



UNC
CENTER FOR HEALTH
PROMOTION AND
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ACCURE Press Release (Chapel Hill and Greensboro Audiences)

New study will evaluate if technology, system protocols, and training can reduce differences in cancer care between African American and white patients

A five-year national study now underway in Greensboro and Pittsburgh attempts to determine if technology and other tools can make sure that African American breast and lung cancer patients receive the same level of care as white Americans.

Earlier research has shown that although a higher percentage of white Americans are diagnosed with breast and lung cancer, a higher proportion of African Americans actually die from these diseases.

The Accountability for Cancer Care through Undoing Racism and Equity (ACCURE) study is funded by the National Cancer Institute and is being led as a collaborative effort between the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC), The Partnership Project, Inc., Cone Health and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC).

“It is critical that we lead this study in an equitable, partnership manner, using the ‘Community-Based Participatory Research’ approach, in order for our findings to have relevancy to the communities we hope to positively impact the most,” explained Eugenia Eng, DrPH, Co-Principal Investigator, and professor of health behavior at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health.

ACCURE aims to optimize transparency and accountability to achieve racial equity in the completion of cancer treatment among patients with early stage breast and lung cancer. Patients are encouraged to be more proactive in analyzing power and authority within the health care system. Patients are also encouraged to work with a patient navigator, who has comprehensive training in cancer issues, health literacy and communication techniques.

Health care providers will be given ongoing data about patients’ treatment progress according to race to immediately flag any disparity. Also, a real-time electronic registry will be built to alert caregivers when a patient has dropped out of care so that contact can be established to resume care before it is too late.

“Our previous pilot research data indicates that African American women would appreciate additional time with providers to understand more about their cancer diagnosis, which is why our ACCURE Navigator position will be so powerfully helpful,” said Nora Jones, MS, Community-Based Principal Investigator, Executive Director of The Partnership Project, Inc.

In addition to decreasing racial disparities among cancer patients, ACCURE also has the potential to define technologies that, if widely applied, can help resolve disparities in cancer and other chronic illnesses along the lines that the American Association For Clinical Oncology envisioned (the *Rapid Quality Reporting System*), and to create sustainable change within cancer care systems.

“We are hopeful that our approach to using interventions that include race-specific data feedback and [Quality Improvement] techniques for provider groups will improve outcomes for all patients and close the gap experienced by African American patients and other underserved ethnic groups,” said Sam Cykert, MD, Co-Principal Investigator, Associate Director, Medical Education, and Clinical Director NC Regional Extension Center for Health Information Technology), Area Health Education Centers Program. “Our systems-level approach has the potential to reduce racial disparities in 1500 cancer centers affecting 1.4 million patients annually.”

This study is a continuation of the exploratory research managed by the Greensboro Health Disparities Collaborative and conducted from 2006 to 2009. . The earlier project sought to understand more about the reasons for disparities between African American and white breast cancer patients. The mission of the Greensboro Health Disparities Collaborative is to establish structures and processes that respond to, empower, and facilitate communities in defining and resolving issues related to disparities in health.

Skip Hislop, Site Principal-Investigator, Vice-President of Oncology Services for Cone Health Systems, says, “One of our core values at Cone Health is caring for our community. This study strengthens and deepens our commitment to providing exceptional care to all.”

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The [UNC Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention](#) addresses pressing health problems, including reducing health disparities, by collaborating with communities to conduct research, provide training, and translate research findings into policy and practice. The Center for HPDP is one of its first three [Prevention Research Centers](#), selected by the U.S. Centers for Disease and Control in 1985. Now comprised of 37 academic institutions, the PRC program is an interdependent network of community, academic, and public health partners. Today, HPDP connects more than 120 UNC researchers with communities, organizations, and agencies for the purpose of using research-based approaches to promote good health outcomes.

[Cone Health](#) is committed to being a national leader in quality, service and cost. The Network for Exceptional Care consists of The Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital, Wesley Long Hospital, Women’s Hospital, Annie Penn Hospital, Cone Health Behavioral Health Hospital, [LeBauer HealthCare](#), [MedCenter High Point](#), [MedCenter Kernersville](#) and various outpatient

clinics and programs. More than 8,600 exceptional people provide exceptional care to the people of Guilford, Rockingham, Forsyth, Randolph and Alamance counties.

The mission of the [Partnership Project, Inc.](#) is to undo racism in Guilford County, NC through education, organization and support. Since its incorporation in 2007, the Partnership Project regularly hosts four trainings per year in the Triad area which originated from the educational direction of The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, Inc. The Partnership Project planned and manages the [Greensboro Health Disparities Collaborative](#), which is an academic-community coalition with the mission to establish structures and processes that respond to, empower, and facilitate communities in defining and resolving issues related to disparities in health.

The [University of Pittsburgh Medical Center](#) is deeply committed to the western Pennsylvania region. The Division of Hematology/Oncology is an integral part of the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute (UPCI) and emphasizes clinical care, research, and teaching. The UPCI is one of the elite cancer centers across the country in basic, translational and clinical research as well as a leader in providing cancer prevention, compassionate patient care and support, and community-based outreach services through UPMC Cancer Centers, UPCI's partner in cancer care.