

Partnering Toward a Healthier Future: Celebrating National Minority Health Month

Last year's U.S. census revealed that Montgomery County, Maryland is a majority minority county for the first time in history with Hispanic and African-American populations representing the largest communities of color. In the decade since the 2000 census, Prince George's County experienced a similar increase in minority populations with the Hispanic community doubling to represent 15 percent of all county residents.

With such drastic demographic changes in the communities Adventist HealthCare serves, it is imperative that we educate and train health care providers about health disparities and how culturally and linguistically appropriate services are used as tools to meet the needs of our diverse populations.

In view of Minority Health Month, we want to highlight a few of the activities in which the Center is engaged to improve the health of the diverse population in the tri-county region of Frederick, Montgomery and Prince George's counties:

Patient Demographic (REL-G) Data Collection

In an effort to improve patient-centered care, beginning in 2011, the Joint Commission will require the documentation of patient information, in particular, gender, race, ethnicity, country of origin and patient communication needs, including preferred language for discussing health care and the need for an interpreter.

The Center on Health Disparities is working to ensure that Adventist HealthCare's health information technology for patients will incorporate the new Joint Commission requirements.

Collection of patient information in harmony with the new Joint Commission standards will enable health care providers and researchers to better understand the health care needs of diverse patient populations and to tailor health care services accordingly.

Qualified Bilingual Staff (QBS) Training

Since 2007, the Center on Health Disparities has provided the Qualified Bilingual Staff (QBS) interpreter training to Adventist HealthCare staff, and individuals working at partnering entities throughout Maryland (i.e., Primary Care Coalition, the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services and Sinai Hospital of Baltimore).

Through the QBS training, health care professionals and staff who speak other languages in addition to English, learn effective interpretation skills for use in health care settings. More than 400 people have taken the course since the program's inception and more than 150 people currently serve as QBS interpreters throughout Adventist HealthCare and other Maryland health care facilities. The QBS Program enables Adventist HealthCare to provide better patient and family-centered care and is in harmony with the new Joint Commission standards.

Cultural Competency Care Training

Did you know that African-American women are nearly 40% more likely to die from breast cancer than non-Hispanic white women? And that Asian/Pacific Islander men and women have higher rates of stomach and liver cancer?

At the Center on Health Disparities, we understand that a “one size fits all” approach to health care is neither complete nor quality care. Identifying and understanding the needs of patient populations are essential to providing care that meets the cultural and linguistic needs of our diverse patient communities. The Research Institute at the Center on Health Disparities staff develops and delivers cultural competency care training to health care providers throughout the Adventist HealthCare system and other health care entities throughout Maryland. Currently, the Center offers trainings in overall cultural competence as well as disease-specific modules such as cancer.

News You Can Use...

- The Center on Health Disparities is committed to understanding and meeting the needs of the diverse patient population which it serves. Watch “Health Today” at 8 p.m. on April 5th and 19th on Montgomery County Cable Channel 16 to hear Executive Director Marcos Pesquera speak about the current and forthcoming endeavors of the Center.
- In celebration of April as Minority Health Month, the Center will post disease-specific health tips on their [Facebook](#) page throughout the month. Bookmark our page and “Like” us today!
- Attend one of the Adventist HealthCare Health and Wellness Department’s free community health screenings:
 - Blood Pressure Screening on Monday, April 11th from 10 a.m. to noon at Long Branch Community Center in Silver Spring, Md.
 - Blood Pressure Screening on Thursday, April 14th from 10 to 11 a.m. at Bowie Senior Center in Bowie, Md.
 - *Delivering Solutions* Health Fair on Sunday, April 17th from 10 a.m. to noon at Washington Adventist Hospital

Please visit the [Adventist HealthCare webpage](#) dedicated to highlighting Minority Health Month under “Events & Classes” for additional community activities during the month of April.

Partnering Toward a Healthier Future,
Your Friends at
The Center on Health Disparities

