

2023 AHNS Cancer Prevention Service Community Service Grant

Background: From 2017-2020, the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine (UMMSM) has hosted student-run screening fairs during Oral, Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Week (OHANCAW). Due to the COVID pandemic, our 2021 fair was cancelled. Our 2022 fair occurred virtually via four videos created by our students and faculty focusing on patient education of various head and neck cancers. Therefore, our goal for this year's OHANCAW events include returning to our established community partners in three different underserved populations of Miami-Dade County while establishing a new site targeting our growing homeless population. We also hope to implement a new intervention across our sites that increases awareness and prevention of head and neck cancer arising from the skin. Miami-Dade County has one of the highest UV ratings in the United States [1] and many of our non-Caucasian populations are less aware of their risk of skin cancer. Studies have shown that simplified diagrams, explanations of the risk of sun exposure, and increasing awareness of the use of sunscreen can dramatically decrease skin cancer rates [2]. Head and neck squamous cell carcinoma (H&N SCC) that has spread to the regional lymph nodes possesses a poor prognosis and is known to be more aggressive than locally confined disease [3].

Significance: Since the establishment of OHANCAW at UMMSM through a grant by the 2015 American Head and Neck Society's Prevention and Early Detection Community Service Grant, we have screened over 600 participants across four sites, identified over 40 individuals requiring immediate follow-up care, and provided 180 patients with further ENT or primary care evaluation. Although the results of the screening sites have been encouraging, we hope to further improve our efforts this year by focusing on head and neck skin and oral cancer awareness within our community. Three locations have shown particularly great success in our past screening fairs: the Center for Haitian Studies in our underserved community of Little Haiti, Camillus House serving our downtown Miami homeless population, and the San Juan Bosco Clinic in Allapatah, focused on our Latino population. These three sites will help to serve a growing number of underserved and uninsured individuals who lack access to basic primary healthcare. This year we also plan to partner with our needle exchange clinic, the IDEA clinic, which often serves as a point of care for the homeless community. Homeless individuals have been shown to have higher rates of H&N SCC due to inadequate access to housing and are likely at further risk in Miami due to the high UV index. We hope that our intervention will not only help bring awareness to the dangers of excess sun exposure, but also directly offer a solution that can combat H&N SCC.

Innovation and Methods: In the preliminary presentation of our four educational videos at the Camillus House in 2022, participants stated that they found the videos both simple to understand and informative of warning signs of head and neck cancer that they should be aware of. While speaking to the director of the Camillus House, she stated one of the most requested items for the homeless population is sunscreen. Providing travel size sunscreen could not only increase turnout at local events but will also provide a vital resource that is often not accessible to the homeless community. As one of the areas of the United States with the greatest sun exposure year-round, UMMSM has a unique opportunity in reducing the risk of H&N SCC of our underserved patient populations throughout Miami Dade county. To achieve this goal, our team hopes to accomplish the following: arrange free H&N screening of the skin and oral cavity at our sites, share the warning signs of H&N SCC, explain the importance of limiting sun exposure, demonstrate how to perform a basic at-home H&N exam, and provide patients with free trial size sunscreen bottles. The sunscreen will have custom fold-out labels attached containing 1) the basic parameters of a H&N exam and skin check, 2) warning signs of H&N SCC and the ABCDE criteria for melanoma, 3) a link and phone number to sign up for a "Jackson Card," which provides free to low cost healthcare to low income and uninsured individuals, and 4) a QR code to access our videos created last year focusing on various head and neck cancers. As the four community sites we plan to serve are within 2 miles of our major academic center and public hospital, we will be able to connect high-risk participants identified during screening with access to proper follow-up care. We additionally hope to increase outreach through families and friends that may see the sunscreen in the community. Our student-run

screenings have historically been an effective model [4] for providing care to underserved populations and connecting with the community to increase awareness of HNC. The team at UMMSM now looks to continue exemplifying the importance of preventative medicine by renewing our work with established community partners and utilizing insight gained from previous fairs. We aspire to demonstrate the feasibility of community-based screening programs in medically underserved neighborhoods, the importance of the development of culturally competent educational materials, and the effectiveness of a screening model involving medical students.

Methods: The screening events will be held across four sites: the IDEA Exchange Clinic in Overtown, the San Juan Bosco Clinic in Allapatah, the Camillus House located in downtown Miami, and the Center for Haitian Studies in Little Haiti. With the funds provided by this grant, we plan to improve our educational component by creating easily digestible materials on H&N SCC and skin cancer with graphics for our participants that are attached to a trial size version of sunscreen. To assess the efficacy of our educational material and presentation, we will ask participants to complete a survey related to H&N SCC and skin cancer before and after the educational component of the screening event. In the screening site targeting the uninsured and underinsured participants at San Juan Bosco Clinic, we hope to collaborate with the primary care clinic to advertise 2 months leading up to the event with flyers and have our own medical students give out flyers during the student-run clinic that occurs once weekly. At our Little Haiti event, we have had previous success with the local Haitian Creole radio station to reach our target population. A formal training course will be provided one week prior to the event for the medical students to learn to screen participants effectively and efficiently before presenting to the ENT physician. Furthermore, we plan to incorporate a university approved EMR system, REDCap, to establish a patient database to facilitate follow-up and referrals. We will use our previous established connections with our Sylvester Cancer Center to provide social work assistance to our patients as needs arise. Additional efforts to improve our screening event includes hiring local language professionals to translate education material and surveys, expanding the number of exam rooms, and recruiting additional physicians and residents with the help of our faculty mentor Zoukaa Sargi MD, MPH.

Expected Outcomes: We expect to reestablish our relationships at three existing sites and increase our outreach to the homeless population of Miami through our partnership with the IDEA Clinic. By listening to the needs of our community and utilizing the innovation of information tagged sunscreen, we hope to improve the effectiveness of our support. After the event, our executive board will analyze surveys to determine if our methods of education were useful in increasing awareness of head and neck cancer. We also plan to utilize the exit surveys to determine which advertisement strategies were most useful in recruiting screening participants. Any patients identified to be at risk will be directly connected into our Jackson Memorial Health System with support acquiring access to proper medical care. We hope that by working with trusted members of the community through our partnerships, participants will feel more at ease when scheduling follow-up appointments.

Estimated Cost/Funding: The estimated cost of this project is \$1,000. \$500 will be allocated to marketing and advertising - \$150 for flyers and a newspaper advertisement and \$350 for a discounted radio spot with the local community of Little Haiti. \$150 will be spent on translating services at San Juan Bosco Clinic and Little Haiti. \$150 will be spent on 400 trial size sunscreen vials to be given to our patients and to bring home to their families, available on Amazon. Printing of education materials, surveys, and screening forms is provided free of cost by the University. The remaining \$200 will be spent on logistical supplies such as tongue blades, gauze, and gloves. If necessary, additional funding may be applied for through the student government. However, funding is limited through our student government due to the COVID pandemic and reallocation of funds.

Thank you for your time and consideration for our application for the 2023 AHNS Prevention and Early Detection Community Service Grant.

References:

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