

2024 AHNS Cancer Prevention Service Community Service Award Application

Background: Brooklyn is the most populous of the five boroughs in New York City with over 2.7 million inhabitants. However, cancer care in New York has historically been centered in Manhattan with four comprehensive cancer centers within 22 square miles. The opening of the NYU Perlmutter Cancer Center Sunset Park location in 2019 marked the first NCI designated cancer center in Brooklyn, and since then efforts have been underway to increase community-based initiatives to reduce cancer care gaps for underserved populations. Comprehensive care for head and neck cancers at NYU in Brooklyn including dedicated providers in head and neck surgery, radiation oncology, medical oncology, and speech language pathology began just 1.5 years ago in September 2022.

Proposed project: Head and neck cancer screening event held at the NYU Perlmutter Cancer Center – Sunset Park to provide education and screening questionnaires and exams to residents of Sunset Park and surrounding neighborhoods, and to increase awareness about available head and neck cancer care services in Brooklyn.

Targeted population: Sunset Park is a working class, low-income community in Brooklyn with 54% of residents living at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level. It is largely a community of immigrants with 40-50% of the population born outside of the US, many of whom don't speak English and may be undocumented, creating challenges when it comes to navigating the medical system.

Methods: Our screening event would involve a questionnaire asking about medical history and signs and symptoms of head and neck cancers, as well as a screening head and neck exam performed by current ENT faculty, residents, and fellows. Any positive finding would trigger a formal appointment the following week with a head and neck surgeon for further evaluation. In addition to the screening questions and exam, educational materials would be provided regarding head and neck cancer prevention and detection. All written materials would be created in multiple languages and offered to patients in their preferred language. Medical interpreters would be available for all screening exams.

Expected outcome: Increased education and awareness in the community about head and neck cancer prevention and detection and resources available locally.

Impact on community health: We will partner with the Perlmutter Cancer Center's Community Outreach and Engagement Core which has a network of community health workers and navigators to help publicize the event. Over the past several years they have successfully launched the "Stamp out Cancer Brooklyn" program and provided outreach and education to more than 2,000 individuals and navigated more than 500 of them to cancer services. This program has focused on screening and prevention of breast, lung, colorectal and prostate cancer as well as vaccination against infectious agents linked to cancer including HPV. This

event could help expand program services to include head and neck cancer by not only providing screening to residents but through education of navigators about resource available for head and neck cancer treatment, leading to a greater long-term impact.

Estimated cost: Costs associated with this program would primarily be related to the production and distribution of educational materials in multiple languages as well as equipment needed to perform the screenings (headlights, gloves, tongue depressors, etc) and is estimated to be \$1000. All personnel would participate on a volunteer basis.

Other funding: No additional funding sources expected at this time.