Editor's Note

In this issue: Learn about efforts to address prostate cancer disparities in the African-American community, impact of nutrition on health and food policy, and more through a coordinated speaker's bureau and make plans to attend the Nutrition Science and Food Policy Summit in May!

Promoting Prostate Cancer Awareness in Local African-American Churches

African-American men have nearly a 60 percent higher chance of getting prostate cancer as compared to other men. They also die from prostate cancer at a two to three times higher rate than Caucasians. Recent studies suggest black men have a genetic connection to prostate cancer that increases risk for developing prostate cancer. Additionally, they present higher prostate-specific antigen (PSA) values than Caucasians. This type of cancer develops at a faster rate and is often more aggressive than in Caucasians. Yet, black men are not getting the same screening test they need to help them learn what their risks are so that their health-care provider can track their PSA values and give them the care they need to avoid a potentially preventable death.

The reasons behind this are pretty complicated and lie within the realms of biology, medicine, lifestyle, and spirituality. It is an effort to dispel many of these deep-rooted myths. Rather than myths, City of Hope's Department of Community Benefit, in collaboration with the incredible multi-ethnic marketing team, have embarked upon a journey to reverse these statistics in the San Gabriel Valley.

On a rainy January 2, local clergy, lay church leaders, community leaders and a representative from the Connecting People of African Descent, a diversity resource group, joined in a day of learning regarding the risks of prostate cancer in African-Americans. The agenda included training on how to be a community resource person, how to connect prostate cancer screening and awareness with scripture and, finally, presentations by our own prostate cancer experts Zijie Sun, M.D., Ph.D., Clayton Lau, M.D., and Przemyslaw Twardowski, M.D. This day was an outgrowth of the Prostate Cancer Awareness campaign, conducted in September, by multiethnic marketing. The purpose was to raise awareness of the risks that men of African-American descent have in regard to prostate cancer. Moving forward, City of Hope will work with the local faith community to uncover culturally appropriate pathways to inform our congregants of these risks and support them with the information and resources necessary to get a PSA test, and more if needed.

On Feb. 26, we will be at the First African American Methodist (FAME) Church in Pasadena to help share the prevention message during two sessions. In March, we will co-host a second training with FAME to provide more information to clergy and lay church leaders. If you happen to attend church and see us there, please stop by and say, “Hi.”

Looking for a Few Great Speakers

In December 2016, PAIS for Health, a Los Angeles-based health interpreter nonprofit, found that they needed to train their health-care providers to be more culturally competent. They turned to City of Hope's Department of Community Benefit to help locate a lung expert from their own African-American community. The connection to prostate cancer that resulted from this one event is an incredible opportunity we have to make our community healthier while breaking down barriers to care for the most vulnerable in our service area.

Throughout the year, many of us receive requests for speakers and scramble to find the right person to fill that request. Sometimes this leads to calling the same person and resulting in double booking or speaker fatigue. In an effort to streamline the requests, the Department of Community Benefit is in the process of creating a centralized system for filling these requests. But to get it going, we need to create a list of incredible people who want to participate. If you want to help us locate speakers who want to participate, contact Zijie Sun, M.D., Ph.D., at CommunityBenefit@coh.org. Tell us a little about yourself, what your area of expertise is, and what your availability is. We would like to avoid a potentially preventable death. A health-care provider can track their PSA screening test they need to help them avoid a potentially preventable death.

Quarterly Community Benefit Hub

Once a quarter a wonderful group of City of Hope employees, from over 15 different departments, get together to learn more about community benefit and also discover opportunities to collaborate in meeting the needs of our local service area. If you want to learn more about community benefit and want to help make City of Hope a stronger partner, we can help you do so. The vulnerable who live in the San Gabriel Valley and beyond, are your opportunity to join our meetings. The food is great, but the conversations and connections made are even better.

Nutrition Science and Food Policy Summit – May 19 to 21

Eating has become a food fight. Doctors and nutrition researchers are making recommendations to eat one way and nutritionists are telling their patients to eat a different way. It is no wonder why the common people are confused. The food professionals are not always providing a shared message. Join the Nutrition Summit to explore the controversy surrounding food – from the scientific conflict to the economic impact of poor nutrition policy to the accompany health consequences. Together, we will explore solutions that will unite all parties involved in this food fight to create lasting change.

If you research food and nutrition, you should come. Doctors and nutrition researchers are making recommendations to eat one way and nutritionists are telling their patients to eat a different way. It is no wonder why the common people are confused. The food professionals are not always providing a shared message. Join the Nutrition Summit to explore the controversy surrounding food – from the scientific conflict to the economic impact of poor nutrition policy to the accompany health consequences. Together, we will explore solutions that will unite all parties involved in this food fight to create lasting change.

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