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A Model Program for Improving Access to Health Information and Patient Navigation Services

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The Chinese Community Health Resource Center (CCHRC) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to meet the needs of the San Francisco Bay Area's monolingual Chinese population by providing them with culturally sensitive, linguistically appropriate health information and services. Since its founding in 1989, CCHRC has worked closely with physicians, community organizations such as Chinatown Public Health Center and Chinese Community Health Care Association, and national organizations such as the American Heart Association, American Diabetes Association, National Cancer Institute, and the American Lung Association to provide the underserved in the Chinese community with a multitude of programs and services.

CCHRC offers free bilingual health seminars, community health fairs, a friendly bilingual patient navigation system, where community members can get help making their way through the complicated healthcare system, and individual nutritional counseling with a registered dietitian. Printed bilingual educational material on an array of topics, including tuberculosis, Hepatitis B, Cancer, Diabetes, Osteoporosis, and heart disease, as well as hundreds of health related books and videos, is pre-screened by health professionals and available at CCHRC's wellness library, which also houses its American Cancer Society-endorsed Chinese Community Cancer Information Center.

In recent years, CCHRC has also been conducting individual and collaborative research to assess the effectiveness of current programs and uncover areas needing more attention. For example, a survey of more than 800 participants at CCHRC's 2003 Men's Health Day showed that 31.1% had never been screened for colorectal cancer and 24.3% of men had never had a PSA test. Furthermore, 96% of male participants primarily spoke a Chinese dialect, 20% had no health insurance, and 45.1% had an annual household income of less than \$20,000. These results demonstrate a need for culturally competent, bilingual health services.

CCHRC provides approximately 15,000 services annually; 90% of recipients are monolingual, over 65% are female; 30% are Medicaid (known as Medi-Cal in California) recipients, and approximately 15% have no insurance coverage.

The Chinese Community Health Resource Center remains committed to helping the Chinese community access culturally sensitive and linguistically competent healthcare, and will continue to do so with the support of and in collaboration with our sponsors and community partners.