

Latino Health Institute and Beth Israel Nursing Students Help Teens Kick the Habit

HealthCorps® enlists LHI to provide multicultural health outreach in NYC schools

Dr. Mehmet Oz's HealthCorps enlisted Beth Israel Medical Center's Latino Health Institute (LHI) to supplement its curriculum focusing on nutrition, fitness, and mental resilience being taught in 26 public high schools throughout New York City.

HealthCorps sought LHI's expertise in providing multicultural health outreach to New York City's minority communities.

"Whether we are communicating with the Hispanic community or other underserved minority populations, our methodology is the same," explained Sharon Voytush, LHI's Executive Director. "We use the language and the values of the community we are trying to reach, which is particularly important when it comes to something as sensitive as personal health issues."

LHI was tasked with developing a compelling presentation to help high school students stay tobacco-free. The target school was Lower East Side Preparatory High School (LES Prep). The setting was an assembly of more than 500 students in the school's auditorium. LES Prep is a transfer school, meaning that most of the students are older – ages 17-21 – and seeking to complete the requirements necessary to receive their high school diploma. The students are all from immigrant families.



Martha Poulin and Rene Anaya, LES Prep's Principal and Assistant Principal, along with HealthCorps' in-school coordinator Ian Forster, identified smoking prevention and cessation as the key topic due to the troubling popularity of smoking among the school's population.

"Much of the peer pressure kids feel regarding whether or not to smoke occurs in school," explained Principal Poulin. "If a teenager feels smoking is socially acceptable and widely practiced, they are much more likely to smoke."

To create and deliver a presentation that the students could relate to, LHI teamed with Phillips Beth Israel School of Nursing (PBISN), enlisting six nursing students who were not much older than their target audience. The PBISN students had first-hand experience working with patients suffering from the worst effects of smoking. And the fact that they are similar in age to many of the LES Prep students dramatically improves their validity as messengers.

With assistance from LHI staff and PBISN associate professor Cecilia Sireci, the PBISN students created an interactive presentation that went beyond simply addressing the short- and long-term health effects of smoking. It also included factors more likely to influence a high schooler's decision to smoke: social acceptability, peer pressure, and familial influences. The PBISN team discussed everything from resistance and refusal skills to media literacy as it relates to tobacco advertising and marketing.



Phillips Beth Israel School of Nursing smoking cessation team: (L to R) Elana Friedman, Grace Cohen, Glenda Tan, Adriana Bodner, Megan Connell, Michelle Villaflor

Op-Ed



Hector Castro, MD
Medical Director
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Digital Medicine

This spring the Federal Communications Commission released its ambitious National Broadband Plan. The F.C.C. is pushing to greatly expand high speed wireless broadband services.

We commend F.C.C. Chairman Genachowski for actively promoting broadband expansion and increasing adoption rates. A significant number of Americans still lack the ability to regularly access the internet and are unable to take advantage of the opportunities created by broadband technology. The National Broadband Plan will close the digital divide. And with strong leadership and advocacy from the F.C.C. and the Obama administration broadband can reach its full potential in several critical areas, including the healthcare field.

One example of how high-speed Internet services can expand the availability of quality care is telemedicine, which is quickly moving out of the realm of “just beyond the horizon” to “it is here and now.” Earlier this year, after the devastating earthquake in Haiti, reports surfaced that a team of U.S. medical and technology experts doing relief work in the disaster area had set up the telemedicine gear that allowed medical specialists back in the states to consult on cases using cameras and broadband access to the internet.

Improvements in technology have made the use of telemedicine to provide consultative support to first responders and physicians in disaster areas practical and effective. With adequate bandwidth, doctors in major facilities can actually see the patients, listen to their hearts and lungs, and look at other crucial data in real time.

In Haiti, because of the overwhelming level of destruction, doctors and nurses who were on the scene had to treat patients far outside their areas

of expertise. But using telemedicine, medical pros in the field can hold streaming video consultations for remote diagnosis or to obtain treatment advice from specialists.

Within the United States, many medical centers are now routinely using telemedicine to reach out to underserved communities. These communities often have very good generalized medical care available, but do not have the specialization which can only be found in major facilities.

In California, this spring, physicians and scientists moved into a new \$40 million medical education center at UC Irvine that features a 60-seat “televideo” auditorium where students can watch doctors use telemedicine to provide care to patients in rural and remote areas of the state. Medical students are also able to watch real-time medical procedures that doctors perform at UCI Douglas Hospital in Orange.

Here at Beth Israel Latino Health Institute, physicians are exploring how they can utilize mobile phones to help patients manage diabetes by transmitting blood glucose readings to their health care providers.

And at Massachusetts General Hospital, a program called “Connected Pediatric Critical Care” enables on-call attending physicians from their homes to examine a patient and communicate with on-site pediatric ICU staff using real-time video conferencing gear and a portable robotic telemedicine station that can be rolled to the patient’s bedside.

Broadband technology will make health care more portable, accessible, accurate and personal. This will be hugely beneficial for patients. We strongly support the F.C.C. plan to get all Americans connected.

El Curativo

NEWS FROM THE LATINO HEALTH INSTITUTE

Our Mission

Improve the health status of New York City’s Hispanic community by providing culturally competent services, improved access at all levels of care, education about healthy life choices, and solutions to the problem of ethnic and racial health disparities.

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Latino Health Institute
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Mentoring and Career Counseling Aid Adults at International Center for the Disabled



Sharon Voytush, executive director of the Latino Health Institute, counsels Jonathon Russell in a résumé-building and job-interview-training workshop at ICD

Beth Israel Medical Center's Latino Health Institute (LHI) has been offering career counseling, mentoring, and internships to disabled adults as part of its ongoing relationship with the International Center for the Disabled (ICD). The ICD is a non-profit outpatient rehabilitation center in Manhattan serving people of all ages with disabilities and other rehabilitative and developmental needs.

LHI participated in the ICD's Disability Mentoring Day by offering information and advice on ca-

reer opportunities in the healthcare field. LHI Executive Director Sharon Voytush spoke at the event, reviewed resumes, and conducted mock interviews to help attendees better understand the needs of the job market and the demands of the healthcare industry.

"In the healthcare profession, our mission is to serve the community," explained Voytush. "At Beth Israel, we seek out opportunities to help all facets of the community, whether that means providing a medical service or simply offering career advice that enables someone to earn a healthy income and take better care of themselves."

LHI and Beth Israel's Diversity Council also participated in the ICD's Job Fair, recruiting interns to work at Beth Israel to gain job experience. Four ICD interns are currently finishing up their assignments at Beth Israel and three more are scheduled to start mid-summer. Look for an update on their progress in the next issue of *El Curativo*.

"By opening doors to capable individuals of all backgrounds, we serve the community as well as ourselves," said Debbie Visconi, Senior Vice President of Administration at Beth Israel. "The more diverse our workforce is, the better equipped it will be to serve our increasingly diverse community."

LHI's Third Annual Career Day for Hispanic and Minority Youth Focuses on Nursing

The Latino Health Institute (LHI) partnered with Phillips Beth Israel School of Nursing (PBISN) and Dr. Mehmet Oz's HealthCorps® to create a special seminar for New York City high school students on careers in nursing. Held at PBISN, the seminar was designed to educate teens in underserved populations about the opportunities in nursing and the potential offered by that career.

A group of twenty three students from several Manhattan high schools attended the event. They were able to meet Beth Israel nurses as well as faculty and nursing students from PBISN. The teenagers all participate in the HealthCorps curriculum in their schools.

With in-school coordinators working in more than two dozen New York City high schools, HealthCorps was instrumental in raising awareness of the career day and attracting Hispanic and other minority students with an interest in nursing.



NYC High School Students examine a "patient" during Career Day at Philips Beth Israel School of Nursing.

The Latino Health Institute's annual career day event aims to address the disturbing lack of diversity in the health care professions.

Latino Health Institute Wraps-Up Third Series of Seminars for Seniors on Lower East Side

Ongoing Series with University Settlement Addresses Specific Health Concerns

Beth Israel's Latino Health Institute (LHI) has wrapped-up another successful series of educational health seminars at Union Settlement's Houston Street Center. These classes, presented by LHI as the *Health Wise Seminar Series*, are designed to address the specific health needs and interests of senior citizens living in the East Village and on the Lower East Side.

LHI recruits doctors, nurses and other experts throughout Beth Israel Medical Center to lead these interactive seminars. Each annual series features monthly 40-minute classes that begin in the fall and conclude in spring.

One of the best-attended seminars from this past series was Dr. Christine Hinke's discussion on *Aging and the Spine*. A physiatrist, Dr. Hinke serves as Associate Director of Beth Israel's Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.



Dr. Christine Hinke (l), Associate Director of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Beth Israel, and Brooke Weise, Associate Director of University Settlement's Houston Street Center



Stephen Dahmer, MD, Family Medicine Attending, Beth Israel Continuum Center for Health and Healing, discussing traditional and indigenous healing systems

Another popular seminar was given by Dr. Stephen Dahmer from the Beth Israel Continuum Center for Health and Healing. The multi-lingual doctor spoke about botanical medicine and provided a cultural perspective on folk medicine.

To date, the seminars in the first three series have covered topics as diverse as the H1N1 virus, foods to fuel nutrition, crucial facts about stroke, new ideas on how to protect the heart, caregiving, and preventing vision loss. The 2010-11 series, which will be LHI's 4th annual, is going to be the first built around a specific theme: Better Bones. The goal of this series is to teach seniors how to strengthen their bones and muscles to help combat osteoporosis and other age-related problems.

Thank You!

Beth Israel Latino Health Institute wishes to thank Pfizer, Inc. for providing a grant in December, 2009, to support our community outreach program. Pfizer's generosity helps LHI offer top-notch education about healthy life choices to New York City's diverse Latino community as well as other underserved population groups.



NJN Documentary on Hispanic Health Crises Wins Awards

In the Winter/Spring 2009 issue of El Curativo, we reported on a NJN public television documentary, *Su Salud Primero/Your Health First*, which featured an interview with Dr. Hector Castro, Medical Director of the Latino Health Institute. The documentary has since won a



Mid-Atlantic Emmy Award as well as a Philadelphia Press Association Award for Television Public Service. Because of the program's success, the half-hour documentary will now be distributed nationally by American Public Television. Check your local listings!

LHI News Briefs

Kathy's Day

LHI was pleased to be invited back to participate in the 2nd annual Kathy's Day, held in memory of Kathy Callaghan Badolato, who lost her 20-year battle with breast cancer. The event is organized by Nazareth Housing, a community services group based in the East Village. Badolato was the sister of Nazareth Housing's Executive Director Michael Callaghan.

Kathy's Day honors the memory of Badolato by encouraging the public to take stock of their health and learn how to lead healthier lives. Staffers from LHI were on-hand to provide advice and services to attendees, including free asthma consultations. Among the other free services offered to East Village residents were mammograms, blood pressure testing, HPV and vaccine information, mental health resources and referrals, and yoga and relaxation techniques. There was also a special game room for children.

ASPIRA's 17th Annual City Youth Conference

The New York office of ASPIRA invited the Latino Health Institute (LHI) to participate in workshops at its 2010 City Youth Conference in January. ASPIRA, which is Spanish for "aspire," is a national organization dedicated to developing the educational and leadership capacity of Hispanic youth. In addition to its headquarters in Washington, the organization has nine field offices around the country – including one in New York City.

LHI Medical Director Dr. Hector Castro facilitated two workshops for ASPIRA NY's Youth Conference. The first one was called *Get Your Knowledge Vaccine* and was focused on educating Latino youth about the myths and realities of vaccinations – from H1N1 to concerns about getting AIDS from needles. The second workshop was called *Are You in Good Hands?* and was inspired by the Michael Moore documentary, *Sicko*. Dr. Castro discussed the overall healthcare system and how to make the most of it.

Somos El Futuro Legislative Conference in Albany

Given the leadership role taken by LHI in reshaping the way healthcare is provided to minorities, it was no surprise that Dr. Castro was invited back to participate in the 23rd annual *Somos El Futuro* Legislative Conference in Albany. The April event sets the tone for Hispanic advocacy in New York State and is well-attended by state legislators and representatives from the corporate and non-profit sectors.

Dr. Castro served on a panel entitled *Brown plus Green equals Progress: The Environment, Green Industry and Latino Community*. The panel discussed the impact of energy policies and the environmental movement on the health and welfare of New York's Latino communities. His expertise in pulmonology and experience working with the Hispanic Energy Coalition, SHARE, and the National Alliance for Hispanic Health made him an ideal contributor.

Teens Kick the Habit *(continued from page 1)*

At the conclusion of the presentation, the American Lung Association offered multilingual educational materials to help the kids remember and share the best strategies to become or stay tobacco-free.

"Cigarette companies can't survive unless kids smoke," said Ian Forster, the HealthCorp coordinator at LES Prep. "The Latino Health Institute's peer-to-peer approach is an excellent strategy and I think today's presentation helps LES Prep create an environment that encourages anti-smoking beliefs and behavior."

HealthCorps is a proactive health movement modeled on the Peace Corps and founded by Dr. Mehmet Oz, a notable cardiac surgeon and best-selling author. The organization currently has coordinators working in more than two dozen public schools in New York City. As HealthCorps continues its work in these schools, LHI looks forward to additional opportunities to help young people choose health over tobacco.



Tobacco or Health – PBISN student nurses give a compelling smoking cessation presentation to more than 500 students at Lower East Side Preparatory High School.

Call Us to Find a Doctor

For first-rate service, carefully tailored to your health needs, we encourage you to call Beth Israel Medical Center's Physician Referral Service, **1-877-263-5389**, Monday through Friday, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. We will help you identify an excellent doctor who is right for you.

Latinos Going Green

Latino Health Institute Featured in Local Environmental Documentary



Air pollution is linked to asthma attacks and heart disease. More than 25 percent of the children in East Harlem have asthma. The Bronx and Brooklyn account for almost two thirds of the asthma hospitalizations among NYC school children.

The Latino Health Institute’s Medical Director Dr. Hector Castro appears in a short video produced by the Hispanic Federation, UPROSE and the National Alliance for Hispanic Health that aims to inform and engage Latinos at the local level on the issues of air pollution, climate change, energy and the environment.

The video, *A Fight for Environmental Justice: A Tale of Two Communities*, identifies links between environmental hazards and the overall health of Latinos living in Brooklyn and the Bronx. It also raises awareness of how Latinos can develop strategies for community environmental health. Dr. Castro discusses how exposure to pollutants from motor vehicles, power plants and buildings impacts Latino neighborhoods, resulting in higher rates of asthma and other grave health problems.

Community based organizations are utilizing the documentary to empower a new generation of Hispanic environmental activists. A link to the video is available on the News & Events page of LatinoHealthInstitute.org.



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