

Wellness with a WOW!

LHI teams up with Divabetic for a fresh approach to diabetes education

New York City has been hit hard by diabetes, and minority and poor communities have been especially overwhelmed. One in eight adult city residents has diabetes, and 60 percent are African American or Latino New Yorkers.

“There are many educational programs throughout the city addressing this epidemic, but helping people with diabetes requires more than just offering information,” noted Sharon Voytush, Executive Director of Beth Israel’s Latino Health Institute (LHI). “We recently tried a more unconventional approach to put people on a path to healthier living.”

LHI teamed up with Divabetic, a nonprofit organization with a “Glam More, Fear Less” philosophy to help women deal with their diabetes in a new way. (Go to Divabetic.org to learn more)

The result of this collaboration was a showbiz-style event called *Divabetic – The View*. Held at Beth Israel’s conference center on Union Square, it targeted Hispanic women with diabetes and focused on diabetic eye care.

Divabetic – The View was two hours of glamour, education and elation, with a one hour intermission for a mini-health fair. Hosted by Mr. Divabetic himself, Max Szadek, the “edutainment” program was modeled after the popular daytime TV talk show, *The View*. Health experts from the Beth Israel staff were invited to participate as “celebrity” guests in a gabfest about diabetes in the hospital’s auditorium. Audience participation is a vital element of the



Steve Sanchez Photography

A Yagolicious makeup artist (left) applies eye shadow to Margaret Mercado at Phillips Ambulatory Care Center. Ms. Mercado received a free makeover as part of the Latino Health Institute’s diabetes wellness event.

show, and Mr. Divabetic was an expert at getting everyone involved. This included contests, prizes, pop music interludes, and plenty of dancing!

“This workshop takes away the shame of diabetes and it is fun,” said Sonia Avila, a diabetic who attended the event. “I learned a lot about my condition and how to handle it better.”

“It was great to see a room full of women, all either at risk for diabetes or already diagnosed, totally engaged,” added Jenny Dejesus, a nutritionist at Friedman Diabetes Institute and a “celebrity” panelist at the event. “Everyone there seemed to embrace her inner diva and lose her fear of the disease.”

During the show’s intermission the Congressional Glaucoma Caucus Foundation (CGCF) provided free eye exams. And Divabetic brought in make-up artists from Yagolicious Cosmetics to conduct free makeovers for every woman who had her eyes examined for diabetic retinopathy and glaucoma. The makeovers were a big hit.

Others organizations contributing to the success of this event were IPRO, HealthFirst, Village Care and the Institute for the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly.



Steve Sanchez Photography

Congressional Glaucoma Caucus Foundation ophthalmologists conduct free eye exams at the Divabetic event. Every woman who had her eyes examined for glaucoma received a free makeup application from a professional makeup artist.

Telemundo Covers LHI Diabetes Event

The Latino Health Institute’s approach to diabetes education was unusual, effective and fun, so much so that Telemundo Channel 47 sent a news crew to cover the event. The story aired during the 6pm and 11pm newscasts.



LHI Viewpoint



Sharon Voytush, RN, MS
Executive Director
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Diabetes: You Can Only Manage What You Measure

In the world of 24/7 news, it is increasingly difficult to get people's attention – even about preventing a life-threatening disease that affects more than 25.8 million Americans.

Diabetes continues to rise, and is now the sixth leading cause of death in the United States. At current rates, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) predict that one in three Americans will develop diabetes in their lifetime, costing them an average of 10-15 years off their normal life expectancy.

Diabetes will also make a major contribution to out-of-control U.S. health care costs, placing growing strain on the budgets of families, employers, states and the federal government. The CDC estimates the disease costs taxpayers more than \$174 billion annually. That cost is projected to rise to \$500 billion by 2020.

What can clinicians and health care facilities do? How can pharmaceutical firms and insurance companies focus their efforts? How can politicians and patient advocates sway opinion on how and where health care dollars are best spent on diabetes prevention and treatment?

The *U.S. Diabetes Index* (USDI) is a new and powerful internet-based tool for anyone looking to refine their approach to more effectively reduce the prevalence of this disease. The USDI measures the dimensions of this terrible public health and economic crisis.

Launched in March, 2011, by the National Minority Quality Forum and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, in collaboration with the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust, the USDI (usdiabetesindex.com) and its companion website usdireport.com provide comprehensive information about people living

with diabetes, their care, and the trends that are shaping the U.S. diabetes market.

USDI is a remarkable database that houses more than 30,000 maps, charts, and graphs illustrating the impact of diabetes, including its prevalence, costs, demographics, co-morbid conditions, and other important indices.

It enables individuals or organizations to back up a call to action with statistics segmented by geography (including national, state, county, city, congressional, state legislative and zip code levels), and by age, gender, race and ethnicity. For example, did you know that almost 80 percent of diabetics reside in just 8,000 of the approximately 38,000 residential zip codes in this country?

Whether you are a policymaker, clinician, hospital administrator or community activist, this database can help you address this epidemic on a number of levels. We encourage you to take some time to explore it. You will surely learn more about the populations diabetes affects and gain valuable insight into how to combat it.

The USDI project was spearheaded by Dr. Gary A. Puckerin, President and CEO of the National Minority Quality Forum, a non-profit health care research and educational organization dedicated to the elimination of health disparities. Dr. Puckerin says the USDI will help us direct resources to the most affected areas so those living with the disease in high-risk communities are no longer subjected to the patterns of avoidable hospitalizations and premature death that currently afflict them.

Diabetes is preventable. And now we have a powerful new weapon for the fight. We urge you to use it. Let's start to turn the tide on diabetes, now – and for future generations.

The U.S. Diabetes Index (usdiabetesindex.com) and its companion website, USDI Report (usdireport.com), provide the most comprehensive source of available data about people living with diabetes, their care, and the trends that are shaping the disease in the United States.

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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All Aboard the Health Train

LHI provides seminars and screenings for Amtrak employees

Amtrak has invited Beth Israel's Latino Health Institute on board to help provide health and wellness education to its diverse workforce. The company approached LHI because of its proven track record of delivering multi-cultural information on a variety of practical health issues.

The initial seminar targeted female employees, focusing on combating breast cancer. LHI recruited Dr. Alyssa Gillego, a physician in Beth Israel Medical Center's Appel-Venet Comprehensive Breast Service. She presented recommendations on how to keep breasts healthy, including self-examination tips.

The free seminar was held at Amtrak's New York headquarters and included lunch as well as a complimentary copy of the National Cancer Institute's booklet "Common Breast Changes – Things To Know." The success of the seminar led to plans for an ongoing series that addresses a broad range of health concerns faced by Amtrak's workforce.



Jacqueline Reardon, RN, Transitional Work Officer for Amtrak (left) with Dr. Alyssa Gillego at Amtrak's NYC headquarters.

This spring LHI conducted blood pressure screenings in connection with Amtrak Employee Appreciation Day at Penn Station. And in May Dr. David Carr-Locke, the Chief of Digestive Diseases at Beth Israel Medical Center, met with a group of Amtrak employees to discuss the importance of screening for colorectal cancer and other life threatening gastrointestinal conditions.



Dr. David Carr-Locke (left), Chief, Digestive Diseases Division, Beth Israel Medical Center, with an Amtrak employee at Penn Station in May.

LHI Helps Mexican-Americans Go Red

Takes Go Red For Women Day inside the Mexican Consulate in NYC

Cardiovascular disease claims the lives of nearly 500,000 American women each year. And Latino women are more likely to develop heart disease ten years earlier than other women. Yet many of them are unaware of the threat.

For this reason, The American Heart Association (AHA) created Go Red For Women, a movement to make sure women know they are at risk so they can take action to protect their health.

To support the Go Red Por Tu Corazon campaign during American Heart Month in February, Beth Israel's Latino Health Institute worked with the AHA and Phillips Beth Israel School of Nursing (PBISN), to create a special half-day event aimed at educating Mexican-American New Yorkers about the issue of women and heart disease.

Held at the Mexican consulate in New York City, the Go Red event offered health screenings and the tools and information women need to reduce their risk and lead a heart-healthy life. During the event bi-lingual nurses from PBISN demonstrated Hands-Only CPR. More than 30 CPR training kits were given out, including both adult and infant models. Body Mass Index and blood pressure screenings were also provided free of charge

along with a variety of informative healthy-heart literature.

"Many women do not realize heart disease is their number one killer," Said Karina Escamilla, a Mexican Consulate community affairs officer. "We thank the American Heart Association and Beth Israel for providing Mexican-American women the information and tools needed to live healthier, longer, stronger lives."



A woman practices infant CPR as part of Go Red for Women Day at the Mexican Consulate in New York.



(From left) Ivonne Quintero, Mexican Consulate staffer; Maria Coll, NJ/NYC Regional Director, Latino Health Equity, American Heart Association; Sharon Voytush, Executive Director, Beth Israel Latino Health Institute; Bernice Pass-Stern, Associate Dean, Phillips Beth Israel School of Nursing; Anabella Castillo, student, Phillips Beth Israel School of Nursing.

Colon Cancer: Preventable, Beatable, Treatable

Health seminars promote awareness and screening to save lives

Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States. It is a preventable disease, and without testing an estimated 1,400 more New Yorkers would die each year from it.

March was Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, and Beth Israel's Latino Health Institute (LHI) did its part to educate the public about the importance of testing for the disease, especially for those over 50 years of age.

LHI partnered with Beth Israel's Hospitalist Department to conduct six public seminars to promote colorectal cancer screening and alleviate fears associated with the process. At the conclusion of each lecture, Beth Israel's Colonoscopy Patient Navigator invited people to sign up for screening tests.

"Nine out of ten colorectal cancer cases and deaths can be prevented, but too many Americans over the age of 50 forego colonoscopies due to fear," said Dr. Dahlia Rizk, Beth Israel Medical Center's Hospitalist Program Director and an Assistant Professor at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. "Less than half of those who should be screened get screened."

Dr. Rizk headed a team of experts who participated in the Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month program. Her group included Dr. Roberto Gonzales, Dr. Lionel Santos D'souza and Dr. Gil Ascunce, each a Fellow in Beth Israel Medical Center's Division of Digestive Diseases; and Kendra Blanco, Beth Israel's Colonoscopy Patient Navigator, responsible for guiding patients through the screening process. Colon cancer survivor Cindy Martinez also participated, sharing her own personal experience and giving anyone who signed up for a screening a free teddy bear.



Dr. Dahlia Rizk, Director of Beth Israel Medical Center's Hospitalist Program, at the International Center for the Disabled to discuss Colorectal Cancer Awareness.

Two seminars were dedicated to specific populations. One was held at the Institute for the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly. Colon Cancer is the second most diagnosed cancer in Hispanic Americans. And two separate sessions were held at the International Center for the Disabled, one focusing on educating the staff while another targeted the patients in its rehabilitation and training programs.

Colon Cancer Awareness presentations were also given at the McBurney YMCA, the NYC Parks Department's Asser Levy Recreation Center and Stein Senior Center.

These seminars were a huge success. Not only were they well-attended, but patients signed up for colonoscopies at all six events.



Dr. Roberto Gonzalez, a Fellow in Beth Israel's Division of Digestive Diseases, listens to a question from an audience member at the Institute for the Puerto Rican / Hispanic Elderly during a Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month presentation.



Kendra Blanco (right), Beth Israel's Colonoscopy Patient Navigator with a woman who made an appointment for a screening test at a community outreach event.

In the News

As part of its Colon Cancer Awareness Month outreach, the Latino Health Institute took to the airwaves. Dr. Gil Ascunce, Fellow, Beth Israel's Division of Digestive Diseases, did a telephone interview that aired on two local Spanish-language radio stations, AMOR 93.1-FM and MEGA 97.9-FM.

Additionally, a story about colon cancer appeared in the March 10 edition of *El Diario La Prensa*, NYC's leading Latino newspaper. The article mentioned Beth Israel's outreach program and encouraged readers to attend the LHI seminar at the Institute for Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly.

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Colorectal Cancer survivor Cindy Martinez shared her story at several Colon Cancer Awareness events and gave anyone who signed up for a screening a free teddy bear.



LHI Hosts Cross-Cultural Communications Workshop for Health Care Providers

New York is one of the world's most multicultural cities. In a society as diverse as ours, culturally competent health care professionals are needed more than ever.

Achieving cultural competence in today's health care environment, which is filled with diverse patient and provider populations, is no easy task. This stew of cultures creates a fertile breeding ground for misunderstanding that can result in inferior patient care. So the Latino Health Institute hosted a workshop for health care professionals that focused on strategies that overcome language and cultural barriers.

Partnering with Sanofi-Aventis, LHI brought in keynote speaker Helen Dao, President and CEO of Dao Management Consulting Services, Inc. and a leading expert in cultural and linguistic competency (daoconsultingservices.com).

The event was held in Beth Israel's PACC Conference Center. Workshop participants included community health workers, nurses, health educators, dietitians and others who are members of the Sanofi-Aventis US Community Health Partnership, as well as Beth Israel staff.

The workshop began with an introduction from Henry Cruz, Community Health Liaison for Sanofi-Aventis. Cruz set the tone for the evening and discussed examples of effective culturally competent programs, including the training materials for the CDC's Road to Health Toolkit for diabetes prevention.

Dao then took participants through a 90-minute workshop that helped them appreciate the importance of cultural competence in health care. She began by providing a framework for the discussion, identified benefits to the health care system, and asked individuals to assess their own cultural competency. Then she focused on practical methods for health care providers to attain systemic and clinical cultural competence.

"Culturally sensitive health care can increase patient satisfaction, improve compliance and get better results," said Dr. George Castro, the Latino Health Institute's Associate Medical Director. "The bottom line is better communication leads to better medical care and better outcomes for all New Yorkers."

"The world is a small place. And the smaller it gets, the more important it becomes that we understand each other."

— From a Joint Commission publication about cultural sensitivity

LHI Gets American Heart Association Grant

Community impact project aims to improve cardiovascular health of youth

The federal government's 2010 Dietary Guidelines identify obesity as our nation's greatest public health threat. The Guidelines also note that a majority of adults and one in three children in the United States is overweight or obese. And we know that obesity is linked to a variety of health problems such as heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes and more. It is a crisis that is even more acute in minority communities, and one that we can no longer ignore.

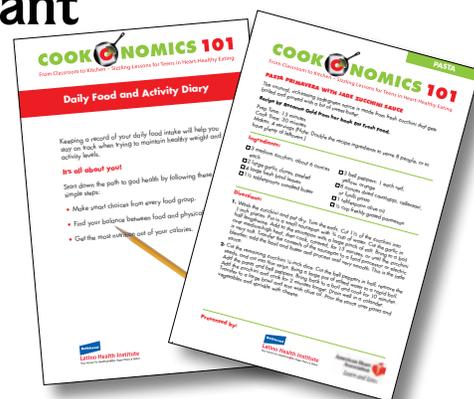
Beth Israel's Latino Health Institute (LHI) developed a healthful-eating program for teens that incorporates cooking, aspects of nutrition and facts about diet-related chronic disease. It has already had an impact in the community. And LHI successfully lobbied for an American Heart Association (AHA) grant to help fund and expand it.

LHI's in-school program is called *Cookonomics 101* — *From the Classroom to the Kitchen*. With AHA support it will

be implemented in four New York City high schools that serve primarily minority communities. *Cookonomics 101* offers a remedial education that consist of four one-hour seminars presented by a team of health, nutrition and culinary experts. The program teaches teenagers the basics of shopping for healthful foods and includes hands-on food preparation and cooking lessons.

"Elements of the program focus on the link between diet and cardiovascular health, the importance of plant-based foods in the diet, and understanding nutrition labels," explained LHI's Executive Director Sharon Voytush, RN, MS. "We also offer advice on meal planning and budgeting, portion control, and how to combine all this information into a lifestyle change for the entire household."

Cookonomics 101 not only offers a teen-friendly introduction to buying, cooking and eating fresh heart-healthy food, it also raises awareness of the fast food adver-



tising assault on young people and in so doing empowers them to make healthier food choices.

"It is a challenge to change eating behavior in adolescents, especially when they are constantly bombarded with media messages for junk food," said Amanda Mercep, Community Relations Manager for the American Heart Association in New York. "In 2009, the fast food industry spent \$4.2 billion pitching offerings like Domino's Wisconsin 6-cheese pizza and Burger King's 2,500 calorie pizza burger. We think Beth Israel's program has a chance to cut through the clutter."

LHI Helps Seniors Build Better Bones for a Better Life

Beth Israel's Latino Health Institute has partnered with the University Settlement to present Better Bones, a program focused on one of the most prevalent health problems seniors face – osteoporosis.

Conceived as a three-year project, the first phase of Better Bones got underway last fall when health professionals from Beth Israel conducted osteoporosis screenings at University Settlement's Houston Street Center to identify women and men age 60 and over who either have osteoporosis or are at significant risk for developing it.

Seniors at risk of developing osteoporosis were invited to join Better Bones and get access to a variety of activities designed to improve bone density, build strength, improve balance and flexibility, and reduce the risk of falls and fractures. Program activities in the first year were ongoing throughout the winter and will wrap up in June. Better Bones will start anew in September, 2011.

Better Bones is part of University Settlement's "Health-Art-Recreation-Technology Program" for members age 60 and over, known as the Senior HeART Program. The HeART program aims to enhance the health and overall quality of life for seniors in the Lower East Side through group-based physical, artistic, and intellectual pursuits, taking full advantage of the state-of-the-art Houston Street Center. It provides services to more than 500 seniors per year and operates seven days per week.

Better Bones offers a variety of ways for seniors to build stronger, healthier bones. In addition to osteoporosis screenings, program components include a schedule of physical activities designed by certified trainers exclusively for Better Bones participants and monthly health education seminars led by experts from Beth Israel. Seminar topics covered include the risks and rewards of osteoporosis drugs,



Attia Miller, a health educator from Beth Israel's Karpas Health Information Center, (right) uses an ultrasound bone density scanner to screen a Better Bones program registrant for osteoporosis at University Settlement.

addressing bone fractures, and fall prevention. Upcoming lectures in the series will focus on Vitamin D and the role of nutrition in addressing bone diseases as well as a seminar dedicated to often-overlooked impact of osteoporosis in men.



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