
UIC News Tips

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UIC HELPS COMMUNITIES FIGHT HIGH PREVALENCE OF DIABETES

African-Americans and Latinos on Chicago's Southeast Side are getting help in the fight against diabetes, thanks to a new grant received by the University of Illinois at Chicago.

The Midwest Latino Health Research, Training and Policy Center, part of the Jane Addams College of Social Work at UIC, has been awarded a three-year, \$2.4 million federal demonstration grant by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The grant will help implement a diabetes action plan aimed at reducing disparities in diabetes risks, complications and associated disabilities among Latinos and African-Americans on the city's Southeast Side.

A UIC study shows an increased prevalence of type 2 (non-insulin-dependent) diabetes in six Latino and African-American communities on the Southeast Side of the city. As a result of the study, UIC has partnered with community groups and residents to form the Chicago Southeast Diabetes Community Action Coalition.

The coalition will present key findings of the study during a community forum **Dec. 14 at 10:30 a.m. at the South Chicago Library, 9055 S. Houston Ave.**

"Cultural, environmental and socioeconomic factors are associated with the high prevalence of type 2 diabetes and its risk factors," said Aida Giachello, associate professor of social work and director of the Midwest Latino Health Research, Training and Policy Center. "The coalition was formed to change the social norms leading to the risk of developing diabetes and to assure that people living with diabetes receive the necessary quality of care, support and resources."

The study indicates that 17 percent of African-Americans and 11 percent of Latinos in the six community areas have developed type 2 diabetes. The statewide average for non-whites is 8 percent.

Additionally, the incidence of gestational diabetes (glucose intolerance of pregnancy) is higher among women in the area, placing them at risk of eventually developing overt diabetes. The study also discovered that community residents had very limited knowledge about diabetes causes and symptoms.

"Diabetes is a costly disease, and this coalition will aid in correcting the health disparities that are prevalent in this area," said Giachello. "Through this community forum, we will present our action plan and create a united front of community leaders and residents working together towards early intervention with people that have diabetes and those that are at risk for diabetes."

The study was funded under a cooperative agreement from the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention - National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion under its Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH 2010) initiative.

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