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Health Equity Updates

July, 2011

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Alliance to Reduce Disparities In Diabetes

Diabetes is a group of diseases marked by high levels of blood glucose, also called blood sugar, resulting from defects in insulin production, insulin action or both. Diabetes can lead to serious complications and premature death. By working together, people with diabetes, their support networks, and their health care providers can reduce the occurrence of diabetes complications.¹

As the American population ages and becomes increasingly diverse, the consequences of inadequate health care to low-income, underserved, uninsured and underinsured groups are becoming progressively serious, particularly for those who have or are at risk for developing diabetes. Diabetes affects 25.8 million people (about 8.3 percent of the U.S. population²).

As the costs associated with this disease skyrocket, it is critical not only to understand how and why disparities exist, but also to invest in prevention and management initiatives that can address the special needs of underserved communities. ([read article here](#)).

Focus Forward Video Featuring Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity

The Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity was recently featured in the Baptist Medical Center's Focus Forward Video Series. To watch the video, please click [here](#):

Community Impact Champion - Larry Oppengaard



For 16 years, Larry Oppegaard of Greensboro has been educating people about the health risks of radon, the colorless and odorless radioactive gas known to cause cancer. Radon is present in many homes, unbeknownst to the occupants. EPA calls it "The Silent Killer".

Larry has revealed the health dangers of radon gas in homes to his Clients while in business as a NC Licensed Home Inspector for 16 years. He has performed radon measurements in thousands of homes. In 2005, Larry earned Dual Certifications from the National Environmental Health Association (NEHA). One certification qualifies him to accurately measure radon levels. The other certification qualifies him to design and install effective radon elimination systems. During the past six years, he has constructed hundreds of pipe-and-fan systems in all types of homes throughout central North Carolina. His business, known as Radon Rid, is run on principles of environmental awareness. Larry minimizes its impact on the planet through diligent practice of the Reduce-Reuse-Recycle philosophy. (read bio [here](#))

"I OWE"

by A J Allen, Class of 2014
A poem for Dr. Maya Angelou

I am a non- traditional student and worked at a Cancer hospital with surgeons, oncologists, and clinical trial researchers and it was with the encouragement from a Robotic surgeon that I worked for that I finished my classes while working as a surgical tech, a group leader for an art therapy/ sports program for kids that had parents with Cancer, and a sitter with at risk patients (burns, cardiothoracic, ICU and suicidal). There were some long days where I did not think I would ever see the light at the end of the tunnel. But whether it was kindness from strangers, or witnessing patients fight bravely for their survival against their respective disease (one being my friend and coworker who passed away to Cancer), or people who basically adopted me into their family for the holidays there has always been a reason to be inspired to pay it forward. I thought to write a letter or poem discussing the words of wisdom Dr. Maya Angelou bestowed on us in a fireside chat and to incorporate some of the concerns students expressed about overcoming obstacles and living up to expectations would be the best way to give back and say thank you to a role model who has given so much to the community here at Wake Forest and out in the World. In writing the poem I thought it would only be fair to address the issue of finding one's voice and identity ironically like Dr. Maya Angelou had to do herself from both a female and male perspective. I also wanted to highlight how in our youth we attribute our success to our own talent and hard work but as we become more mature we realize that its with the help and support of others to provide that opportunity and motivation often with no direct reward that allows a person to reach their true potential and that no one does it alone. I called the poem I owe because we owe it to ourselves to make the most of the opportunities created by the goodwill and sacrifice of others and we owe it to the people who believed in us to develop our gifts and give back to the community.



Please click here to [read and enjoy](#) my poem.

New Website Helps Spanish-speaking Patients Communicate More Effectively With Their Medical Providers

Human Resources and Services Administration would like to make you aware of the following information...

New website helps Spanish-speaking patients communicate more effectively with their medical providers

Conozca las preguntas (Know the questions), a new Spanish-language website of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) located at www.ahrq.gov/preguntas, offers Spanish-speaking patients tips to improve their communication with their medical providers.

AHRQ data show that the proportion of Hispanics reporting poor communication with their providers is widening.

The website also features downloadable public service announcements (PSAs) from AHRQ's nationwide campaign with the Ad Council.

A special website for mobile phone users is also available at <http://4in.fo/Y9SAwg>, and those interested in receiving biweekly tips on talking with their doctors can get them by texting 80676/Preguntas. For a free, continuous-loop DVD of the public service ads, *Abre la boca (Open your mouth)*, for waiting room showing, as well as free supplies of *Conoce usted cuales son las preguntas correctas que debe hacer? (Do You Know the Right Questions to Ask?)*, a bilingual card with 10 key questions patients may want to ask their medical providers, contact bob.isquith@ahrq.hhs.gov.

The US Department of Health and Human Services has announced new draft standards to improve the monitoring of health data by race, ethnicity, sex, primary language, and disability status, and begins planning for the collection of LGBT health data

HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced new draft standards for collecting and reporting data on race, ethnicity, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) populations. Both efforts aim to help researchers, policy makers, health providers and advocates to identify and address health disparities afflicting these communities. (read entire report [here](#))

Publications

"Addressing Race and Genetics: Health Disparities in the Age of Personalized Medicine." The paper asserts that "certain issues regarding racial and ethnic health disparities need to be addressed in order for personalized medicine to offer the greatest benefit to all."

http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/06/pdf/race_genetics.pdf

<http://ajph.aphapublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/AJPH.2011.300133v1>

To learn more about racial and ethnic disparities in influenzavaccination during the 2009-H1N1 pandemic, we examined nationallyrepresentative survey data of US adults. We found disparitiesin 2009-H1N1 vaccine uptake between Blacks and Whites (13.8%vs 20.4%); Whites and Hispanics had similar 2009-H1N1 vaccinationrates. Physician offices were the dominant location for 2009-H1N1and seasonal influenza vaccinations, especially among minorities.Our results highlight the need for a better understanding ofhow communication methods and vaccine distribution strategiesaffect vaccine uptake within minority communities. (Am J PublicHealth. Published online ahead of print May 12, 2011: e1-e4.doi:10.2105/AJPH.2011.300133)

[Researchers Uncover Potential Genetic Link Behind Higher Rates of Type 2](#)

Diabetes Among African Americans

African Americans are known to have higher rates of type 2 diabetes than Caucasians, but the reasons behind this association are not well understood. Now, a new study suggests that the answer may lie in their genes.

A team of researchers from Wake Forest University and Johns Hopkins University reported in the journal *BioMed Central Genetics* that African Americans more efficiently convert omega-6 polyunsaturated acids (PUFA) into long-chain PUFAs.

Place Matters National Conference



A one day conference to address the relationship between place and health, particularly as it pertains to racial and ethnic health inequities. The conference will convene key stakeholders, including grassroots leaders, elected officials, researchers, public health practitioners, policymakers, and community organizers. ([read about conference](#))

Book Corner

Multicultural Medicine and Health Disparities- David Satcher, MD, PhD and Rubens J. Pamies, MD.

An essential guide to clinical issues encountered during management of patients of varied cultural and economic backgrounds This essential text assists health care students and practitioners in delivering skilled and appropriate care to all patients, no matter their ethnicity, country of origin, cultural history, or access to services. Presenting need-to-know and often hard to find information on differences in access to health care, immunization histories, disease prevalence, attitudes about health and provision of care, and much more, this resource provides practical, authoritative, and specific guidance.

We hope you have have enjoyed this month's Health Equity Updates. Please e-mail with any comments or suggestions.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Ronny Bell
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