



Seeds4Hope

A program of the Windsor Essex County Cancer Centre Foundation



2014 SEEDS4HOPE GRANT RECIPIENT

Dr. Maher El-Masri

“Exploring the impact of implementing a community-based outreach and navigation cancer prevention and screening program on the uptake of cancer screening in an immigrant community.”

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH PROJECT

Although there has been a significant decline in cancer mortality rates in Canada over the past two decades, disparities across race, culture, and socioeconomic status remain a concern. Immigrant populations tend to experience cultural and language barriers that limit their access to cancer screening, and early detection and diagnosis programs. In fact, anecdotal evidence suggests that immigrants are more likely to present with advanced stages of cancer due to lack of access to screening programs, leading to poor prognosis and survival. This is especially concerning given that immigrants in Windsor, Ontario constitute over 22% of the total population. Therefore, the purpose of this proposal is to implement and evaluate an alternative model of care through the implementation of a “Community-based Outreach and Navigation Cancer Prevention and Screening Program” that will focus on increasing cancer screening uptake and early detection in under- or never-served immigrant populations. As an initial step, the program will be implemented in the Arabic community, the largest and fastest growing immigrant group in Windsor. This research will be carried out in partnership with a primary care center and stakeholders from within the target community.

The proposed program is designed to provide outreach and system navigation services to the immigrant Arabic community of Windsor. An “Outreach Cancer Screening Navigator” will educate participants about cancer screening and early detection programs, and will act as a navigator who will coordinate and support their screening and follow up activities. The importance of this project stems from the fact that it proposes an innovative participatory approach to overcome the barriers associated with the underutilization of screening and early detection among immigrant communities. In addition, the proposed project emphasizes increasing the uptake of screening, as opposed to knowledge increase, as the primary outcome. This is especially important because the literature suggests that an increase in knowledge does not always include identification of the predictors of cancer screening and calculation of the change in actual cancer screening and follow up rates among study participants.

HOW THIS RESEARCH HELPS ADVANCE QUALITY CANCER CARE IN OUR COMMUNITY

The implementation of an outreach navigation model as an alternative model of care is anticipated to positively impact cancer screening and early detection rates within the under-served immigrant Arabic population in Windsor. The participatory action approach of our proposed model and the engagement of stakeholders from the community are likely to increase the interest in the program, which could further enhance its success. We anticipate that the program will result in increased knowledge and awareness of cancer and its risk factors as well as increase participation in cancer screening and early detection/diagnosis programs among the Arabic population of Windsor. If successful, the proposed program could be expanded to other immigrant communities, which could ultimately translate into significant cost savings and positive health outcomes such as improved survival. In fact, our proposed program is aligned with Cancer Care Ontario’s recent emphasis on cancer screening and early detection as a priority in the battle against cancer.