Vitamin D and Hypertension: Racial/ Ethnic Disparities

This study aims to determine the relationship between Vitamin D levels and hypertension status and whether this relationship differs by race/ethnicity, thereby addressing the disparities in health seen between racial/ethnic groups in the area of hypertension. This will take the form of a cross-sectional study by using a convenience sample of 115 African American and 115 Caucasian subjects recruited for the North Texas Healthy Heart Study who have had clinical and behavioral measures collected as well as plasma stored. Plasma concentration of 25-hydroxy Vitamin D will be measured using an enzyme-linked immunoassay kit, and a participant will be considered hypertensive if the average of two blood pressure measurements was greater than 140/90 mmHg, if they self-reported being hypertensive, or if they were prescribed any anti-hypertensive medications.

Preliminary analysis reveals a disparity in vitamin d levels between African Americans and Caucasians. Further analysis of hypertension and behavioral measures is currently underway.

(PI: T Sattar; Funded by: Texas Academy of Family Physicians Foundation)

PRIMARY CARE Research Institute

Vickery is Active

Vickery is Active is a planning project to collect qualitative and quantitative data to guide a small-scale implementation project to make environmental changes to the Vickery Meadow neighborhood in order to increase access to physical activity. Sixty-one adults and 63 children were recruited through community centers and afterschool programs to participate in an hour to hour and a half focus group discussion. Focus groups were conducted in English and Spanish, and a translator was available for ethnic groups who spoke languages besides English or Spanish.

Key informant interviews were conducted with 21 individuals who are local stakeholders, such as business owners and school principals. Qualitative data analyses indicated that security issues were most frequently reported as barriers to being physical active in Vickery Meadow by adults such as fear of attack or reports of crime. Environmental issues were most frequently reported by children as barriers to being physically active such as sidewalks in disrepair, unsafe crosswalks, and too much traffic. Solutions to improve access to physical activity centered on environmental and security related changes such as installing more lights, increasing police presence, and building new sidewalks and crosswalks. These findings in combination with information from the key informant interviews will guide the development of a small scale implementation project to improve access to physical activity in the Vickery Meadow Community. (PI: Kitzman-Ulrich, funded by the Community Council of Greater Dallas).