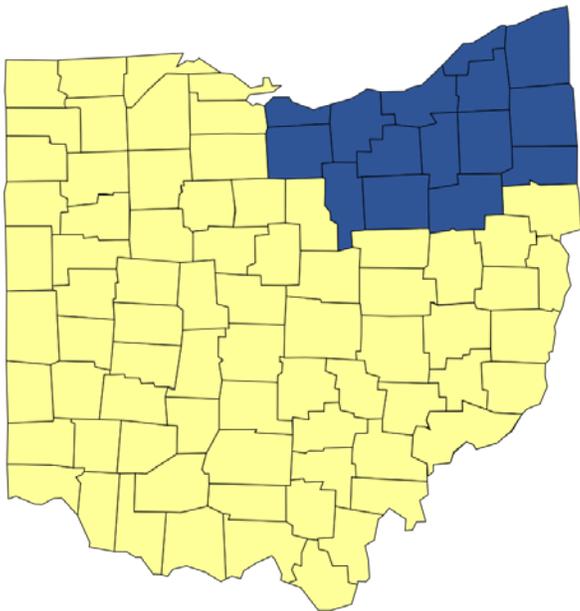


Community Outreach and Engagement Case Comprehensive Cancer Center at Case Western Reserve University

Catchment Area

The catchment area for the Case Comprehensive Cancer Center at Case Western Reserve University (Case CCC) encompasses 15 counties in Northeast Ohio. We care for traditionally underserved populations, which include African Americans in Cleveland, Akron, and Youngstown; the rural areas of Ashtabula County; and the Amish in Geauga County. Poverty is a major concern and a daily reality for many in these communities, linked to elevated levels of chronic stress, tobacco use, and obesity.



Community Engagement Focus

The proposed project aims to integrate community outreach and engagement (COE) activities into basic science research and training programs within Case CCC to increase the basic science research that is responsive to its unique catchment area.

At a Glance

Case Comprehensive Cancer Center is using the COE supplement as an opportunity to focus on in-reach to the cancer center membership. Our in-reach project began with in-depth interviews with members of our cancer center's molecular program. Results from those interviews led to the development of a cancer center program leader retreat with members of the cancer center Community Advisory Board (CAB), the creation of a survey of the entire cancer center membership and trainees to assess their understanding of and readiness for COE and the development of an internal COE advisory board consisting of program leaders and cancer center leadership.

Collaborators

Our collaborators included members of the Molecular Oncology program at the Case CCC, program leaders of the six research programs at the Case CCC, researchers from our Prevention Research Center for Healthy Neighborhoods and members of our CAB.

The Approach

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 individuals in the Molecular Oncology program. Interviews were transcribed, and themes related to training and service needs for COE and opportunities were identified from participants, including their awareness, experiences, needs, and what they have found helpful.

Themes from the interviews included communication, opportunities for engagement, catchment area awareness, and barriers to COE. Participants discussed the importance of and interest in COE. Needs and potential service offerings around communication that would be valuable to scientists include strategies for communicating science and tailoring dissemination to the audience as

well as opportunities to practice, receive feedback, and see examples of successful communication. Opportunities for engagement include relationship building, use of media, presentations, informal discussions, and educational opportunities for community members as well as for scientists to learn from community members and patients. Potential barriers include awareness of the catchment area and how to access relevant catchment area information, as well as awareness of opportunities for the benefit of COE.

Themes from the interviews have informed the development of a survey that has been distributed to all Case CCC members to assess (1) a general understanding of COE; (2) COE in the context of the member's research; (3) member readiness to engage with COE; (4) identification of community partners and audiences; and (5) interest in specific COE services and supports. Members will indicate their program so that data can be compiled for the Case CCC as well as organized by research program to guide COE in-reach activities in the coming year.

In addition to creating a survey to be disseminated throughout the cancer center, the COE team also provided specific opportunities for cancer center members to have deeper engagement with the cancer center's CAB. Comments from the interviews indicated that many of the interviewees were not familiar with the cancer center's CAB or its role in community outreach. Cancer center members were invited to present their research at CAB meetings. A template for the presentations includes the following:

1. What is the "big problem" your research is trying to solve?
2. What's the specific question you are working on right now?
3. When you have the answers to the previous questions, what happens next? How will it impact cancer outcomes?
4. Do you have specific requests/questions for the CAB?

In addition to presenting at the CAB meetings, a retreat was held for the program leaders that included members of the CAB. Program leaders had an opportunity to learn more about CAB members' experiences with disparities and working in the community. During the retreat, a mini CAB meeting was held that provided an opportunity for program leaders to experience a cancer center member presenting his research to CAB members and the type of engagement that follows the presentation. This led to an excellent discussion with the program leaders and CAB members regarding exploring opportunities to engage at the beginning of research projects and helping to inform future research questions.

You put in front of us the reality of what occurs. There is a realization of a lack of thought into how diversity can impact research. As we discussed in the retreat, basic scientists can understand the issues better.

**—James P. Basilion, PhD, Program Leader
Cancer Imaging**

Implementation

Guidance/Sustainability

The leadership of the cancer center has been instrumental in supporting COE as an interwoven component of the research and the training throughout the cancer center.

In order to sustain the in-reach COE efforts, an internal advisory board (IAB) has been established. The IAB consists of one of our program leaders from each of our six programs to serve as liaisons for their program members. The IAB will build capacity of the program leaders' understanding of COE and allow them to more effectively communicate the types of support and services that members may need from the Case CCC Office of COE. The first meeting of the IAB will be in January to review the responses of the COE survey distributed to cancer center members.

I believe few in the room recognized the cultural limitations they harbor. Linguistic alienation and a disconnect from norms, values, and folkways of Black, Brown, and others will continually stand as barriers toward the development of effective program policy and outreach efforts.

**—James P. Babilion, PhD, Program Leader
Cancer Imaging**

Community Advisory Board Updates



Gulnar Feerasta
LGBT Community Center



Greg Archer
Teach to Beat Cancer Program,
Case Comprehensive Cancer
Center, Survivor



Marvin McMickle, DMin, PhD
Antioch Baptist Church,
Survivor



Juan Molina Crespo
Consultamos LLC



Elizabeth Jones
National Coalition of 100
Black Women Greater
Cleveland Chapter



Lisa Wheeler Cooper
Care Alliance



Ron Lloyd
Neighborhood Family
Practice



Karen Butler
Northeast Ohio Neighborhood
Health Services (NEON)



Veronica Rice
Community Member/
Survivor



When you need help now*

Signature Health*
Rural-Serving FQHC



case.edu/cancer



Individuals/organizations who have recently joined our community advisory board to engage with cancer center scientists. Our full CAB consists of 30 members.

Find Out More

Learn more about the Case Comprehensive Cancer Center, visit www.case.edu/cancer.

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Community outreach and engagement (COE) activities across the translational research continuum

National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated cancer centers' COE efforts should span all cancer center programs, including basic, clinical, translational, and population research. In FY20, NCI issued a call for Cancer Center Administrative Supplements to support COE activities that focus on either basic science or the translation of evidence-based interventions into community practice. The long-term goal of the supplement initiative is to build capacity for cancer centers' COE programs to adapt and implement evidence-based programs and successfully collaborate with cancer center investigators across research programs and in partnership with community members. To learn more, visit us at <https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/research-emphasis/coe>