

**NATIONAL PLAN
OF ACTION ON
ASIAN AMERICAN
WOMEN AND
BREAST CANCER**

**NATIONAL ASIAN WOMEN'S HEALTH ORGANIZATION
MAY 1997**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

NAWHO would like to gratefully acknowledge the following sponsors of our mission to eradicate breast cancer by involving Asian American women at every level of the fight against this devastating disease:

Bristol-Myers Squibb, Co., Oncology/Immunology
The Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation
Office of Minority Health, Department of Health and Human Services
Office on Women's Health, Department of Health and Human Services
Genentech, Inc.

for co-sponsoring the first National Asian American Breast Cancer Summit and Follow-up Meeting

We would also like to thank the following additional foundations for their generous support of NAWHO's Asian American Women's Breast and Cervical Cancer Project:

The San Francisco Foundation
California Community Foundation
Contra Costa County Breast Cancer Partnership
The Breast Cancer Fund

Finally, NAWHO would like to give special thanks to the **National Breast Cancer Coalition** (NBCC) and the **American Cancer Society** (ACS) for their generous support and technical assistance on the National Plan of Action on Asian American Women and Breast Cancer and the Asian American Women's Breast and Cervical Cancer Project.

National Asian Women's Health Organization

250 Montgomery Street, Suite 900

San Francisco, CA 94104

Phone: 415.989.9747

FAX: 415.989.9758

E-Mail: nawho@nawho.org

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

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The American Cancer Society (ACS) is pleased to support the National Asian Women's Health Organization (NAWHO) and the National Asian American Breast Cancer Plan of Action. We congratulate NAWHO for their leadership in developing this plan of action, and are grateful for the invitation to participate in the discussions they sponsored with other organizations to establish the foundation for this document. Through continued collaboration, the organizations who participated in the development of the plan, as well as others with a commitment to Asian American women and breast cancer, can make progress on this important issue.

The goals of the action plan are consistent with the mission of ACS, and we look forward to future opportunities to join NAWHO in raising awareness about the needs of Asian American women, and working to build public health infrastructure to meet those needs. The American Cancer Society is the nationwide community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem by preventing cancer, saving lives and diminishing suffering from cancer, through research, education, advocacy and service.

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NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION ON ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN AND BREAST CANCER

As part of the Asian American Women's Breast and Cervical Cancer Project, the National Asian Women's Health Organization (NAWHO), brought together leaders with expertise in breast cancer research, data collection, early detection, treatment, and advocacy to develop a comprehensive National Plan of Action on Asian American Women and Breast Cancer.

This Plan of Action is based on the information, strategies, and recommendations provided during the first National Asian American Breast Cancer Summit held in New York City on September 16, 1996, and the subsequent Follow-up Meeting held in Yountville, California on January 31, 1997. During the Summit, leaders in the fight against breast cancer discussed a number of innovative strategies to impact breast cancer in the Asian American community. The Summit participants identified four priority issues: addressing gaps in research and data; assuring that outreach and early detection programs are culturally and linguistically competent; improving accessibility of treatment programs; and increasing the involvement of the Asian American community in the nationwide effort to combat breast cancer.

During the Follow-up Meeting, experts offered their recommendations in the following specific areas: improving community-based intervention programs (screening, early detection, and treatment); building public and private partnerships; developing a better understanding of the etiology of breast cancer in Asian American women, including not only risk factors, but increasing intergenerational risk; increasing data collection on Asian American women; involving Asian American women in clinical trials; and expanding advocacy efforts to actively engage Asian American women. The National Plan of Action on Asian American Women and Breast Cancer incorporates these recommendations, and will be implemented by NAWHO and other agencies to increase the involvement of Asian American women in breast cancer research, outreach, education, and advocacy.

THE CHALLENGE

According to the United States Census Bureau, Asian Americans represent the fastest growing and most diverse ethnic groups in the United States. By the year 2020, the Asian American population will have increased from 8 million in 1992 to 20 million. Despite this growing presence, there have been few efforts to gather information and data on the more than 30 different ethnic groups who comprise the Asian and Pacific Islander community. Consequently, little is known about the specific health needs of this heterogeneous population. This is especially true regarding breast cancer.

The lack of understanding about breast cancer in this community is complicated by the fact that Asian women living in the United States come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, and have varying levels of English proficiency, cultural integration, and economic status. The specific health needs of Asian Americans have often been overlooked due to stereotypes, among the most misleading being the "model minority" myth, which perpetuates the impression that all Asian Americans are prosperous, educated, and healthy. This stereotype simply is not true for the vast numbers of Asians in the United States, and has masked the enduring barriers and problems that many Asian Americans encounter.

This lack of information and understanding translates into a lack of resources, services, and opportunities to meet the unique needs of Asian American women. The lack of extensive research on breast cancer and Asian American women also contributes to the inaccurate perception that all Asian American women are at lower risk for breast cancer compared with white American women. The Asian American community's own lack of health information and education, combined with the uninformed neglect of the medical community only reinforces the general notion that breast cancer is not a serious health problem in this community. For breast cancer in particular, this compounds the already pervasive problem of getting women to participate in screening programs, regardless of their socioeconomic or cultural backgrounds.

Cancer screening rates among Asian American women are very low. Asian and Pacific Islander women had lower rates of Pap test screening and mammography and clinical breast examination than any other United States racial or ethnic population in 1991-1992. A California study of 167 Chinese American women revealed that 69% reported no understanding of mammograms, while a survey of 1200 Vietnamese women in California found that 34% had never heard of mammography.

Changing demographics dictate the need for a new perspective on breast cancer in the Asian American population. While breast cancer incidence and mortality rates for Asian American women are the lowest of all women in the U.S., it is not possible to adjust these surveillance statistics on the basis of immigration status. Although breast cancer incidence and mortality rates are lower in Asian countries, and therefore lower among recent Asian immigrants to the U.S., this protective effect steadily erodes with each successive generation, and lifetime risk soon approaches that of white American women. Breast cancer incidence rates among Japanese and Chinese American women (Asian American ethnic groups with a majority having lived in the U.S. for three to five generations) are significantly higher than those of their counterparts in Japan and China. Thus, while it is true that incidence in the U.S. is lower in aggregate, four observations are critical to understanding the urgency of the problem faced by Asian American women. First, aggregate rates lead to stereotypes that are a poor basis for individual counseling; second, even though breast cancer incidence and mortality are lower, the disease burden in this population is not inconsequential. Third, the neglect of these problems will worsen over time as the population of Asian Americans grows into a larger group with a growing number of women who have equivalent risk of breast cancer. Lastly, the assumption of minimal disease burden contributes to diagnosis at stages with poorer prognosis.

We are concerned that the assumption that Asians do not get breast cancer may give Asian American women and the providers that serve them a false sense of security, and discourage breast cancer education and advocacy efforts for this population. It is clear that breast cancer educational and outreach methods have been less effective in reaching the Asian American population. It is critical that breast cancer information and services are provided to Asian Americans in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner, and that health care providers, government officials, and researchers assist in shattering the myth of low breast cancer risk.

To work towards this goal, a comprehensive Plan of Action for systematically addressing all aspects of Asian American women's access to and involvement with breast cancer education and detection services is needed. This action plan will assist NAWHO and other agencies serving Asian Americans in catalyzing national efforts to advance research on breast cancer, improve accessibility to early detection and treatment programs for Asian American women, and encourage their participation and pro-active involvement in advocacy efforts.

NAWHO AND THE ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN'S BREAST AND CERVICAL CANCER PROJECT

The National Asian Women's Health Organization (NAWHO) is a non-profit, community-based health advocacy organization committed to improving the overall health status of Asian women and girls. NAWHO was founded in response to the absence of comprehensive and pro-active research and services addressing the health issues of Asian women and girls, as well as the lack of programs promoting equality for and the self-empowerment of Asian American women.

NAWHO created the Asian American Women's Breast and Cervical Cancer Project in 1995, when participants at NAWHO's first national Asian women's health conference, "Coming Together, Moving Strong: Mobilizing an Asian Women's Health Movement" voiced their concerns about the need for a pro-active stance on breast cancer from the Asian American community. There was an obvious void in the growing nationwide fight against breast cancer, with little representation of Asian American women in mainstream efforts and little attention being given to breast cancer within the Asian American community itself. Hence, NAWHO began the Asian American Women's Breast and Cervical Cancer Project as an innovative and unique program that would address breast cancer and Asian American women at the community, medical, and public policy level.

In addition to convening the first National Asian American Breast Cancer Summit and Follow-Up Meeting, NAWHO has conducted regional training sessions for health care providers to improve outreach to the Asian American community in early detection and screening programs. These sessions are based on a training manual developed by NAWHO to assist providers and health educators in tailoring their current breast cancer programs to involve Asian American women. The sessions strive to encourage providers, clinicians, and health educators to become greater advocates for the health of Asian American women by increasing their awareness of Asian women's health needs and issues.

NAWHO is the only Asian American organization serving on the Board of the National Breast Cancer Coalition, an advocacy group with over 50,000 individual members and 400 organizational members, that has helped raised millions for breast cancer research and an immeasurable level of heightened awareness about this devastating disease. In this NAWHO is bringing the voice of Asian Americans into the mainstream fight against breast cancer; working with a number of public and private sector agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Cancer Society to ensure that the needs of Asian American women are incorporated into breast cancer research development, educational efforts, and treatment programs.

I. RESEARCH

I. RESEARCH

A. EXAMINING INCREASE IN RISK AMONG ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN

The epidemiology of breast cancer among Asian American women is linked to migration patterns. As women move to the United States from Asian countries, her chances of getting breast cancer increase, and the risk of breast cancer in successive generations increases as well. This increased risk among Asian American women and their daughters is presumably related to the loss of protective factors from low-incidence Asian countries and gain in risk for breast cancer associated with residence in the United States. However, very little is understood about the factors underlying this observation, and how they may vary by ethnicity and generation status. The heterogeneity of the Asian American population (i.e. ethnicity, generation status) poses a challenge to research investigations of breast cancer risk, but must not be neglected in study designs.

The lack of understanding regarding the specific etiology of breast cancer is no less complicated for Asian American women than for other U.S. women. For example, although differences in diet have been investigated, when studying dietary factors as risk factors for breast cancer among Asian American women, the influence of Asian cultural food staples are difficult to isolate, making it unclear whether a relationship is due to an actual biological connection or to other factors. Further, few studies have investigated the relative importance of well-established risk factors (e.g. menstrual/reproductive, family history) among Asian Americans. What is clear is that risk of breast cancer is lower in Asian countries than in the U.S., and when an Asian woman

migrates to the U.S., her risk of breast cancer increases, and that increased risk is passed on to her daughter, and daughter's daughters until it is nearly equivalent to the average risk of other U.S. women.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- There must be more research aimed at identifying reasons for the increase of breast cancer in Asian American women, and more investigation of risk factor theories such as the differences associated with residence in the U.S. as compared to Asian countries. Researchers must work to ensure that differences (i.e. ethnicity, generation status) among subgroups of Asian Americans are examined and documented when conducting research on breast cancer.
- There must be more research on the comparative relevance of risk factors observed in white American women to Asian American women, taking into account the complexity and multi-factorial etiology of breast cancer (i.e., breast cancer is not a one-exposure disease). A better understanding of the lower risk for women residing in Asian countries, and the increasing risk over time after migration to the U.S., holds immense potential for understanding how breast cancer might be controlled. Thus, this research would benefit all women.

II. DATA COLLECTION

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A. INCREASING AMOUNT AND ETHNIC SPECIFICITY OF BREAST CANCER DATA

Despite lower overall incidence and mortality rates, breast cancer still is the leading cause of cancer mortality for Asian American women. While national and state-based surveillance systems provide extensive amounts of data on white Americans, there are considerable gaps in the quality and coverage of comparable information on breast cancer in Asian American women, including age- and ethnic-specific information.

Lack of adequate data on Asian American women and breast cancer contributes to the misperception that Asians are not at risk for breast cancer. In turn, this may lead Asian American women to have a false sense of security about their own risk of breast cancer, and it may discourage funding for breast cancer education and advocacy efforts for this population.

Gathering ethnic- and generation- specific data is extremely important in order to gain an understanding of the epidemiology of breast cancer in Asian American women. For example, data from the National Cancer Institute's SEER Program indicate that between 1988 and 1992, the incidence of breast cancer among the Asian American population ranged from 29 per 100,000 for Korean American women to 82 per 100,000 for Japanese American women. Vietnamese Americans, Chinese Americans, and Filipino Americans had incidence rates of 38 per 100,000, 55 per 100,000, and 73 per 100,000 respectively.

Lack of adequate data systems contributes to the current inability to explain the differences in these rates. Also, little is known about the screening behavior of Asian populations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

■ Governments must strengthen their state and national capacity to carry out comprehensive programs to collect and use population-based data on breast cancer incidence and mortality among Asian Americans. Also, it is especially important that accessibility to services be regularly monitored. There is a critical need for reliable, comparable, and timely data on Asian American women. Data collection, analysis, and tracking must include ethnic subgroups of Asian American populations.

III. CLINICAL TRIALS

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A. ADDRESSING ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

The time required to participate in studies has a major impact on the recruitment and retention of Asian American women in clinical trials. Asian American women who work in hourly wage jobs economically cannot take the time off to participate in trials, nor to pay for the costs of any follow-up hospital or physician care not covered by the study. For many women, commitments to work, family, and their community often supersede any of their own health concerns. In addition, the health care providers that serve Asian Americans are not always aware of the availability of clinical trials for cancer patients, and are sometimes reluctant to refer a patient to new and experimental treatments over standard care.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- When recruiting for clinical trial participation among Asian Americans, researchers must design studies to take into account women's multiple roles and the demands on women's time, including child-rearing, household duties, and income-generating activities. When designing strategies for recruitment and retention of Asian American women in clinical trials, researchers must include the provision of follow-up care and referrals. In addition, there should be mechanisms available to cover follow-up physician and hospital fees that result from participation in clinical trials.
- Public and private sector agencies such as the National Cancer Institute and pharmaceutical companies should develop a strategy for involving the participation of Asian American women in clinical trials by working with Asian American community leaders and Asian American consumers in fostering a better public understanding and knowledge of clinical trials.
- Health care providers should communicate to patients the relative advantages and disadvantages of clinical trials in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner, to allow patients to make an informed decision about their treatment options.

A. ADVANCING SCREENING AND TREATMENT

Although early detection programs are now finding breast cancer at an earlier stage, methods of screening and treatment are invasive, potentially harmful in their use of radiation, and still do not detect breast cancer until 6-10 years into the course of the disease. Asian Americans are reluctant to utilize screening services because of the community's stigmatization of breast cancer as a fatal disease. Asian cultural norms treat such diseases as fate, as something that cannot be helped or fought against. The general fears of radiation and mastectomy, combined with the fact that many Asian Americans do not utilize any type of preventive care, contributes to breast cancer incidence in Asian American women found at later stages, creating an urgency for better treatment options.

The recent finding in breast cancer research of the BRCA1 and BRCA2 gene, whose mutations and alterations are found to increase a woman's lifetime risk of breast cancer, further complicates the issue of early detection and treatment for Asian American women. Although alterations in the genes are responsible for only 5% of all cases of breast cancer, its implications ranging from possible insurance discrimination, job discrimination, negative or positive psychological impact affect Asian American women significantly. Asian American women over the age of 65 have the highest suicide rate in the country, indicating a lack of psychosocial support structures for Asian American women. How will Asian American women deal with the depression and anxiety that may come from a positive test for the gene, which does not guarantee that a woman will get breast or cervical cancer? In addition, a

negative test, which does not guarantee that a woman will not get breast or cervical cancer, may further reinforce the myth among Asian Americans that they are not at risk for breast cancer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- While we encourage more Asian American women to utilize screening and early detection services, there is a critical need to work towards developing better screening technology and treatment options. There must be treatment that recognizes the justified concerns of the public toward radiation and mastectomy, in order to address the critical need of Asian American women with late stages of breast cancer.

- There must be legislative action to protect the consumer from discrimination, psychosocial risk, and misinformation. For Asian American women, this demands that issues of confidentiality, correct translation of information, and appropriate counseling be addressed. There has been a historical problem with informed consent and minority women, with clients not receiving adequate clinical information about the full range of services available. Since awareness of particular screening methods or treatment options and actual knowledge of their mechanism of action, availability, side effects, etc. are not always correlated, health care providers and health educators must identify effective strategies to ensure that Asian American women are fully informed and can demonstrate their understanding, particularly in the case of genetic testing.

V. GOVERNMENT AGENCY PROGRAMS

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A. INCREASING AVAILABILITY OF TREATMENT OPTIONS

There is limited funding allocated to government programs to cover the breast cancer diagnostic and treatment services necessary to meet the needs of Asian American, as well as other under-served women.

Once a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer through the federally-funded National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program (NBCCEDP), the legislation that authorizes the NBCCEDP does not permit payment for treatment services. However, many states are required by law to provide breast cancer treatment services for women when needed. For some Asian American women who may not be familiar with the health care system, navigating through a bureaucracy to obtain needed services and the necessary follow-up treatment in a timely manner is a problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- In order to be more comprehensive and meet the needs of all women, including Asian American women, government screening programs must include education, diagnostic, and treatment services.
- State programs must meet the legislative mandate to insure timely and appropriate breast cancer treatment for Asian American women, and work with community groups to ensure that women are aware of the process for obtaining these services.

B. ENSURING ACCESS

Access to existing government-sponsored programs offering breast cancer services and education is a critical need, particularly for under-served, non-English speaking women for whom these are the only services available.

When a woman comes in for a breast cancer screening, she may have symptoms for other illnesses. Although related categorical programs exist, providers at the breast cancer screening program may not know where patients can best access these services. For Asian American women who do not have high rates of utilization of health care services in general, this may be one of their few health care visits, and the only opportunity to be provided with health care for other problems.

RECOMMENDATIONS

■ In order to reach under-served populations, government programs must work with local agencies in these communities. These programs must also raise physicians' and other health providers' awareness of issues concerning breast cancer within the Asian American community. Further, they must work to ensure that the rescreening of women for breast cancer is a priority among health care providers.

■ Government programs should promote community participation in women's health services and decentralize management by forming partnerships with, and fostering the involvement of local Asian American community-based health organizations, private providers, and Asian American

consumers.

■ Government programs must ensure that their screening programs contain an education component which provides culturally-appropriate, accurate, and complete information on breast cancer to all clients, in order to empower women to seek preventive care, including the decision regarding when to begin having regular mammograms.

■ Federal agencies, especially CDC and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), should set specific goals for the number of women they will provide services for in order to evaluate their effectiveness in reaching the Asian American population. In addition, they should support more ethnic-specific breast and cervical cancer health promotion and education programs.

■ The availability of culturally-appropriate related health services, either on-site at government sponsored screening programs, or through a coordinated referral to public or private sector health care systems must be ensured.

■ Government bodies such as the Office of Women's Health in the Department of Health and Human Services, must incorporate strategies on improving access provided by breast cancer and Asian American women's health advocacy groups into their policy programs, utilizing recommendations made at the 1996 "Bridging the Gap: Enhancing Partnerships to Improve Minority Women's Health" Conference, held in Washington DC January 27-28, 1997.

C. MANAGING RESOURCES

There is no mechanism to ensure that duplication of programs or services does not occur. This problem particularly affects Asian American populations where resources are scarce, and can ill-afford lack of access to a full range of care, from screening to treatment. Efforts must be taken to assure a more effective and comprehensive delivery of services when resources are scarce.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- In order to avoid duplication, government programs must maximize coordination of services and clarify responsibilities and roles of service providers so that under-served Asian American women can particularly benefit from redistribution and better allocation of breast cancer resources and services.

- There should be more collaboration across federal and state programs and organizations to help pool necessary resources to support projects that will improve the breast cancer outreach and screening/early detection services to Asian American women.

- More funding must be allocated to develop a template for health educational materials for Asian Americans, as well as to develop and maintain databases of existing educational materials. This resource would promote best practices and minimize duplication of effort.

VI. COMMUNITY-BASED INTERVENTIONS

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A. IMPROVING OUTREACH TO ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN

Among all U.S. racial and ethnic populations, Asian American women have the lowest rate of mammography screening. Data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System show that in 1991-1992, only 48% of Asian American women aged 50 years and older reported having had a mammogram and clinical breast exam within the preceding two years. Although quality services exist, information is not being disseminated adequately enough in the Asian American community to affect screening behavior.

The low utilization rate of breast cancer screening methods among Asian American populations inevitably results in too many women being diagnosed at a later stage of disease. In addition, the allocation of culturally specific resources, such as breast cancer educational materials and services, for the Asian American population is difficult, due to the extreme ethnic diversity within the population.

Several cultural beliefs regarding health lead to delays in the diagnosis of breast cancer in Asian American communities. These include the stigmatization of breast cancer as a fatal disease, the belief in acceptance of fate and endurance of suffering, and not wanting to burden family members. NAWHO's past health assessments and recent health survey found that Asian American women's notions of health are shaped by the ways in which their roles are constructed in the family, community, and in the broader socioeconomic context. These

roles have traditionally put women's health on the fringe, placing primary emphasis on the needs of men and the family as a whole.

RECOMMENDATIONS

■ Asian American community leaders must become more involved in breast cancer outreach programs to ensure that information is reaching Asian American women. Asian American community-based clinics and organizations must break down the stigma surrounding breast cancer, emphasizing that diagnosis of breast cancer at a smaller size or earlier stage will give a woman more choices, and thereby a measure of control over treatment decisions. They must also promote women's health education and work to change the low priority status of Asian American women's health in their communities.

■ More resources must be allocated to conduct community outreach on breast cancer screening to both non-English speaking, limited-English speaking and English speaking Asian American populations. Community outreach must include mass media campaigns, but also must consist of more than brochures and other health education materials. Many Asian American women get their health information from the media, such as women's magazines, but would prefer to receive more information from doctors and health educators. In addition, some women

may be illiterate in their own Asian language or in English, and require verbal education.

- Asian American community health organizations must build stronger alliances with government-sponsored programs to ensure that they provide information on mechanisms for the follow-up and tracking of patients diagnosed with breast cancer.

B. IMPROVING DELIVERY OF SERVICES AND CARE

Breast cancer programs and services designed for the Asian American community that do not involve the participation of Asian Americans throughout the development process are often not culturally appropriate and do not adequately meet the needs of Asian American women. Further, many Asian immigrant and refugee women see health care providers who received medical training in Asia that did not emphasize clinical breast examinations or breast cancer screening services. Also, a significant number of Asian American women utilize traditional medicine in addition to western allopathic medicine. Physicians treating Asian American patients with breast cancer may not be aware of this fact, and may prescribe allopathic treatment without inquiring about traditional treatments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Model demonstration programs for addressing breast cancer in the Asian American community must be comprehensive, tailored to meet the specific needs of the local community, and include local and community leaders.

- Maintaining personal good health is not a cultural priority for Asian American women, and providers need to become advocates in changing a gender and culturally-based attitude toward preventive health care.

- Health care providers must be provided with the technical assistance necessary to increase breast cancer screening and referrals.

- There must be psychosocial support groups in place to assist Asian American women diagnosed with breast cancer, as well as for their families. In addition, more support mechanisms, such as a standard of care for counseling and education must be created in response to research developments such as the testing for the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes.

- Programs and providers who serve Asian American women must recognize the importance and validity of traditional systems of medicine to Asian American women, and seek to understand and coordinate western and traditional systems of medicine.

VII. ADVOCACY

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A. EMPOWERING ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN

In order to improve access to quality health care, there is a constant need to monitor and shape the direction of public policy, the health care industry, and research efforts on breast cancer. However, Asian American women have been marginalized from participating in and influencing the political process that can improve health care in their communities. Asian American women must become involved and mobilize as a pro-active force to change the way health care institutions and programs have treated their issues and concerns.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Asian American leaders and breast cancer advocates must work together to educate Asian American women about the grassroots and public advocacy that can shape and improve health care delivery in the United States. They must also work together to increase their representation and inclusion in the leadership, planning, decision-making, management, and evaluation of services at all levels of the health care system.
- The Asian American community must work to ensure that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to actively participate in public policy activities, advocate through the appropriations process, and educate state legislatures and the U.S. Congress by providing relevant and timely data and analysis relative to breast cancer.
- The Asian American community should actively join the efforts of groups like the National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC) — which advocate within industry and the scientific and medical communities to bring the voice of women wherever decisions have an impact on the fight to eradicate breast cancer—to work in coalition to address breast cancer, as well as to ensure that the concerns of Asian American women are made a priority issue.
- Advocates must work with policy-makers to ensure that funding is allocated for treatment services for low-income and under-served women with breast cancer, at the same time that advocates are promoting increased utilization of screening services among Asian American women. Advocates must also advocate for more funding towards improving the technology of screening and treatment methods.

VIII. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

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VIII. PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

A. INCREASING COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION OF PROGRAMS

In 1993, after a massive drive, NBCC delivered 2.6 million signatures on a petition to the President of the United States resulting in his commitment to a National Action Plan on Breast Cancer (NAPBC), a public/private partnership focusing on areas traditionally neglected in breast cancer. The successful planning and implementation of its activities depends on the sustained involvement of both the private and public sectors.

Coordination between government and non-governmental organizations, agencies, and individuals is necessary in order to identify and prioritize effective and pragmatic strategies to address diseases such as breast cancer.

RECOMMENDATIONS

■ The NAPBC's Steering Committee must ensure that the Asian American community is represented at all levels of planning, implementation, and evaluation of the NAPBC, including representation on the Steering Committee. The NAPBC should incorporate the recommendations of the National Plan of Action on Asian American Women and Breast Cancer into the activities of the Working Groups. These Working Groups have been established to identify and implement specific initiatives within six priority areas identified by the Steering Committee. In addition to representation on the Steering Committee, Asian American women should also be included in the Working Groups, particularly with Consumer Involvement.

■ Community women's health advocates should keep pharmaceutical companies informed of issues important to the Asian American community, in order to better direct research priorities and development of breast cancer treatment options. In turn, the pharmaceutical industry should recognize the mutual interests shared with Asian American community groups, and allocate more resources to the community to address those interests.

B. FOCUSING ON MANAGED CARE

Health care is rapidly changing to a managed care structure, with public and private partnerships becoming increasingly important to address the health needs of the diverse populations in the U.S. Again, ensuring appropriate care and coverage for a full range of services, including breast cancer screening, education, and counseling at any point of entry into the health care system is critical for Asian American women due to their low rates of utilization of preventive health care.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Health care providers, government agencies, and community-based organizations should strengthen collaborative efforts with managed care institutions to ensure the availability of breast cancer screening, diagnostic, and treatment services for Asian American women.
- When Asian American women enter the health care system under managed care, breast cancer screening should be considered preventive health care and discussed by the primary care provider.
- Counseling and education programs on genetic testing should be made available in the range of Asian languages and presented in a manner that acknowledges the particular cultural views of the patient. While developing guidelines on issues such as BRCA1 and BRCA2, there must be mechanisms for enforcing guidelines and standards of care to ensure against genetic discrimination in health care coverage.

APPENDIX I

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NATIONAL ASIAN AMERICAN BREAST CANCER SUMMIT AND FOLLOW-UP MEETING

List of Participants

Amy Allina

Project Manager

Bass and Howes
1818 N Street, NW #450
Washington, D.C. 20036

Pat Barr

Executive Board Member

National Breast Cancer Coalition
507 Main Street
Bennington, VT 5201

Susan J. Blumenthal, MD, MPA

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health

U.S. Public Health Service's
Office on Women's Health, DHHS
200 Independence Ave, SW, Rm 730B
Washington, D.C. 20201

Susan Braun

Chief Executive Officer

The Susan G. Komen Breast
Cancer Foundation
5005 LBJ Freeway, Suite 370
Dallas, TX 75244

Otis Brawley, MD

Director

Office of Special Populations,
National Cancer Institute (NCI),
National Institutes of Health
Executive Plaza North, Room 300
6130 Executive Blvd, MSC 7340
Bethesda, MD 20892

Canossa Chan

Director, Health Education

Chinatown Health Clinic
89 Baxter Street
New York, NY 10013

Sophia Chang, M.D., M.P.H.

Medical Director

San Francisco Health Plan
538 Howard Street, Fifth Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Lorinda Chen

Director, Public Affairs

Elmhurst Hospital Center
79-01 Broadway
Elmhurst, NY 11373

Chris Cho

Director

Bellevue Hospital, Social Work Dept
1st Avenue and 27th Street
New York, NY 10016

Henry Chung, MD

Medical Director

Chinatown Health Clinic
89 Baxter Street
New York, NY 10013

Cindy Chung

Special Projects Coordinator

Saint Joseph's Hospital
168-40 79th Avenue
Flushing, NY 11366

NATIONAL PLAN
OF ACTION ON
ASIAN AMERICAN
WOMEN AND
BREAST CANCER

Mary Chung

Executive Director

NAWHO

250 Montgomery Street, Suite 410

San Francisco, CA 94104

Berta Colon

Program Assistant

Norman Foundation

147 East 48th Street

New York, NY 10017

Susan Davis

Executive Director

Women's Environment and

Development Organization (WEDO)

355 Lexington Avenue, 3rd Floor

New York, NY 10017

Tuei Doong, MA

Deputy Director

Office of Minority Health, DHHS

RKWL II, Suite 1102

5600 Fishers Lane

Rockville, MD 20857

Jane Eng

Executive Director

Chinatown Health Clinic

89 Baxter Street

New York, NY 10013

Laurel Eu, M.A.

Public Affairs Specialist

U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Los Angeles District

19900 MacArthur Blvd., Suite 300

Irvine, CA 92612

Nanette Falkenberg

Bass and Howes, Inc.

250 W. 57th Street, Suite 2217

New York, NY 10107

Linda Frame

Director of Education

The Susan G. Komen Breast

Cancer Foundation

5005 LBJ Freeway, Suite 370

Dallas, TX 75244

David Ginsburg, M.P.H.

Chief

Breast and Cervical Cancer Control
Program

California Dept. of Health Services

PO Box 942732, MS-434

Sacramento, CA 94234-7320

Laura Greiner

*Manager, Corporate and Organization
Relations*

American Cancer Society

1599 Clifton Road, NE

Atlanta, GA 30329

Rosemarie Henson

Chief, Program Services Branch

Division of Cancer Prevention and
Control

National Center for Chronic Disease

Prevention, Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention (CDC)

4770 Buford Highway, MSK-52

Atlanta, GA 30341

Harriet Ishimoto

Staff Assistant

Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi

8th District, California

450 Golden Gate Ave

San Francisco, CA 94102

Priya Jagannathan, M.P.H.

Program Specialist

NAWHO
250 Montgomery Street, Suite 410
San Francisco, CA 94104

Wanda Jones, PhD

Office of the Director
Office on Women's Health, CDC
1600 Clifton Road M.S. A-02
Atlanta, GA 30333

Howard Koh, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.C.P.

Consultant

Skin Oncology, Cancer Prevention, &
Control Center
Boston Medical Center
720 Harrison Avenue, DOB-801A
Boston, MA 02118

Kate Monico Klein

Coordinator of Women's Services

Department of Public Health
101 Grove Street, Room 310
San Francisco, CA 94102

Sarah Kovner

Special Assistant to the Secretary

Dept. of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave., SW., Rm 605F
Washington DC, 20201

Anne Kuchins

Director of Community Outreach

Saint Joseph's Hospital
168-40 79th Avenue
Flushing, NY 11366

Lillian Lew, Med., R.D.

Director

Southeast Asian Health Project
411 East 10th Street, Suite 207
Long Beach, CA 90813

Rod Lew, M.P.H.

Associate Director

Assoc. of Asian Pacific Community Health
Organizations
1440 Broadway, Suite 510
Oakland, CA 94612

Michael D. Loberg, Ph.D.

President, Oncology/Immunology

Bristol-Myers Squibb Co.
P.O. Box 4500
Princeton, NJ 085443-4500

Michele Lord

Program Director

Norman Foundation
147 East 48th Street
New York, NY 10017

Sunita Mehta

Grants Administrator

The Sister Fund
116 East 16th Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10003

Ruth Merkatz

Office on Women's Health
Food and Drug Administration, DHHS
5600 Fishers Lane, HF-8
Rockville, MD

Wilma Montañez

Program Officer

Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation
6 East 39th Street, 12th Floor
New York, NY 10016

Debra Nakatomi

President

Nakatomi and Associates
1301 Montana Ave, Suite C
Santa Monica, CA 90403

Carol Noblitt

Director, Special Projects

National Alliance of Breast Cancer
Organizations
9 East 37th Street, 10th Floor
New York, NY 10016

Kathleen O'Donnell, M.P.A.

*Director, Strategic Alliances and Patient
Support*

Bristol-Myers Squibb,
Oncology/Immunology.
P.O. Box 4500
Princeton, NJ 08543-4500

Cindy Pearson

Program Director

National Women's Health Network
514 Tenth Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20004

Christina Perez, M.N., WHCNP-FNP

Regional Minority Health Consultant
Office of Minority Health, Region IX
Office of Public Health and Science
50 United Nations Plaza, Rm 329
San Francisco, CA 94102

Suki Terada Ports

Executive Director

Family Health Project, Inc. 90 Washington
Street, 27th Floor
New York, NY 10006

Martha C. Romans

Director

Jacobs Institute of Women's Health
409 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20024

Rochelle Sax, ACSW

Cancer Care, Inc.

1180 Avenue of the Americas, 2nd Fl.
New York, NY 10036

Kay Strawder, J.D., M.S.W.

Regional Women's Health Coordinator

Office of the R.H.A.
DHHS, Public Health Service Region IX
50 United Nations Plaza, Rm 327
San Francisco, CA 94102

Stephanie Siefken

Director, Cross Cultural Affairs

New York City Dept. of Health
125 Worth St., Room 203B
New York, NY 10013

Edwina Thorn

Chair, Breast Cancer Network

American Cancer Society
48 Frese Road
Hudson, NY 12534

Virginia Tong

Special Assistant for Program Development

Sunset Park Family Health Center
Lutheran Medical Center
150 55th Street, Room 2062
Brooklyn, NY 11220

Susan True

Acting Director

Bureau of Chronic Disease
New York State Department of Health
ES Tower Bldg. 584
Albany, NY 12237

The Honorable Nydia Velázquez

U.S. House of Representatives
815 Broadway
Brooklyn, NY 11206

Fran Visco, J.D.

President

National Breast Cancer Coalition
200 S. Broad Street, 8th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Leslie Wolfe

President

Center for Women Policy Studies
1211 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Ste 312
Washington, DC 20036

Evaon Wong-Kim, L.C.S.W., M.P.H.

Oncology Social Worker

San Francisco General Hospital
1001 Potrero Ave., Rm 1C12
San Francisco, CA 94110

Anna Wu, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

Department of Preventative Medicine
USC, School of Medicine
1441 Eastlake Avenue, MS44,
P.O. Box 33800
Los Angeles, CA 90033

Stephen W. Wyatt, DMD, MPH

Director

Division of Cancer Control and
Prevention
National Center for Chronic Disease
Prevention and Health
Promotion, CDC
4770 Buford Highway, MSK-52
Atlanta, GA 30341

Alice Yaker

Executive Director

SHARE
1501 Broadway, Suite 1720
New York, NY 10036

Cora Yamamoto

Special Assistant

Office of Health and Industry Programs
Center for Devices and Radiological
Health
Division of Mammography Quality and
Radiation Programs, FDA, DHHS
1350 Piccard Drive, HFZ-240
Rockville, MD 20850

Lucy Young, MEd

President

Chinese-American Cancer Society
American Cancer Society
112-25 Queens Blvd.
Forest Hills, NY 11375

Caroline J. Yu

Executive Director

Asian American Coalition for Children
and Families, Inc.
1 West 34th Street, Suite 1202
New York, NY 10011

Karen D. Zeitlin

Grants Manager/Program Assistant

The Moriah Fund
35 Wisconsin Circle, Suite 520
Chevy Chase, MD 20815

NATIONAL ASIAN AMERICAN BREAST CANCER SUMMIT

Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)

Honorary Chair

Mary Chung, Executive Director

National Asian Women's Health Organization

Convener

AGENDA

Monday, September 16, 1996, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The Coleman Center

810 Seventh Avenue, 23rd Floor

New York, NY 10019

- Discussion Moderator: **Cindy Pearson**, Executive Director
National Women's Health Network, Washington, DC
- Session Moderators: **Mary Chung**, NAWHO
Alice Yaker, Executive Director of SHARE, NY
- 10:00 - 10:10 a.m. Welcome **Mary Chung**
- 10:10 - 10:20 a.m. Introduction **All Participants**
- 10:20 - 11:30 a.m. Morning Session **Moderator: Mary Chung**
- OPENING KEYNOTE SPEAKER: **Susan J. Blumenthal, M.D., M.P.A.**
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health
U.S. Public Health Service's
Office on Women's Health, Dept. of HHS
Assistant Surgeon General
Co-Chair, National Action Plan on Breast Cancer
- RESEARCH: **Otis Webb Brawley, M.D.**, Director
Office of Special Populations,
National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health
- PRIVATE/PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP: **Michael Loberg, Ph.D.**, President
Oncology/Immunology, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Co.

SCREENING AND OUTREACH:

Susan True, M.Ed., Acting Director
Bureau of Chronic Disease Services,
New York State Department of Health

MINORITY WOMEN'S HEALTH:

Tuei Doong, M.A., Deputy Director
Office of Minority Health, Dept. of HHS

11:30 - 12:00 p.m.

Discussion

All Participants

12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

Luncheon

LUNCHEON KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez (D-NY)

1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Afternoon Session

Moderator: Alice Yaker

SCREENING/EARLY DETECTION:

Steve Wyatt, D.M.D, M.P.H., Director
Division of Cancer Prevention and Control,
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and
Health Promotion,
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Rosemarie M. Henson, M.S.S.W., M.P.H.
Chief, Program Services Branch,
Division of Cancer Prevention and Control,
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and
Health Promotion,
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

ACCESS AND DATA COLLECTION:

Henry Chung, M.D., Medical Director
Chinatown Health Clinic, New York

SURVIVOR:

Lucy Young, M.Ed., President
Chinese-American Cancer Association

ADVOCACY:

Pat Barr, Executive Board Member
National Breast Cancer Coalition

2:00 - 3:00 p.m

Discussion

All Participants

NATIONAL ASIAN AMERICAN BREAST CANCER SUMMIT FOLLOW-UP MEETING

AGENDA

Friday, January 31, 1997, 10:00 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Napa Valley Grille
6795 Washington Street
Yountville, CA 94599

Discussion Moderators:	Mary Chung , NAWHO Sophia Chang, M.D., M.P.H. Medical Director, San Francisco Health Plan	
10:00 - 10:10 a.m.	Welcome	Mary Chung
10:10 - 10:30 a.m.	Introductions	All Participants
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PLAN OF ACTION		
Morning Session		
Moderated By: Sophia Chang, M.D., M.P.H.		
10:30 - 10:50 a.m.	Examining Risk Factors for Asian American Women	Anna Wu, Ph.D.
10:50 - 11:10 a.m.	Data Collection on Asian American Women	Laura Greiner Howard Koh, M.D., M.P.H.
11:10 - 11:30 a.m.	Involving Asian American Women in Clinical Trials	Laurel Eu, M.A.
11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Profile of Government Agency Programs	Rosemarie Henson, M.S.S.W., M.P.H. Cora Yamamoto, M.S.S.W.
12:00 - 12:40 p.m.	LUNCH	NAWHO Overview and Presentation

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PLAN OF ACTION

Afternoon Session

Moderated By: **Mary Chung**

12:40 - 1:20 p.m.	Profiles of Government Programs (continued)	Tuei Doong, M.H.A. David Ginsburg, M.P.H. Kate Monico Klein Christina Perez Kay Strawder, JD, M.S.W.
1:20 - 2:00 p.m.	Community-Based Interventions: Screening, Early Detection, and Treatment Services	Linda Frame Priya Jagannathan, M.P.H. Lillian Lew, M.Ed., R.D Rod Lew, M.P.H. Evaon Wong-Kim, M.S.W.
2:00 - 2:30 p.m.	Advocacy and the Breast Cancer Movement in the United States	Fran Visco, J.D. Amy Allina
2:30 - 3:00 p.m.	Building Public and Private Partnerships	Debra Nakatomi Carol Noblitt Kathleen O'Donnell
3:00 - 3:15 p.m.	Closing Remarks and Discussion	Mary Chung All Participants

