For immediate release

New grant to bring patient navigators, breast cancer screening and education to high-risk women in South Texas

SAN ANTONIO (April 24, 2014) — Minority women have low breast cancer screening rates.

Even if they are screened, they delay confirmatory diagnosis and treatment because of costs, cultural and language issues, competing responsibilities, and more.

That's why Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez, professor and director of the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio, is offering the Navegando Salud patient navigator program, which trains bilingual, bicultural community health workers to offer breast cancer screenings, education and other services to women in South Texas.

Navegando Salud just received a one-year, $100,000 grant from the Avon Foundation.

The grant was among 10 announced at the 12th Annual Avon Walk for Breast Cancer in Houston on April 13, 2014.

“We’re honored to receive this grant, which will help us go a long way in generating the best breast care possible for women and their families,” said Ramirez, the Dielmann Chair in Health Disparities Research & Community Outreach and the Max and Minnie Tomerlin Voelcker Endowed Chair in Cancer Health Care Disparities at the Health Science Center.

Patient navigation has proven to remove barriers to screening, promote timely diagnosis and treatment, and improve outcomes for medically underserved cancer patients, Ramirez said.

Navegando Salud aims to:
- remove barriers to access to timely, high-quality breast cancer care;
- facilitate seamless patient-centered, multi-disciplinary care delivery;
- educate patients on the importance of early detection and treatment adherence; and
provide community outreach and education in high-need areas to promote cancer screening and healthy behaviors to reduce women’s breast cancer risk.

“Our navigators will tailor their services to each patient’s needs to improve patients’ quality of life and satisfaction with the breast health care received during their cancer journey,” Ramirez said.

In addition to *Navegando Salud*, the Avon Foundation funded nine other projects across Texas. Find out about all 10 grants here.

“Every grant moves us closer toward our goal of a world without breast cancer,” said Eloise Caggiano, a breast cancer survivor and program director of the Avon Walk for Breast Cancer.

Others from IHPR faculty and staff involved in *Navegando Salud* are: Patricia Chalela, DrPH, assistant professor; and Sandra Costilla and Armida Flores, patient navigators.

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The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, one of the country’s leading health sciences universities, ranks in the top 3 percent of all institutions worldwide receiving federal funding. Research and other sponsored program activity totaled $231 million in fiscal year 2011. The university’s schools of medicine, nursing, dentistry, health professions and graduate biomedical sciences have produced approximately 28,000 graduates. The $736 million operating budget supports eight campuses in San Antonio, Laredo, Harlingen and Edinburg. For more information on the many ways “We make lives better,” visit www.uthscsa.edu.

The Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at The UT Health Science Center at San Antonio investigates the causes and solutions to the unequal impact of cancer and chronic disease among certain populations, including Latinos, in South Texas and the nation. The IHPR, founded in 2006, uses evidence-guided research, training and community outreach to improve the health of those at a disadvantage due to race/ethnicity or social determinants. Visit the IHPR online at http://ihpr.uthscsa.edu or follow its blog at http://www.saludtoday.com/blog.