

Editor's Perspective

Health Screening: Let's All Talk the Talk and Walk the Walk

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The World Health Organization and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) designated the month of January as the Cervical Cancer Awareness Month. Globally, an estimated 604,000 women were diagnosed with cervical cancer, and approximately 342,000 women died from this disease (IARC, 2022). For decades, the IARC has been at the forefront to curb the global burden of cervical cancer, which disproportionately affects women (~90% incidence and mortality rates) living in the middle- and low-income countries. This year, the IARC lauded three projects impacting cervical cancer care outcomes. These projects included innovative interventions in the areas of (a) vaccination against high-risk types of human papillomavirus (HPV), the causative agent of most cases of cervical cancer; (b) treatment of cervical precancerous lesions in a resource-constrained setting; and (c) better coverage of cervical cancer screening programs in at-risk populations.

In this issue of JNPARR, the readers will find two poignant articles highlighting the importance of health screening to detect colorectal and breast cancers (Lapiz-Bluhm & Cabungcal, 2022) and hypertension (Lapiz-Bluhm et al., 2022) as early as possible to tackle the high morbidity, mortality, and cost of care associated with these diseases. Furthermore, the staggering prevalence rate of HTN among Filipino Americans ranging from 70 % to 74 %, sends an alarming message to all healthcare providers about the looming incidence of stroke and cardiovascular events in this at-risk patient population. Everyone could not agree more with the articles' authors that there is a dire need for a concerted effort to develop culturally appropriate interventions that can improve health screening and health promotion practices among Filipino Americans.

As the Program Director for the Doctor of Nursing Practice focused on primary care of children, adults, older adults, and the family, I can foresee the critical role of doctorally-prepared nurse practitioners in utilizing evidence-based interventions that can promote and sustain health screening and health promotion practices among Filipino Americans. The DNP-prepared primary care nurse practitioners are educated and trained in advanced practice nursing, scientific inquiry, healthcare informatics, policy analysis, advocacy, and organizational leadership. Thus, they are well-poised to provide quality patient care, develop and implement innovative healthcare solutions, evaluate program outcomes, and transform patient care delivery and healthcare systems, particularly in highly preventable diseases.

At the individual level, each can be a role model to our friends, families, relatives, colleagues, and peers by talking the talk and walking the walk. We must follow the guidelines for health screening and disease prevention issued by the US Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF, 2021).

Let us all respond to the call for action by getting vaccinated whenever applicable, getting timely screening for early detection and prevention of disease spread, and getting tested and diagnosed early for better disease outcomes.

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