

Perlmutter Cancer Center Staffers Lead Cancer Care Conversation at Brooklyn Public Library Fair



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Upcoming Event
Stamp Out Cancer Brooklyn will help run a cancer screening event at the Brighton Beach Playground on

Stamp Out Cancer Brooklyn's multilingual health workers offered community members help navigating cancer screenings, diagnosis, treatment, and support—in five different languages.

Representatives from the Stamp Out Cancer Brooklyn team spoke to community members about the full continuum of personalized cancer care NYU Langone Health offers at a resource fair held at the Brooklyn Public Library's Sunset Park branch on September 6. To reach the diverse array of community members present, they spoke in English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Arabic.

"Our goal is to help as many Brooklynites as possible learn how to detect cancer early and to provide support in navigating the often-complex healthcare system, whether they are seeking screenings or undergoing treatment," said community health navigation manager Patrizia Bernard, MPH, who led the presentation from Stamp Out Cancer Brooklyn. Spearheaded by NYU Langone Health's Perlmutter Cancer Center in partnership with the Department of Population Health, NYU Langone Hospital—Brooklyn, and the Family Health Centers at NYU

September 28 and 29.

Russian-speaking medical professionals will be present at the event, created in partnership with the Skin Cancer Foundation, to speak to community members about our comprehensive cancer support options, from prevention and screenings to treatment and survivorship.

Langone, Stamp Out Cancer Brooklyn aims to reduce the overall cancer burden in Brooklyn, where there is a high incidence of certain cancers, and to narrow the disparity gap in cancer-related outcomes.

To serve the minority and immigrant communities that make up 58 percent of the Brooklyn population, the Perlmutter Cancer Center's staff includes navigators who are fluent in numerous languages. During the September 6 talk, Bernard paused every few minutes to allow her four community health representative colleagues to repeat the information she provided—Camila Yepes spoke in Spanish, followed by Alice Liang in Cantonese, Na Feutch in Mandarin, and Alzahraa Ahmed in Arabic. Bernard also regularly speaks with community members in French and Haitian Creole.

Bernard and the other community health representatives emphasized the critical role they play in supporting Brooklyn's diverse population, from providing interpretation services to offering help with scheduling and even attending appointments alongside them. In fact, Ahmed accompanied one event attendee the following week to get biopsy results, where she learned she had triple-negative breast cancer. Ahmed was with her to provide support and will continue to follow up with her to ensure she gets the care she needs without delay.

At the event, the representatives also discussed the team's collaborative work addressing social determinants of health for underserved populations—and gathered information that day to help on that front. Victoria Foster, MPH, program director at the

Perlmutter Cancer Center, who oversees the Stamp Out Cancer Brooklyn initiative, handed out surveys in four languages to ascertain what cancer-related topics the community members would like to see addressed at future events. "With the results of the surveys, we will build out programming with the Brooklyn Public Library that directly impacts the lives of the various community members, so that our future events are truly community-driven, culturally tailored, and in relevant languages," Foster said.

Since the event, attendee Pui Kuen Cheng, a Brooklyn resident who speaks Cantonese, has begun working with Liang, the community health representative who speaks both Cantonese and Mandarin, to review her options for getting a mammogram. "It was great to hear about all the cancer resources in my own language," she said (through interpreter Liang). "I felt comfortable, and I understood so much more about the cancer options than I would have if the talk was only in English."

Other community board organizations whose representatives spoke at the event included the Arab American Association of New York; the Center for Family Life in Sunset Park; the office of Council Member Alexa Avilés; the Fifth Avenue Committee; Mixteca; Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow; Raising Health; the United Senior Citizens Center of Sunset Park; and UPROSE.