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## *A Multicultural and Multilingual Outreach Program for Cervical and Breast Cancer Screening*

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**Partners in Health:** The Breast and Cervical Health Cooperative is a New Orleans-based community health intervention program designed to increase the access of underserved multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual women to cervical and breast cancer health education and screening. This article describes innovative approaches used over the past 4 years to successfully link the services of a university cancer center to women in the community through a culturally sensitive outreach program. In addition to cancer screening, health referrals were made for many other diverse medical/social complications such as hypertension, obesity, and violence. The program initially targeted African American women but during the past year has successfully integrated Latinas. Key to the program's success was the collaboration of community lay health educators, community churches, advanced practice nurses, and public health programs. This article provides an overview of program strategies and outcomes and discusses multicultural and multilingual issues. *JOGNN*, 34, 395-402; 2005. DOI: 10.1177/0884217505276059

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Living with diversity challenges nurses to confront the cultural, economic, and health care system barriers that continue to contribute to health disparities among minority women. One such challenge is developing cancer prevention programs that are culturally responsive and gender sensitive. Health disparities are profound in two of the many cultures in the New Orleans area: African American and Latin

no. As a port city, New Orleans is known for its rich heritage of a mixture of cultures that makes it one of the unique cities of North America. However, health problems for minorities in the New Orleans region are compounded by the fact that Louisiana is among the poorest states, making the economic status of women a primary barrier to health care. Louisiana ranked 47th among states for women living above the poverty level in 2001–2002. African American women in Louisiana received the lowest wages anywhere in the United States at \$19,400/year, and Latinas averaged \$22,500/year (Caiazza, Shaw, & Werschkul, 2003).

Partners in Health: The Breast and Cervical Health Cooperative is a program designed to improve the access of multicultural, underserved women to early detection screening for breast and cervical cancer in the Greater New Orleans area. This article explains how the program was designed to confront and overcome barriers to cancer screening that African American and Latinas in the community encounter, the partnerships the program created, the challenges it faced, and the lessons the participants learned.

### **Partners in Health: The Breast and Cervical Health Cooperative**

Breast and cervical cancers are diseases for which early screening and detection are lifesaving measures, yet minority women continue to face barriers that prevent access to such basic screening services as clinical breast exams, mammography, and Pap testing (Glanz, Croyle, Chollette, & Pinn, 2003). Mortality rates from breast cancer are 1.3 times higher in African American women (37.1 per

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