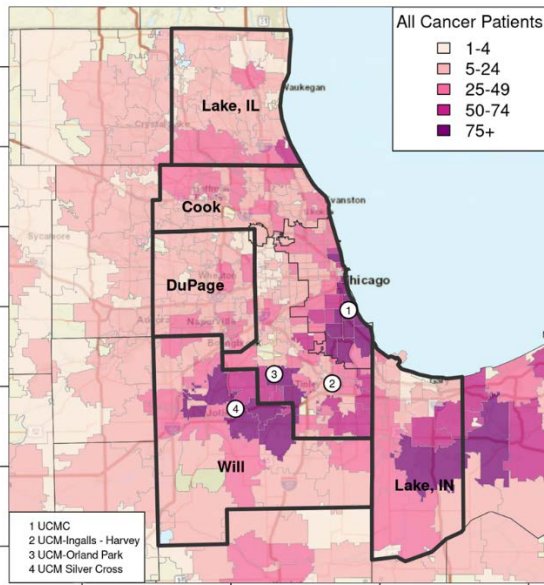


# Community Outreach and Engagement University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center

## Catchment Area

The University of Chicago Comprehensive Cancer Center (UCCCC) is located in Chicago's historically rich and culturally diverse Hyde Park community on the south side. Our five-county region includes four Illinois counties. Cook County represents the largest region and encompasses our local impact area, Chicago, as well as DuPage, Lake, and Will counties. We also serve Lake County, Indiana, in Northwest Indiana. The combined catchment area population of 8 million represent 49 percent non-Hispanic White, 19 percent Black/African American, 8 percent Asian, and 22 percent Hispanic communities. The catchment area is based on patient density and reflects the residence of new cancer patients (83 percent) and patients on therapeutic trials (62 percent).

**UCCCC Cancer Patients 2020-June 2021 by ZIP Code**



## Community Engagement Focus

### At a Glance

The Community Outreach and Engagement (COE) supplement supported the initiation of new collaborations between the UChicago COE Office, the Office of Community Engagement and Cancer Health Equity (OCECHE), community partners, and the cancer center's basic and translational research programs. Community Outreach, Research & Engagement (CORE) piloted community integration across the cancer research continuum within our cancer center.

### Collaborators

The CORE team recruited twenty-one community participants, including cancer-focused community organizations, survivors, caregivers, and advocates representing each of the five screenable cancers: the Blue Hat Foundation (colorectal), EGFR Resisters (lung), Equal Hope (cervical), Sisters Working It Out (breast), and Peer Plus Education and Training Advocates (prostate). The CORE team recruited diverse participants from the University of Chicago (UChicago) Hospital Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC), COE mini-grantees, COE Community Advisory Board members, and fourteen cancer investigators from each of the four UCCCC Cancer research programs: Cancer Prevention & Control, Clinical & Experimental Therapeutics, Immunology and Cancer, and Molecular Mechanisms of Cancer. Workshop facilitators included COE staff and faculty, the Black Cancer Collaborative, UChicago Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the Knight Cancer Institute, and the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science at Stony

Brook University, allowing for both local and national collaboration and exposure for our CORE participants.

“  
**Despite the time I’ve spent researching cancer, I’d never met anyone with the disease type I was investigating. The CORE program provided me the opportunity to meeting an actual person living with the specific type of cancer I was researching, as well as an entire advocacy group.**  
”

—CORE Academic Cluster Participant

## The Approach

Identify relevant community and academic CORE pilot participants:

- Community: cancer patients, survivors, caregivers, advocates, and community-based organization leaders
- Academic: basic and translational researchers at the University of Chicago Comprehensive Cancer Center

Create and administer web-based capacity-building modules for community members to build skills in:

- Patient research advocacy
- Scientific principles and methods
- Language of basic and translational research

Create and administer web-based training modules for investigators in:

- The patient experience
- Community needs
- Cancer disparities

- Effective scientific communication to diverse non-scientific audiences

Plan and execute a community-wide event, the “Cancer and the Microbiome Community Connection Summit,” scheduled for March 2022 in coordination with the community and academic clusters. The summit included:

- Scientific presentations on cancer and the microbiome by UChicago researchers
- Presentations by community advocates
- Interactive breakout sessions between attendees
- Evaluating the CORE pilot program and community academic summit through evaluations administered online following each training module and summit

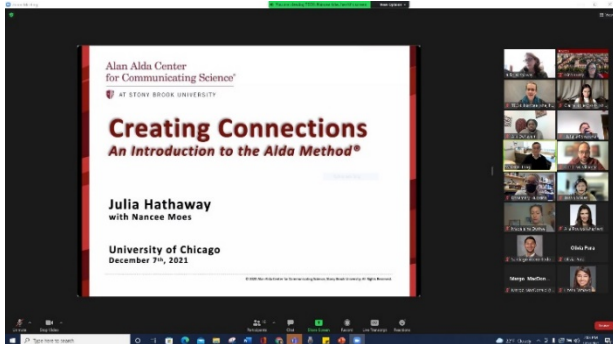
## Implementation Guidance

CORE project workshops are recorded and packaged into self-guided learning modules that can be used to replicate the program and requires no grant funding to sustain.

Intentional integration of these and future CORE members into the UCCCC Annual Cancer Disparities Symposium, to provide opportunities for investigators to share current research progress, findings, and forthcoming research, as well as a platform where community cluster members can share patient experiences. Members of each cluster participated in the current year’s event, and it was a success.

Coordinate, encourage, and support members of each cluster to collaborate on community-focused events that require minimal resources. To date, multiple CORE participants from each cluster have participated in our Webinar Wednesday employee cancer education series, Facebook Live events, in-person community events, and cancer support groups, and helped launch our Community Oncology Lifetime Learners Program. CORE participants from each cluster provide necessary academic and experiential knowledge. COE staff supported event marketing, advertising, audience development, and technical aspects (Zoom registration and operation).

Integration with the COE’s Latinx Cancer Control Task Force, LUCERO—Latinos United for Cancer Education, Research and Outreach—to facilitate bilingual and bicultural in-person community cancer education lunch and lean workshops, Latinx community cancer needs assessment, and the launch of our first in-person bilingual and bicultural Spanish community cancer support group.



Academic Cluster Participate in Virtual Alan Alda Science Communication Workshop

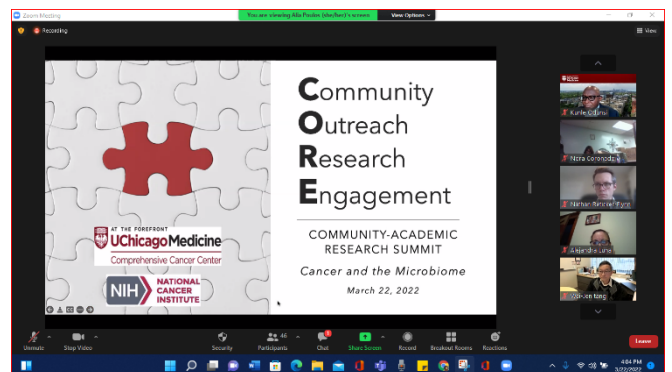
**Future sustainability plans**

- Workshop series featuring CORE members.
- Speaking opportunities to present members’ work to the COE Community Advisory Board and Uchicago Hospital cancer Patient and Family Advisory Council.
- Spotighting CORE members and their work in the weekly COE newsletter.
- Incentivize and support community-academic partnerships from each CORE cluster to apply for COE community-academic partner research mini-grants
- Provide valuable experience for members from each cluster to serve as community-academic research partnership mini-grant reviewers.

“  
**Participation in CORE has helped me finally bridge the connection between bench science and cancer survivorship.**  
 —CORE Community Cluster Participant  
 ”



On March 22, 2022, CORE hosted its culminating event: 1st Annual UCCCC Community-Academic Research Summit. The virtual event, including the theme of Cancer and the Microbiome, the agenda and schedule was a collaborative and bidirectional effort that engaged community and academic partners. The summit featured community and academic CORE dyads serving as event moderators. Key speakers included Dr. Adekunle Odunsi, the UCCCC director; Dr. Eric Pamer, director of the UChicago Duchossois Family Institute for the Microbiome; and Dr. Benjamin Shogan, a colorectal surgeon, member of the Cancer Prevention and control research program, and a microbiome researcher.



Over 80 participants joined the two-hour summit. Eight pre-recorded research presentations by the CORE academic participants were shared. Each researcher presented and received feedback from CORE community participants prior to the summit to ensure appropriate communication and content. The research presentations were followed by live commentary from CORE community participants that evaluated the research presented in three categories: language and understandability, slide presentation, and real-world applications. Finally, we had a lively panel discussion about opportunities and barriers for community researcher connections.

A CORE community participant, cancer survivor, and patient advocate closed out the summit with remarks and a call to action for the intentional creation of more opportunities for connection between community and academia. Summit evaluations revealed that 97 percent of the participants were satisfied with the experience. Additionally, more than half of the CORE participants have remained engaged post-CORE COE funding to develop an abstract, poster, and manuscript. Another two-thirds of the group stayed on to develop a community-academic cancer research project proposal for an institutionally funded mini-grant to conduct CORE 2.0.

## Find Out More

**Cancer Center Website:**

<https://www.uchicagomedicine.org/cancer/education-outreach/community/community-engagement-cancer-health-equity>

**Facebook @UCCommunityCancer**

**Twitter @ucmoceche**

**Instagram @ucmoceche**

**YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=ucmoceche](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=ucmoceche)**

**Email: [CommunityCancer@uchicago.edu](mailto:CommunityCancer@uchicago.edu)**

This project was funded through an administrative supplement from the National Cancer Institute to the University of Chicago Medicine Comprehensive Cancer Center (3P30CA014599-45S2).

## Contact

**Gina Curry, MPH, MBA**

[ginacurry@bsd.uchicago.edu](mailto:ginacurry@bsd.uchicago.edu)

**Nita Karnik Lee, MD, MPH**

[nlee@bsd.uchicago.edu](mailto:nlee@bsd.uchicago.edu)

## Community outreach and engagement (COE) activities across the translational research continuum

National Cancer Institute (NCI)-designated cancer centers' COE efforts should span all cancer center programs, including basic, clinical, translational, and population research. In FY20, NCI issued a call for Cancer Center Administrative Supplements to support COE activities that focus on either basic science or the translation of evidence-based interventions into community practice. The long-term goal of the supplement initiative is to build capacity for cancer centers' COE programs to adapt and implement evidence-based programs and successfully collaborate with cancer center investigators across research programs and in partnership with community members. To learn more, visit us at: <https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/research-emphasis/coe>