

# **Cancer Information Service: An Essential Component of Cancer Control**

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The National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service (CIS), one of the premiere cancer information programs in the United States, has become a nationally recognized collaborator in cancer communication research.

- Numerous special issue journal publications and monographs devoted to CIS-based research:
  - Monogr Natl Cancer Inst, 1993
  - Preventive Medicine, 1998
  - Journal of Health Communication, 1998; 2005
  - Journal of Cancer Education, 2007
- Over 140 peer-reviewed publications in cancer communication research

“If the CIS were an academically based organization conducting health communications research, this [record of peer-review publications] would, by any standard, be a noteworthy accomplishment. The fact that the CIS is, first and foremost, a service program in cancer communications only serves to underscore this remarkable achievement” (Marcus, et al, 2005).

# Why has the CIS collaborated in cancer communication research?



- Consistent with the overall mission of the NCI:
  - Reduce cancer mortality and morbidity through research
- Research provides a mechanism for enhancing the CIS service program, with an emphasis on:
  - Testing new and innovative interventions that can improve service
  - Testing interventions within the usual service environment of the CIS to maximize dissemination

# Examples of CIS Collaborations in Cancer Communication Research



- Successfully tested behavioral counseling and informed decision-making interventions *to respond* to the caller's main reason for calling the CIS 1-800-4-CANCER telephone number
  - Smoking cessation (Orleans et al, 1998)
  - Genetic testing for breast cancer (Miller et al, 2005)
- Successfully tested *proactive* behavioral counseling by telephone appended to usual service calls to the CIS 1-800-4-CANCER telephone number
  - Screening mammography (Marcus et al, 1993)
  - Diet/nutrition (Marcus et al, 1998)

- Successfully tested *proactive outcalls* to underserved geographically defined neighborhoods to promote screening mammography (Crane et al, 1998)
- Successfully tested paid media campaigns to extend the reach of the CIS in promoting smoking cessation (Cummings et al, 1993; Boyd et al, 1998)
- Successfully tested tailored print materials mailed to callers following their usual service call the CIS
  - Diet/nutrition (Latimer et al, 2005; Heimendinger et al, 2005)
  - Cancer screening (Latimer et al, 2005; Marcus et al, 2005)
- Successfully tested clinical trials print material (booklet) that has subsequently been used internationally as a model for providing information about clinical trials (Davis et al, 1993)

# Typical Research Design Embedded within Usual Service Calls to the CIS Telephone Program



Following Usual Service, Information Specialist Determines Eligibility (ECRF and/or a few eligibility questions)

Describe Study, Informed Consent, Complete Baseline Interview

Randomization On-Site at Contact Centers

Usual Service/Minimal Intervention

Experimental Intervention

Follow-Up Assessments for Efficacy/Program Evaluation

# The CIS Model for Collaborative Research

(Marcus et al, 2005)



- Research studies should provide the CIS with an opportunity to improve service as well as contribute to science
- Research studies must not compromise the service mandate of the CIS
- Research studies should be designed in full partnership with the CIS
- Intervention/research protocols must be carefully pre-tested before wide-scale implementation among CIS clients
  - Service mandate cannot be compromised



- Training of CIS staff to conduct the research should respect the existing train-the-trainer program of the CIS
  - CIS Training Coordinators
- Monitoring adherence to research protocols by CIS staff should likewise respect the existing quality control infrastructure of the CIS
  - CIS Service Managers/Supervisors
- CIS leadership and management staff should be involved as full partners in data interpretation and publication of results

# A Call-to-Action for Other Cancer Information Service Programs



“If the CIS, with its complex organizational structure and long-standing tradition of service, can mount a successful program of research, are there other health communication systems and programs that are also willing to form similar partnerships in research?” (Marcus, et al, 2005).

# References



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