



## Centers of Excellence in Health Marketing and Health Communication

The CDC established three Centers of Excellence in Health Marketing and Health Communication in 2005 and 2006 to contribute to the scientific foundation for the new CDC National Center for Health Marketing. The goal of the Centers is to develop and diffuse new, rigorously evaluated paradigms for health communication and marketing informed by scientific theory and research, to advance scientific knowledge and to improve and promote health.

The three Centers of Excellence emphasize evidence-based interventions designed to improve the health of diverse, at-risk, and hard-to-reach populations, including the poor, rural populations, urban minority adolescents, clients of emergency medical services, and low-income workers.

The creation of Centers of Excellence meets one of the Healthy People 2010 Health Communication goals, and is consistent with a number of CDC's strategic imperatives:

- ✓ Maximizing impact on the population's health and safety
- ✓ Using a customer-centric approach by developing programs using extensive research and testing about what people want and need to choose health, and
- ✓ Conducting public health research to create and disseminate knowledge and innovations that people need to protect their health.



<http://www.chcm.uconn.edu/index.html>

The *Center for Health Communication & Marketing (CHCM)* at the University of Connecticut is designing and testing the efficacy of two innovative entertainment-education approaches to promote healthy behaviors among urban adolescents and young adults. One project is testing the efficacy of the video game format to influence abstinence and safer sex behaviors; the other uses a community participatory approach involving local musicians promoting substance-free social norms and behaviors. CHCM is also developing a searchable database of evidence-based health interventions that will be freely available to researchers and the public via the web. In addition, CHCM is creating systems to monitor communication and marketing practices of the 50 state public health departments, public service announcements, and healthy and unhealthy advertising.



[http://depts.washington.edu/hprc/docs/pr\\_excellence.pdf](http://depts.washington.edu/hprc/docs/pr_excellence.pdf)

The *Health Marketing Research Center* at the University of Washington focuses on chronic disease prevention. Two large, regional research projects within the Center address detection and treatment of hypertension through the public emergency medical response system, and employer-based chronic disease prevention efforts. These randomized controlled trials will be complemented by smaller, targeted marketing and communication studies that are both embedded in the larger trials and adjunct to them. Center partners include the American Cancer Society and King County Emergency Medical Services.

The *Southern Center for Communication, Health, and Poverty* at the University of Georgia focuses on reducing health disparities by discovering how the south's poorest and disproportionately African-American populations understand and respond to health risks. One major research study is seeking to discover ways to talk with people about genes in ways that do not increase genetic determinism (i.e. the belief that someone's health is determined solely by their genes), develop ways to teach people that genes interact with behavior, and apply these findings to personalized medicine. In another study, adolescents' attitudes toward smoking are examined to improve the effectiveness of anti-smoking media messages. A pilot study describes the degree to which the poor and near poor across the South believe they are susceptible to multiple risks and have adopted health protective behaviors. Another pilot study is designed to determine how many messages can be placed into one communication about pre-conception health. Finally, the following two pilot studies were competitively selected and will be conducted in year three of the grant: *The Role of Empathy Appeals in Reducing Drug-Abuse Among Low-Income Populations* and *Understanding Health Socialization Processes and Health Information Disparities among Young Adolescents in Urban and Rural Georgia*.

THE SOUTHERN CENTER FOR

Communication, Health & Poverty

<http://www.southerncenter.uga.edu>