

**University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey-
Center for Continuing and Outreach Education**

**Symposium on South Asian Health Disparities and Health Literacy
Challenges**

**NJHA Conference and Event Center, Princeton, NJ
October 9, 2010**

Executive Summary

Overview: The University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey – Center for Continuing and Outreach Education (UMDNJ – CCOE) presented a CME certified Symposium on October 9, 2010 at the NJHA Conference and Event Center, Princeton, NJ.

The activity entitled, *Symposium on South Asian Health Disparities and Health Literacy Challenges*, was designed for physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals as well as educators and researchers that serve the medical and public health needs of the South Asian community; community-based organizations and government agencies that advocate for healthcare issues affecting the South Asian community; and consumers and patients who wish to better understand the dynamics of the patient-healthcare provider interaction in order to improve their health outcomes.

The symposium was sponsored by UMDNJ – CCOE; UMDNJ – Robert Wood Johnson Medical School; South Asian Total Health Initiative (SATHI), Department of Pediatrics; Center for Healthy Families and Cultural diversity (CHFCD), Department of Family Medicine and Community Health, and the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Office of Minority and Multicultural Health. UMDNJ – CCOE is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

UMDNJ – CCOE designates this educational activity for a maximum of 6.75 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*[™].

UMDNJ – CCOE is an approved provider of continuing nursing education by NJSNA, an accredited approver, by American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation. Provider Number P173-11/09-12. Provider approval is valid through November 30, 2012. This activity is awarded **6.75** contact hours. (60 minute CH).

Provider approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing, Provider Number CEP 13780.

This program has been approved for **6.75** Category 1 Continuing Education Credits for CHES by the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey – School of Public Health. The UMDNJ-SPH has been designated as a provider of continuing education in health education by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc. Approval number is 18030.

University Behavioral HealthCare of the University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey, Provider # 1173, is approved as a provider for social work continuing education by the Association of Social Work Boards (ASWB) www.aswb.org, through the Approved Continuing Education (ACE) program from August 10, 2009 to August 10, 2012. University Behavioral HealthCare of the University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey maintains responsibility for the program. ASWB credits are

accepted by the New Jersey State Board of Social Workers. Licensed social workers participating in this course will receive 6 cultural clinical continuing education clock hours. Targeted social work practice level: Intermediate.

Learning Objectives: After participating in this symposium, participants should be able to:

- Describe the impact of health disparities including low health literacy experienced by South Asian populations in New Jersey.
- Identify and apply best and promising practices to help patients/consumers with health literacy challenges, navigate the health care system to reduce disparities, manage chronic illnesses, and support prevention activities.
- Employ innovative health education strategies including multimedia, music, and mobile technologies to improve access, disease self-management, promote wellness and integrative healing, and empower patient/consumers.

Participant Breakdown: There were 126 attendees. The charts below reflect the audience’s professional status as per the evaluations:

Professional Status	Total Respondents	Percent
Physicians	18	14.28%
Nurses	12	9.52%
Community Health Education Specialists	5	3.97%
Social worker	1	.79%
Researcher	1	.79%
Public Health Professional	6	4.79%
Advocate Consumer	2	1.58%
Other	9	7.14%
No designation	72	57.14%

Audience Generation: The methods used to publicize this activity to prospective participants included:

- CCOE Website
- Outreach to SAALT (South Asian American Leading Together) organizations asking community partners in New Jersey to get the word out. (Sent digital brochure.)
- Email Blasts
- Press Release provided to national and local newspapers
- Listing in UMDNJ Announcement (Weekly email to entire UMDNJ)
- Personal invitations from SATHI planning committee members to community thought leaders

Speakers/Presentations: The faculty was comprised of: 9 MDs, 3 PhDs, 3 Nurses (RN/ MSN), 3 MPH, 1 MSW, 1 Literacy consultant, 1 member of the Asian American Study Foundation, 1 Associate Director of NAMI New Jersey, 1 Representative from NJ DOHSS – Director, Prevention of Blindness and Diabetes Unit, and 1 Yoga Instructor, who presented 2 didactic talks and 8 panel discussions followed

by question and answer sessions. Inter activity was further enhanced by having the presenters available during the lunch break to answer questions. There were several exhibitors from cultural and community organizations. (No- commercial interests).

The faculty for this program was:

Ranjita Misra, PhD, CHES, FMALRC
Professor, Department of Health and
Kinesiology
College of Education and Human Development
Research Director, Center for the Study of
Health Disparities
Texas A&M University
College Station, TX

Christina Zarcadoolas, PhD
Associate Professor, Department of Preventive
Medicine
Mount Sinai School of Medicine
Health Literacy Consultant,
New York City Department of Health and
Mental Hygiene
Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention
Public Health Detailing Program
New York, NY

Sunanda Gaur, MD
Co-Director, South Asian Total Health Initiative
(SATHI)
Professor of Pediatrics
Director, Robert Wood Johnson AIDS Program
Director, Pediatric Clinical Research Center
UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
New Brunswick, NJ

Naveen Mehrotra, MD, MPH
Co-Director, South Asian Total Health Initiative
(SATHI)
Associate Clinical Professor of Pediatrics
UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
New Brunswick, NJ

Robert C. Like, MD, MS
Professor and Director
Center for Healthy Families and Cultural
Diversity
Department of Family Medicine and Community
Health
UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
New Brunswick, NJ
SATHI Advisory Committee Member

Geetha R. Ghai, PhD, MBA
Former Associate Director,
Center for Advanced Food Technology
Department of Food Science
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Public Member of Advisory Commission
Office of Minority and Multicultural Health
New Jersey Department of Health and Senior
Services
New Brunswick, NJ

Aparna Kalbag, PhD
Post Doctoral Fellow
Office of Global Health
UMDNJ-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
New Brunswick, NJ

Jigna Rao
Member, Asian American Study Foundation
Board of Trustees, The State of New Jersey
Former Director, Drumthwacket
The Official Residence of the Governor of New
Jersey
Princeton, NJ

Thangamani Aravindan, MSN, RN, CCRN
Adjunct Faculty, Union Community College
Trinitas School of Nursing, Elizabeth, NJ
Cardiothoracic RN
Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, Newark, NJ
President, American Association of Indian
Nurses-NJ

Bhaswati Bhattacharya, MD, MPH, MA
Clinical Assistant Professor, Family Medicine
Weill – Cornell Medical College, NY
Director, Center of CAM
Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, NY
Dinacharya Institute, New York and Calcutta

Rajita Bhavaraju, MPH, CHES
Training and Consultation Specialist
UMDNJ – New Jersey Medical School
Global Tuberculosis Institute, Newark, NJ

Marybeth Caruso, RN, FN-CSA
Nursing Coordinator and Nurse Case Manager,
Tuberculosis Center
Middlesex County Health Department, Edison,
NJ

John D. Clarke, MD
Medical Director and Medical Review Officer
Long Island Rail Road, New York
President, Clarke Multimedia, Inc.
New York, NY

George H. Collier, PhD
Senior Scientist
Telcordia Technologies, Inc., Piscataway, NJ

Elissa Director, MA
Health Literacy Consultant
Founding Member, The New Jersey Health
Literacy Coalition
Somerset, NJ

Kiameesha Evans, MPH, CHES
Program Director, Office of Community
Outreach
Cancer Institute of New Jersey
UMDNJ – Robert Wood Johnson Medical
School
New Brunswick, NJ

Sharad Goyal, MD
Assistant Professor of Radiology Oncology
The Cancer Institute of New Jersey
UMDNJ – Robert Wood Johnson Medical
School
New Brunswick, NJ

Vidya Bhushan Gupta, MD, MPH, FAAP
Professor of Clinical Pediatrics
New York Medical College, New York, NY
Medical Director, Hudson Valley
Developmental Disabilities
Service Office, Thiells, NY

Namratha R. Kandula, MD, MPH
Assistant Professor of Medicine
Division of General Internal Medicine
Northwestern University Feinberg School of
Medicine
Chicago, IL

Vasudev N. Makhija, MD, DFAPA
Psychiatrist, Linden, NJ
Clinical Associate Professor, Department of
Psychiatry
Graduate Program in Health Sciences
Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ
Senior Vice President, New Jersey Psychiatric
Association
Bedminster, NJ

Linda Mathew, MSW, LSW, OSW-C
Oncology Certified Licensed Social Worker
The Cancer Institute of New Jersey
New Brunswick, NJ

Meena Murthy, MD
Chief, Division of Endocrinology, Nutrition &
Metabolism
Director, St. Peter's Thyroid and Diabetes
Center, Department of Medicine
St. Peter's University Hospital
New Brunswick, NJ

Sunil H. Parikh, MB, BS, CPM
Statewide Project Director
Prevention of Blindness and Diabetes Units
Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
N. J. Department of Health and Senior Services
Chairman, Sight Saving Academy India, Inc.
Rahway, NJ

Aruna Rao, MA
Associate Director, NAMI New Jersey
Founder and Director, SAMHAJ
North Brunswick, NJ

Ranjitha Sandeep
Founder/Director
Yoga – Sutra for Life
Westfield, NJ

Biren Saraiya, MD
Assistant Professor of Medicine
The Cancer Institute of New Jersey
UMDNJ – Robert Wood Johnson Medical
School
New Brunswick, NJ

Varsha Singh, MSN, APN-C
Adjunct Faculty, Trinitas School of Nursing,
Elizabeth, NJ
Advanced Practice NP, Adult Medical Clinic
Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital,
Rahway, NJ
Secretary, American Association of Indian
Nurses NJ

Sunil J. Wimalawansa, MD, PhD
Professor of Medicine & Physiology &
Integrative Biology
Director, Osteoporosis Center
UMDNJ – Robert Wood Johnson Medical
School
New Brunswick, NJ

Participants were asked to rate each presenter on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 5 being “strongly agree.” The total number of attendees was 126; evaluation forms were received from 54 attendees. The information below is based on feedback received from participant evaluation forms and reflects the mean score.

1. **Christina Zarcadoolas, PhD - Addressing Health Literacy Challenges in Multicultural Communities**
 - a. Speaker demonstrated current knowledge of the topic. 4.90
 - b. Speaker was an effective presenter. 4.86
2. **Ranjita Misra, PHD, CHES, FMALRC – Addressing Health Disparities and Chronic Illness in South Asian Communities**
 - a. Speaker demonstrated current knowledge of the topic. 4.81
 - b. Speaker was an effective presenter. 4.54
3. **Panel Discussion: Interfacing Health Literacy with Selected Initiatives in Culturally Competent Health Care, Cardiovascular Health Disparities and Provider/Consumer health Education.**

Vidya Bhushan Gupta, MD, MPH, FAAP

 - a. Speaker demonstrated current knowledge of the topic. 4.82
 - b. Speaker was an effective presenter. 4.80

Namratha R. Kandula, MD, MPH

 - a. Speaker demonstrated current knowledge of the topic. 4.78
 - b. Speaker was an effective presenter. 4.67

Elissa Director, MA

 - a. Speaker demonstrated current knowledge of the topic. 4.51
 - b. Speaker was an effective presenter. 4.24
4. **Workshop - Cancer Care and Prevention: Navigating the Healthcare System – Sharad Goyal, MD (moderator); Kiameesha Evans, MPH, CHES; Linda Mathew, MSW, LSW, OSW-C; and Biren Saraiya, MD**
 - a. Panel demonstrated current knowledge of the topic 4.33
 - b. Was presented effectively 4.33

5. **Workshop – Diabetes Care and Prevention – *Geetha R. Ghai, PhD, MBA (moderator); Meena Murthy, MD; Sunil H. Parikh, MB, BS, CPM***
 - a. Panel demonstrated current knowledge of the topic 4.90
 - b. Was presented effectively 4.67
6. **Workshop Theme – Tuberculosis Prevention and Control –*Jigna Rao (moderator); Rajita Bhavaraju, MPH, CHES; Sunanda Gaur, MD; and Marybeth Caruso, RN, FN-CSA***
 - a. Panel demonstrated current knowledge of the topic 4.71
 - b. Was presented effectively 4.43
7. **Workshop – Chronic Disease Management – *Aparna Kalbag (moderator); Thangamani Aravindan, MSN, RN, CCRN; Vasudev N. Makhija, MD, DFAPA; and Arun Rao, MS***
 - a. Panel demonstrated current knowledge of the topic 3.88
 - b. Was presented effectively 4.53
8. **Workshop – Multimedia, Music, and Mobile Technologies – *Robert C. Like, MD, MS (moderator); John D. Clarke, MD; George H. Collier, PhD***
 - a. Panel demonstrated current knowledge of the topic 4.71
 - b. Was presented effectively 4.64
9. **Workshop – Integrative Healing – *Naveen Mehrotra, MD, MPH (moderator); Bhaswati Bhattacharya, MD, MPH, MA; Ranjitha Sandeep; and Sunil J. Wimalawansa, MD, PhD***
 - a. Panel demonstrated current knowledge of the topic 4.68
 - b. Was presented effectively 4.67
10. **Closing Session – Call to Action – *Sananda Gaur, MD; Naveen Mehrotra, MD, MPH; Robert C. Like, MD, MS; Sharad Goyal, MD; Geetha R. Ghai, PhD, MBA; Jigna Rao; Aparna Kalbag, PhD***
 - a. Panel demonstrated current knowledge of the topic 4.58
 - b. Was presented effectively 4.57

Audience Feedback

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 5 being “strongly agree” respondents indicated that the activity met the stated objectives in such a way that they are better able to:

- Describe the impact of health disparities including low health literacy experienced by South Asian populations in New Jersey (4.62)
- Identify and apply best and promising practices to help patients/consumers with health literacy challenges, navigate the health care system to reduce disparities, manage chronic illnesses, and support prevention activities. (4.31)
- Employ innovative health education strategies including multimedia, music, and mobile technologies to improve access, disease self-management, promote wellness and integrative healing, and empower patient/consumers. (4.30)

Participants were asked to rate several aspects of the activity on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “strongly disagree” and 5 being “strongly agree.” The information below is based on feedback received from participant evaluation forms and reflects the mean score.

1. The information presented increased my awareness/understanding of the subject. **(4.85)**
2. The information presented will influence how I do my job. **(4.53)**
3. The information presented will help me make improvement in my organization. **(4.49)**
4. The program was educationally sound, fair and balanced. **(4.78)**
5. The program avoided commercial bias or influence. **(4.87)**
6. Overall, the program met my expectations. **(4.74)**
7. I would recommend this program to my colleagues. **(4.78)**

Reflecting on their practice, respondents indicated how the activity would impact their behavior:

- **90.91%** would apply health literacy best practices learned in this program in their health care organization or work setting.
- **49.09%** would implement health disparities reduction interventions in their health care organization or work setting.
- **65.45%** would provide more culturally and linguistically appropriate services in their health care organization or work setting.
- **72.73%** will tailor their health messages and education programs for multicultural populations that their organization serves.
- **74.55%** would support the idea of creating a New Jersey Health Literacy coalition to help meet the needs of our state’s increasingly diverse communities.
- **70.91%** would seek additional information on the topics of health disparities, health literacy and cross-cultural health care.
- **3.64%** would do nothing differently as current practice reflects activity recommendations.
- **3.64%** would do nothing differently as system barriers prevent them from changing their practice.

Perceived system barriers:

- Funding & resources! - The perception that other minority groups are more "deserving" of healthcare resources than South Asian.
- Corporate culture & style sheet
- Limited knowledge spread to health care workers on diverse population and their health practices & lack of organizations taking aggressive steps improving culturally competent care based on their community and the community they serve.
- It is evident that providers, presenters and all present are very committed to improving health literacy, but how do you convey the importance to health professionals and healthcare organizations that might not agree.
- Changing the administration
- I do not encounter South Asian population at my association - this population either does not know we exist or choose not to reach out.
- I am full-time faculty at the NJ Dental School & hence have very limited policy making choices.

Respondents' comments regarding this activity and suggestions for improvement:

- Make PowerPoint's available on line or electronically
- Need more time for comments/questions
- Bad survey design to ask identifying information- skews data & honesty of response
- Good job with workshops, booklet, and topics speakers! Would be great if the talks could be on a CD or on a web page link.
- The book is great during the presentation, but more difficulty after.
- More networking time.
- Provide the agenda at least 2 days before conference.
- Either decrease the introduction of conference or make lunch as a Q&A comments session, so that we have time for Q&A.
- E. Director could have run through slides faster.
- RE: Workshop – Diabetes: This workshop could have used summary slides or audience interaction, as I didn't understand the point of the cases. Were the cases supposed to tell us how to manage the medical issues? Or, to show the diversity of SA presentation of OM? Or, the variation of blood sugars in SA Pts? Would have liked more info on how to intervene. Dr. Parikh was s/s. I not sure what the point of the pre/post test was. No one collected the forms and it seems like a waste of paper.
- All I can say is "Excellent, Excellent, and Excellent Info!!!!"
- I am not sure if this is already going to be done, but if SATHI could make a comprehensive yet brief summary of the conference and distribute it out to all types of physicians and throughout NJ.
- Recommendations for screening are not up to date, i.e., BSE, PSA
- Re: Dr. Kandula- some slides didn't show up well
- Talk about taboo subjects in SA Culture: i.e. sexuality, pregnancy outside of marriage, mental illness, depression, substance abuse, HIV, domestic violence, etc.
- RE: Workshop – Diabetes: Liked the discussion but not enough focus on the solutions
- RE: Workshop – Integrative Healing: Excellent session- My favorite of the day! B. Bhattachandya was AWESOME! Great Speaker, very interesting topic and should definitely be at subsequent South Asian Health conferences! And should be invited to RWJMS for a speaker series/lecture!
- I would have liked more cultural information and emails for the presenters, Dr Gupta spoke too fast. Dr Clarke was fantastic. Dr Collins was very intelligent and helpful.
- Similarities (references) to like immigrant cultures, what has been done, what is planned, goals to achieve.
- Workshop – Integrative Healing - best panel- made the day worthwhile.
- Workshop – Diabetes: Perhaps you wanted the Audience to do this- Could have been more specific; didn't discuss implication of her cases. Dr. Ghai – Excellent
- Workshop – Media- I was expecting more case examples of ehealth used -- I learned from this conference primarily that SA health is being overlooked & there is a vibrant research & practice community. I would have liked to have more balance of theory /models and actual evidence-based practices. Perhaps it is too early for the evidence to be gathering on practice that works. Speakers Gupta, Murthy & Kandula stood out for me. Thank you for the lunch, but I agree to someone in the audience that we should practice what we preach re: nutrition. I will include this POP in my research proposal.
- Breaks/lunch longer than needed- Day could have been shortened.
- Excellent conference, Thank You! Recommendation: we do not need 50 minutes of introduction by SATHI founders, Comm. Health, Dean of MS, Assembly man- A little too much.

- Dr. Clarke was excellent!
- Still a MPH student- when I start work this will have hanged any planned approach
- Excellent
- Dr Saraiya spoke a little too fast.
- Excellent program- very informative and enjoyable. I was bored with E. Director's talk
- Dr. Misra- Excellent presentation
- Dr. Bhattacharya had an educational presentation. She was enthusiastic and knowledgeable about ayurveda. An amazing presenter. The only complaint I have was that her presentation was cut short. I would love to learn more about how to implement such practices in a medical setting.
- When bringing different systems of medicine to a common symposium/conference, it would be appreciated if the different systems respect each other while putting across their point of view.
- My expertise is limited to oral and dental health
- Speakers assumed that everyone in the audience was knowledgeable about South Asian culture. Some of us were not.

Respondents' suggestions of topics to be addressed in future activities:

- Dental & Oral Health / Oral Health and General Health Relationship
- Address mental health disparities
- More and more health care professionals must attend programs like this - Can improve knowledge and awareness on South Asian population & health care disparities
- Influence of religion on health practices. CAM open-up this topic a little but I feel religion can have a significant impact on health management.
- Metabolic Syndrome
- Women's health - contraception, pregnancy, sexual health
- Workshop for those of us that are not South Asian, diet and cultural beliefs
- How to connect with researches? What are the next steps? Career Fair maybe? What can SATHI do to include South Asians in CDC and other research?
- Balance of East and Western medicines- more time for Eastern medicine.
- Malaria - Prophylaxis for travelers to SA
- Was expecting more direction on designing health messages for So. Asian pop- Maybe future conference should provide more "how-to"
- Laptop presentation of poster session not effective- can't readily access in setting provided!
- Dr. Zarcadoolas was excellent!
- I would love to see more participants in the exhibitions