

BEAT CANCER-New Community Partnership Seeks to Increase Colon Cancer Screenings in North Omaha

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African Americans are at much higher risk of being diagnosed and dying from colon cancer. These rates are similar here in Nebraska and more specifically North Omaha where the highest portion of Black Nebraskans reside. These increased rates are primarily due to lower screening rates. Because of this, a group of researchers including North Omaha natives Dr. Keyonna King and Mr. Michael Griffin; Dr. Daisy Dai, and Dr. Tzeyu Michaud at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, led by Dr. Jungyoon Kim, have partnered with Mr. John Ewing, Jr. at the Douglas County Treasurer's Office (DCTO) to establish a partnership with the Nebraska Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). They are also in talks with Nebraska

Department of Health and Human Services (NE DHHS) to join the partnership to pilot a colon cancer screening program focused on increasing the rate of Black residents screened.

This is the first partnership of this kind in the state and nationally to offer a public health program at a local government office. Other community partners include Charles Drew Health Center, Inc., Empowerment Network, the Great Plains Colon Cancer Task Force, and community residents who are also colon cancer survivors. Collectively, this partnership established BEAT CANCER, a cross sectoral partnership that works to improve colon cancer screening in North Omaha by testing two approaches: recruitment and enrollment in-person at the DCTO/DMV or mail-in.

In-person recruitment will occur at the Douglas County Treasurer's Office and Driver's Licensing Office at 4606 North 56th Street from October 2023 to January 2024. To be screened, participants must register by completing a brief survey and signing a consent form.

Then, program staff will provide fecal immuno chemical test (FIT) kit, a screening kit to collect a stool (poop) sample that will be tested for colon cancer.

Participants complete the test at home and mail in specimen to the Nebraska Medicine laboratory using a prepaid envelope. The test results will be received in 3 weeks. For mail-in approach, the NE DHHS will randomly select potential individuals (African Americans aged 45-75) using DMV database for recruitment and mail initial letters asking if they want more information to participate in the program. NE DHHS will then mail the FIT (stool) kit to those interested in being screened.

Participants will complete same steps as in-person enrollment to send specimens to the local laboratory and receive results. Residents who participate have the opportunity to be screened in an easy and accessible way at a location that most residents visit regularly.

Residents may also prevent early death and improve their quality of life. For individuals who do not have regular sources of health care, such as a family doctor or insurance, a Community Health Navigator at Charles Drew Health Center, Inc. will reach out to provide follow-up services after a positive test result.

The program will run from October 2023 to January 2024; home-based stool (poop) test kits will be provided to individuals visiting Douglas County Treasurer's Office and the DMV Driver's Licensing Office at the North Omaha location, 4606 North 56th Street.*

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