

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND PREVENTIVE MEDICINE  
RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

**Cervical Cancer Screening Among Young Hispanic American Women:  
The Knowledge Barrier**

**Elizabeth Werner**

Healthy People 2010 reports that Cervical Cancer is one of the top 10 cancers that afflict women each year. In 2004, over 11,000 women were diagnosed with cervical cancer and approximately 3,800 died from the disease. Most times, invasive cervical cancer is preceded by changes in the shape and condition of the cells of the cervix; these changes can be detected by a pap smear. In effect cervical cancer deaths can be avoided if women followed preventive screening recommendations. However, women are not adhering to screening recommendations. In 2006 only 84% of women aged 18 and over had received a pap test within the past 3 years. Looking at women aged 18-24, this number drops to 76%.

Hispanic women are an important group to look at when examining cervical cancer statistics because they have a rate of cervical cancer that is significantly higher than all other race/ethnicity categories. Because of this, Hispanic women are a group to target for future interventions. However, before interventions can be developed it is essential that we understand the problem completely.

The current literature establishes a variety of barriers to cervical cancer screening; however what is missing from the literature is a depth of understanding behind many of the barriers to screening. The literature has established that there exists a lack of knowledge among women when it comes to pap smears and cervical cancer. This project will aim to understand the knowledge barrier at a more in-depth level and uncover some of the reasons behind the lack in knowledge.

In order to investigate this problem, qualitative methods will be used, recruiting 2 groups of women in the Charles Settlement House neighborhood. Group one will include women who have never received a pap smear and group two will include women who have received a pap smear. Key informant interviews will be conducted with these women and the results of each group will be analyzed and then compared to note any differences.

**Committee Chair:  
Scott McIntosh, PhD**

**Committee Members:  
Peter Veazie, PhD  
Sireesha Reddy, MD**

**Wednesday, November 11, 2009  
12:00PM – 12:30 PM  
Helen Wood Hall, Room 4W301**

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME**