

Grants Totaling \$1.5M to Advance Breast Cancer Care in Latinas

Grant recipients hope to educate community members and close the care gap for breast cancer patients.

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Two programs at UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center each received a \$750,000 [grant](#) from Gilead Sciences to prioritize and improve [breast cancer health equity](#), especially among Latina women.

Although breast cancer rates are relatively low in Latinas compared with non-Hispanic white women, Latinas often receive diagnoses at later stages and are about 30% more likely to die of the disease, according to a [UC Davis news release](#). Latinas are less likely to have genetic counseling for breast cancer compared with non-Hispanic white women. They also have lower rates of [mammography screening](#).

The Women's Cancer Care and Research program (WeCARE), a research hub dedicated to the advancement of the understanding of breast cancer and gynecologic cancers and improving treatment strategies for these cancers, received a \$750,000 grant to help it partner with the Latino Cancer Institute. The partnership will aim to establish a new breast cancer outreach program at two health centers in Sacramento and San Diego.

Laura Fejerman, PhD, of the UC Davis Cancer Center, coleads the WeCARE program. "We need to close the gap in breast cancer care," she told [UC Davis](#). "Low-income Latinas are getting left behind because they are not aware of the role genes play in breast cancer," Fejerman added. "The answer is to integrate health educators who speak Spanish and are community members to educate Latinas and help them navigate breast cancer screening and care, if cancer is diagnosed."

The [Center for Advancing Cancer Health Equity \(CACHE\)](#) at UC Davis also received a \$750,000 grant. The grant will fund the "embajadoras [ambassador] project" aimed at training bilingual and bicultural [promotores](#), or nonprofessional advocates, to provide better access to cancer education, prevention and care to community members in the 19 counties the center serves.

Luis Carvajal-Carmona, PhD, the founding director of CACHE, noted that the COVID-19 pandemic "uncovered the effects of multiple structural barriers and inequities to delivering health care in Latino communities. An important lesson has been that trusted community health workers have

the language, knowledge and trust of their communities.”

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