

Jefferson Health: Meeting the Needs of Immigrants where They Live

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

If you've ever been in a foreign country where you didn't speak the local language and you needed health care, you probably were quite relieved to find a conveniently located English-speaking doctor. Now imagine the thousands of immigrants that have come to our city, live in low-income neighborhoods, and, like anyone else, at times are in need of health care. Trekking to a hospital emergency room in Center City is the only option for many uninsured people, and it can be a special hardship for those who do not speak English.

Jefferson Health has recognized the need for local neighborhood clinics to treat low-income, uninsured people, particularly non-English-speaking immigrants. In 2020, Jefferson will open the Hansjorg Wyss Wellness Center in the Bok Building, formerly a vocational school, on the

1900 block of South 9th Street, situated in a largely Southeast Asian immigrant community. In addition to health care, this center, led by Dr. Marc J. Altshuler, will provide social, educational, and mental health services, funded primarily by a \$3.1 million grant from the Wyss Foundation.

Jefferson has been concerned about the needs of immigrants for a long time. In 2007, directed by Dr. Altshuler, Jefferson opened the Center for Refugee Health at 9th and Chestnut, to care for more than 2,000 newly arrived refugees from 50 countries. Language interpreters work primarily through a Language Line. In 2004, Dr. Jack Ludmir and his associates created Puentes de Salud ("Bridges of Health"), a nonprofit aimed at the Latino community. A special clinic for Latina women was part of that project and is now

Jefferson Latina Women's Clinic. Jefferson opened clinics in Chinatown and South Philadelphia staffed by Chinese and Spanish speakers in 2001 and 2003, respectively.

Most recently, Jefferson asked Dr. Ludmir to create the Philadelphia Collaborative for Health Equity (P-CHE), aimed at addressing health inequities <https://p-che.org/>. P-CHE has conducted a study to determine the needs of the Latino community in North Philadelphia. They asked 28 organizations to be part of the Community Advisory Group, including many Latino and Hispanic organizations, and conducted interviews with their members. P-CHE will award more than \$500,000 in grants to organizations focused on closing the health-disparity gap in North Philadelphia.

Teens' Perspectives on Health

The Philadelphia Collaborative for Health Equity asked teenagers to provide input about their health needs through the Photo Voice project. Not surprisingly, many of their photos illustrated the effects of drugs, smoking, and violence on their community. The more-surprising images, like the one pictured here, illustrated their concerns about their neighborhoods' unhealthy outdoor environment. Trash piled up everywhere made them feel unsafe, depressed, and disgusted, and they wanted more trees, plants, public gardens, and playgrounds. <https://p-che.org/news-resources/photo-voices/>

—Bonnie Eisenfeld



Community Destruction

Leaving trash around the community makes us look like we don't love our community. My quote means that **people just dump trash anywhere**. People who just visit probably be disgusted.

Destrucción de la Comunidad

Dejando la basura alrededor de la comunidad hace ver como si no amamos nuestra comunidad. Mi oración significa que **la gente solo tira la basura en cualquier sitio**. Las personas quienes visitan probablemente les da asco.

Ashanti, 16, and Anthony, Providence Center

Courtesy Thomas Jefferson University Hospital

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