



The Iowa Initiative Research Program

Principle Investigator: Dr. Mary Losch (University of Northern Iowa)

The Iowa Initiative Research Program is a set of five studies designed to increase knowledge, persuade adult women to seek and access contraception if they wish to delay or prevent pregnancy, and improve contraceptive behaviors in this group. Led by Dr. Mary Losch, the Iowa Initiative Research Program is based at the University of Northern Iowa in the Center for Social and Behavioral Research. With its five-year timeline, the program is designed to impact thousands of Iowa women.

The first year of the program is devoted to project development and the collection of detailed qualitative and quantitative information that will provide the foundation for the individual project interventions that will begin in 2009 and continue through 2011. Through the intervention period and during 2012, the success of the projects will be evaluated and the findings at both the state and national level. The research program is a collaboration that includes academic expertise of faculty and research professionals at three universities -- University of Northern Iowa, University of Iowa and University of Alabama-Birmingham. Summaries of each project are provided below.

Salon Intervention

Project Director: Dr. Susan Dobie (UNI)

Replication and expansion of public health education design using stylists to provide health messages and referrals for reproductive health and family planning care. Salon professionals are trained to provide 3-4 basic messages to clients and messages are reinforced with posters, flyers, website, etc. in the shops.



Pharmacy Intervention

Project Directors: Dr. Karen Farris & Dr. Mary Aquilino (UI)

Pharmacies will be targeted for an intervention designed to increase the visibility and accessibility of over-the-counter contraceptives and increase the information about all family planning products by the pharmacies and the pharmacists in those establishments. Intensive training about over-the-counter and prescription contraceptives will be provided to participating pharmacists and displays will be modified to increase visibility and reduce stigma associated with the purchase of family planning products.

Social Marketing

Project Directors: Dr. Shelly Campo & Ms. Natoshia Askelson (UI)

Students in Iowa's three public universities, two largest community college systems and two residential colleges will be the focus of intensive educational messages and periodic provision of free condoms. Information channels will include the heavily-utilized social networking sites and on the Internet, local events, bars, and student activity information provided by the institutions where possible.

General Statewide Social Marketing

Project Directors: Dr. Shelly Campo & Ms. Natoshia Askelson (UI)

The broad social marketing approach will target wider audiences and include print, electronic media, radio and TV. It will also include event sponsorships, promotions, etc. This will occur in limited areas in the first two years of implementation and then be expanded to the entire state in the third year.

Edutainment

Project Directors: Dr. Connie Kohler (UAB) & Dr. Shelly Campo (UI)

Replication and expansion of Dr. Connie Kohler's (University of Alabama-Birmingham) work to imbed public health messages in radio serials produced by and directed toward



minority populations. Reproductive health and family planning messages will be embedded in 30 episodes of a radio serial developed and targeting African-American and Hispanic populations in Iowa.

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