Social determinants of health

Each month, these pages focus on health topics and disparities in communities that are especially relevant to African-American people. The vision of the University of Pittsburgh’s Pittsburgh Courier, Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh, UPMC Center for Research and Inclusion, and University of Pittsburgh Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute (CTSI) is to produce health disparities research that improves health outcomes, addresses health inequities, and reduces health disparities in underserved populations.

The University of Pittsburgh’s School of Medicine’s CTSI recently submitted a proposal to the National Institutes of Health and the Pittsburgh students engage in evidence-based community-based organizations (CBOs) that serve underserved areas of the community. Called the Community-Driven Partnership for Equity (COMP), the partnership with UPMC aims to engage at least 150 medical students, 20 CBOs, and other community members in a series of webinars to understand disparities in health, discuss how to address them, and work together to make a difference.

“Each group of nine to ten students will work with one CBO to conduct a series of webinars and work on a project,” explains Dr. Thuy Bui, associate dean for the General Internal Medicine (GIM) CTSI. “COMP’s goal is for students to report on their own projects and findings to their training and the work of the CTSI.”

Dr. Bui notes, “It takes time for CTSI and the CBO partners to build trust and rapport, and for the CBO partners to identify clear goals. That’s why each webinar will focus on one topic and one goal.”

The CTSI and the CBO partners will work together to ensure that the projects are successful and have a lasting impact. “We want COMP to have a positive impact on the communities and that impact will last long after the period of years,” Dr. Bui says.

The CTSI is committed to working with the CBO partners to ensure that the projects are successful and have a lasting impact.