

Press Release

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LAUNCH OF SUMMER 2005
HEALTHY LIVING CAMPAIGN FOR SOUTH ASIANS
AND
1ST COMMUNITY RESOURCE DIRECTORY FOR SOUTH ASIANS, NEW YORK EDITION

New York—July 5, 2005—The South Asian Health Project (the Health Project) today announces the launch of Summer 2005 Healthy Living Campaign for South Asians (HLC) and New York area Community Resource Directory for South Asians (CRD).

The HLC is a network of community and faith-based organizations involved in health-related activities. The activities range from health fairs to community education on nutrition to helping clients find a physician. Participating agencies include South Asian Youth Action, Sakhi for South Asian Women, the Islamic Circle of North America, the Council of Peoples Organization, United Hindu Cultural Council for Seniors, United Sikhs; among others.

South Asians (including people of Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Indian, Nepalese, Maldivian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, and Indo-Caribbean descent), the fastest growing minority in the US, are facing an increase in poor health outcomes. Currently, South Asians bear a disproportionate burden of diabetes, heart disease, and obesity when compared to other ethnic groups. Limited attention to South Asian health is compounded by the “model minority” myth--stereotyping South Asians as affluent and, therefore, impervious to poor health. Consequently there is increasing evidence that health disparities cut across immigration status, income, and education levels.

“Summer 2005 Healthy Living Campaign for South Asians is an innovative approach to raising more awareness about the unique health needs of South Asians in the United States and the importance of community-wide action,” according to Dr. Chandak Ghosh, founding Board Member of the Health Project and Medical Consultant for the US Department of Health & Human Services/Health Resources & Services Administration.

The Health Project hopes to expand the campaign in 2006 with more partners in New York as well as other states. The key to the HLC is the participating agencies that already deliver much needed services for South Asian communities and their commitment to ensuring that health needs are proactively addressed this summer.

One of the barriers to addressing health needs is the absence of information on culturally- and linguistically-appropriate care. The Health Project is working to bridge that gap.

As a first step, the Health Project is disseminating the CRD, available in print and on-line, in an effort to facilitate access to existing culturally- and linguistically-appropriate services. Featuring 26 agencies, the publication is a listing of organizations that offer programs for South Asian communities in the N.Y. area.

“The directory highlights our community assets—groups dedicated to promoting health and well-being of South Asians in New York, and the Health Project is committed to ensuring information is made available as widely as possible,” notes Shazia Anam, chair of the Health Project.

A copy of the directory is available at any one of the agencies participating in this summer’s HLC, as well as on the Health Project’s website, www.SouthAsianHealth.org. The CRD was made possible with financial support from Office of Minority Health, US Department of Health and Human Services and Aetna Inc.

“The Healthy Living Campaign and Community Resource Directory may serve as a model for minority groups, on a limited budget, working to promote health and bridge the gap between information and community members,” comments Claude Coliman, Region II Office of Minority Health, US Department of Health and Human Services.

The Health Project is the first community-based initiative in the Northeast area with a mission to achieve health equity for South Asians through individual and community empowerment. More information is available at www.SouthAsianHealth.org.

For a copy of the Community Resource Directory for South Asians, New York Edition, go [here](#) (link to pdf).

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