Community BENEFITS
Working to Reduce the Burden of Cancer
DEAR READERS,

Dana-Farber’s community outreach programs, described in this brochure, are at the heart of the Institute’s patient care and scientific mission. If our goal is to relieve the suffering associated with cancer in children and adults, then we must be committed to helping those on whom the burden of cancer often falls the hardest – the disadvantaged and medically underserved in our community.

In many ways, our involvement in the community is a direct extension of our work in the lab and the clinic. Our experience in treating patients and educating them about their disease, combined with research into cancer biology and prevention, inform the programs we have launched in the Greater Boston area. These initiatives include public awareness efforts about cancer risk; screening programs for early detection of certain cancers; and projects to increase access to cancer care and clinical research to people across the city.

One of the strengths of these programs is that they are evidence-based, guided by research into the most effective ways of engaging local populations in better health practices. They draw on the skills and talents of people across Dana-Farber – physicians, nurses, researchers, and others – who work together to reduce cancer disparities and promote health equity in our priority communities. The programs are strengthened by our collaboration with local organizations such as community health centers, governmental agencies, and support networks. These partnerships enable our programs to reach racially and ethnically diverse groups, and those for whom socioeconomic circumstances, financial obstacles, or cultural barriers may have stood in the way of learning about cancer risk or seeking treatment and screening services.

The ability of community-based programs to have an impact on cancer in the United States is reflected in their inclusion in the “Cancer Moonshot,” the federal government’s landmark effort to achieve a decade’s worth of progress against cancer in the next five years. One of the project’s chief strategic goals is to improve patient access to the highest quality cancer care, including access to the newest, most promising therapies, advanced diagnostics, and clinical trials. This is especially important at a time when precision medicine and advances in immunotherapy are transforming the treatment of some cancers.

The report of the Moonshot Task Force calls on local cancer centers and community partners to identify ways to improve cancer prevention and early detection by addressing the social determinants of health; another key effort is to identify populations at greater risk for cancer due to genetic factors and to monitor their health status. This aligns well with the work we are undertaking.

Implicit in Dana-Farber’s outreach efforts is the idea that quality prevention, early intervention, and treatment services be equally available to every member of the community. At Dana-Farber, we’re putting this into practice.

Laurie H. Glimcher, MD
President and CEO, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

“The ability of community-based programs to have an impact on cancer in the United States is reflected in their inclusion in the ‘Cancer Moonshot,’ the federal government’s landmark effort to achieve a decade’s worth of progress against cancer in the next five years.”

– Laurie H. Glimcher, MD

Published 2016 by Dana-Farber Cancer Institute’s Community Benefits and Communications Departments.

On the cover: Youth leaders with Dana-Farber community partner Sociedad Latina.
As a leading center for cancer prevention, treatment, and discovery, Dana-Farber is committed to providing the best possible care to children and adults with cancer and to seeking tomorrow’s cures through research. Central to that mission is our dedication to meeting the health needs of high-risk and medically underserved populations in our communities.

We recognize the profound burden of cancer experienced by residents in our surrounding neighborhoods, especially among communities of color. Our efforts to lessen this burden include a broad range of public health programs to reduce cancer incidence and mortality, support community development, and ensure that every patient who walks through our doors receives equitable and culturally appropriate care.

The following pages describe this work, telling the story of Dana-Farber’s impact in the community and spotlighting the residents and neighborhoods we serve. We are making significant progress in curbing youth access to tobacco, providing breast cancer screenings, increasing vaccination rates for human papillomavirus (HPV), educating residents about sun safety, and more. Our impact is greatly strengthened by embedding these programs and services in the fabric of the communities we serve.

We are grateful to our skilled and dedicated community partners — including community health centers, city and state health departments, nonprofit organizations, and advocacy networks — who share our goal of reducing cancer-related disparities in Boston and across the state. This is an Institute-wide commitment that involves Dana-Farber’s executive leadership, faculty, staff, and trustees who contribute their time, expertise, and resources to ensure that our efforts have the greatest reach. Further, we thank our generous donors, who allow us to launch new evidence-based programs to supplement and strengthen our existing activities.

Cancer is the number one cause of death in the city of Boston. We at Dana-Farber are working every day to change that equation as part of our 70-year mission of care and discovery.

Anne L. Levine, M.Ed., MBA
Vice President of External Affairs

Magnolia Contreras, MSW, MBA
Director, Community Benefits

DEAR READERS,

We are grateful to our skilled and dedicated community partners — including community health centers, city and state health departments, nonprofit organizations, and advocacy networks — who share our goal of reducing cancer-related disparities in Boston and across the state. This is an Institute-wide commitment that involves Dana-Farber’s executive leadership, faculty, staff, and trustees who contribute their time, expertise, and resources to ensure that our efforts have the greatest reach. Further, we thank our generous donors, who allow us to launch new evidence-based programs to supplement and strengthen our existing activities.

Cancer is the number one cause of death in the city of Boston. We at Dana-Farber are working every day to change that equation as part of our 70-year mission of care and discovery.

Anne L. Levine, M.Ed., MBA
Vice President of External Affairs

Magnolia Contreras, MSW, MBA
Director, Community Benefits

BOSTON
THE COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

We draw on the many strengths of the neighborhoods we serve—where social, economic, and environmental forces pose everyday challenges to health—to guide our efforts to eliminate cancer disparities and improve people’s lives in Boston and beyond.

DANA-FARBER in the Community

Anne Levine (right) and Magnolia Contreras lead Dana-Farber’s Community Benefits efforts.
For the past two decades, Dana-Farber’s Community Benefits program has worked to reduce cancer disparities and improve health outcomes for residents in medically underserved communities around Boston. Together with physicians, researchers, staff members, and other partners throughout Dana-Farber and in the community, our team designs and supports evidence-based programs to:

- **EDUCATE** community members about risk, prevention, early detection, treatment, and survival of cancer;
- **PROVIDE** screenings to find cancers early, when they are more treatable;
- **ENCOURAGE** healthier lifestyles through smoking cessation, exercise, and other activities;
- **IMPROVE** residents’ access to needed cancer services, including access to clinical trials for diverse populations; and
- **ADVOCATE** for local, state, and national policy changes to ease the burden of cancer.

Meeting the HEALTH NEEDS of our neighbors

To learn more about Dana-Farber’s Community Benefits programs, visit www.dana-farber.org/communitybenefits or call 617-632-4433.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

To help counter community members’ fears, Dana-Farber has created programs to demystify the disease, stress the importance of early detection, and showcase survivorship in underserved Boston neighborhoods. The program has been recruiting survivors to be “ambassadors” who share their own cancer experiences and encourage neighbors to seek timely care.

SPREADING THE WORD ON SURVIVORSHIP

The word “cancer” is scary, and many people associate it with death – especially in communities where residents see a disproportionate number of relatives and friends die from the disease. But cancer survivors are everywhere. Nearly 14.5 million Americans have a history of cancer, and that group is expected to grow to almost 19 million by 2024, thanks to advances in detection and treatment.

TAKING ACTION ON PROSTATE HEALTH

Prostate cancer incidence is **60 percent** higher for African-Americans, and their mortality rate is **150 percent** higher compared to other racial and ethnic groups.

Prostate cancer survivor Tom Farrington sounds the alarm about prostate cancer risk.

African-American men have the highest rates of prostate cancer in the U.S. They are more likely to develop the disease, they tend to be diagnosed at a later stage, and their risk of dying from it is 150 percent higher than other racial and ethnic groups. Dana-Farber has been working for years to address these troubling disparities. One of its strongest partners is Prostate Health and Education Network (PHEN), a national organization founded in 2003 by prostate cancer survivor and Dana-Farber Trustee Thomas Farrington. PHEN holds monthly support group meetings at the Institute for men of color and collaborates with Dana-Farber clinicians and staff on prostate cancer education, outreach, and advocacy efforts.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in American men, after skin cancer, with an estimated 220,800 new cases in 2015. The disease can generally be cured with early detection and proper treatment; nearly 3 million men who have been diagnosed at some point are alive today in the U.S. However, late-stage diagnosis, genetic differences, and low socioeconomic status contribute to the disturbing disparities in prostate cancer mortality.

Farrington urges African-American men to talk with their doctor, know their family history, and make healthy lifestyle choices around eating, drinking, exercise, and smoking. “Our mission,” he says of PHEN, “is to advise every black man that he is at high risk for prostate cancer.”

Source: Prostate Health Education Network

COMMUNITY UPDATES

Prostate cancer incidence is **60 percent** higher for African-Americans, and their mortality rate is **150 percent** higher compared to other racial and ethnic groups.
COMMUNITY UPDATES

PROGRAM AIMS TO IMPROVE CANCER OUTCOMES

The Cancer Care Equity Program (CCEP) places Dana-Farber at the forefront of efforts to eliminate cancer disparities and improve health outcomes in medically vulnerable communities, both locally and nationally.

The CCEP, launched in January 2012, collaborates with other faculty who conduct cancer disparities research, and gives residents from diverse, low-income neighborhoods streamlined access to high-quality cancer prevention and treatment services and to clinical trials that test potential new therapies. It is also expanding research on cancer disparities to address the reality that certain groups (based on factors like race, ethnicity, income, and gender) suffer more than others from the burden of cancer.

“Dana-Farber recognizes that, even though we sit in the middle of the city, many people in our vicinity still have poor cancer outcomes,” says CCEP Faculty Director Christopher Lathan, MD, MS, MPH, a lung cancer specialist at Dana-Farber. “We are committed to opening our doors widely and to ensuring that we deliver equitable and culturally appropriate care to everyone we serve.”

The program’s centerpiece is Dana-Farber Community Cancer Care at Whittier Street Health Center (see page 12). The CCEP also established an annual research symposium on cancer disparities in collaboration with the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center’s Initiative to Eliminate Cancer Disparities. The symposium features national experts who share latest research findings and strategies that have proven to be effective.

Lathan and others hope the Cancer Care Equity Program will serve as a national model for addressing inequities in cancer care and outcomes.

DEVELOPING OUR CURRENT AND FUTURE WORKFORCE

Chisom Ebele, RN, came to Dana-Farber as a high-school intern through the Institute’s partnership with John D. O’Bryant School of Mathematics and Science in Roxbury. Through mentorship and hands-on learning, the 17-year-old gained the necessary skills to work with cancer patients. She continued training as a clinic assistant over four summers and academic years. After graduating from Simmons College and earning her nursing license, Ebele joined the Dana-Farber staff as a nurse in Adult Ambulatory Services. “It’s been great to work with the Dana-Farber staff as a nurse in Adult Ambulatory Services. “It’s been great to grow into my career here,” she says.

Ebele is one of more than 300 young people from the Boston Public Schools who, over the past nine years, have completed summer and academic-year internships through the Institute’s Workforce Development initiative. Partnering with schools and community-based organizations, the training program builds skills and exposes students to career options in health care and science. Each summer, 60 local teens intern in more than 50 different Dana-Farber departments, learning from mentors about subjects such as Cancer Biology, Finance, and Pediatric Oncology. All of the students attend career and college readiness workshops and participate in educational sessions with health care leaders, organized by DFCT’s Office of Workforce Development. The office also provides meaningful learning experiences and access to career opportunities for unemployed and underemployed adults from the Boston community.

Racial and ethnic minorities are currently underrepresented in health care professions, and nurturing new generations of well-prepared and highly skilled providers, researchers, and leaders is an important part of Dana-Farber’s teaching mission.

PATIENT NAVIGATORS

In 2005, the Patient Navigator Program was launched.

The Patient Navigator Program helps address cultural, language, transportation, and other barriers as a way to improve timely and effective care for patients at Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women’s Cancer Center. The program seeks to reduce the time from an abnormal finding to resolution.

HATS PROVIDE WARMTH AND LOVE

Dana-Farber’s Caps for Kids program provides handmade hats, scarves, mittens, and more for local children each year, thanks to hundreds of generous and handy members of the DFCT community. Since 1999, staff, patients, friends, and family members have contributed more than 100,000 hand-knit and crocheted items, including 13,630 in 2015 alone. The items are delivered to more than 50 schools, shelters, community centers, and other Boston sites before the December holidays. This heart- and head-warming volunteer program is one of many ways Dana-Farber supports its neighbors of all ages. Thank-you messages from youngsters who have received hats through Caps for Kids underscore its impact:

“Thank you for the best hat in the world.”

“Thank you for the red and grey hat. It keeps me warm at night. It is my favorite color.”

“I will wear it forever.”
MAMMOGRAPHY VAN: From SCREENING to Care

When patients arrive for a screening mammogram at Charles River Community Health (CRCH) in Brighton, they enter the center’s beautiful new building to fill out paperwork—and head right back outside for their appointment.

They step inside Dana-Farber’s Mammography Van, parked conveniently near the entrance. While on the van, patients receive breast health education, change into a medical gown, and have their digital mammogram performed by a skilled and caring technologist.

Dana-Farber’s Mammography Van visits CRCH twice a month, enabling the neighborhood health center to provide this important test for detecting breast cancer early. “Our patients love the convenience. A lot of them walk here, and they don’t have to spend hours going to the hospital,” says Maria Martinez of CRCH, who coordinates Mammography Van visits. “It’s an excellent service.”

Part of Dana-Farber’s mobile health program, the mammography van represents a lifeline for patients at CRCH. The vehicle has been serving the center (formerly called Joseph M. Smith Community Health Center) since 2002 and typically screens nearly 50 patients each month at sites in Brighton and Waltham. About two-thirds of CRCH patients live at or below the federal poverty level, most belong to racial or ethnic minority groups, and many are uninsured, notes Executive Director Elizabeth Browne, MBA. Patients speak languages that include Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole, Thai, and Vietnamese.

“We know our patients are more likely to have their mammogram if the service is provided here,” says Browne. “CRCH is their medical home. We’ve built a level of trust, so they feel comfortable keeping their appointment.” According to Browne, the Mammography Van visits are critical to her center’s overall efforts to promote cancer screening.

“We’re grateful for and pleased with our long-term partnership with Dana-Farber,” she says. “It makes a real difference in our ability to deliver quality preventive care to our patients.”

Dana-Farber’s Mammography Van has delivered 41,000-plus screening mammograms to more than 18,000 women since it rolled out in 2002.

Over 66 percent of patients screened in 2015 were returnees from previous years.

CONVENG BOSTON’S BREAST CANCER EQUITY COALITION

In the city of Boston, black, non-Hispanic women have higher death rates from breast cancer than women of other racial/ethnic groups. Building on past efforts to address these inequities, Dana-Farber and the Boston Public Health Commission helped form the Boston Breast Cancer Equity Coalition. Comprised of 40-plus members, the coalition includes city and state health department representatives, oncology and primary-care clinicians, patient navigators, public health policy makers, advocates, researchers, and patients. Coalition members have been collecting and analyzing data to better understand the root causes of breast cancer disparities. They are also developing interventions, such as using clinical guidelines that reflect the best available treatments and improving patient navigation services to enhance patients’ outcomes.
EDUCATOR OFFERS INFORMATION, HOPE

Health education is a key part of Dana-Farber’s Mammography Van outreach to medically underserved women. At community screening sites, Breast Health Educator Sarah Peterson, MPH, shares information about the importance of mammography screening and steps patients can take to lower their risk of developing breast cancer. “Studies show that health disparities typically begin with missed or delayed follow-up,” says Peterson. By clearly explaining why early detection and immediate treatment are important, she reduces women’s fear and offers hope.

Charles River Community Health is one of 16 community health centers that partner with the mammography van to improve access to high-quality mammography services and breast health education for women. The van program’s mission is to reduce breast cancer rates, increase survival (by catching cancers early, when they are easier to treat), and lower health disparities among women from racial, ethnic, and immigrant populations.

Since 2002, the van — the only mobile mammography program in Massachusetts — has provided more than 41,000 screening mammograms to medically underserved women age 40 and older. The van travels throughout Greater Boston year-round, three to four days a week. Dedicated Dana-Farber technologists and board-certified radiologists work closely together to provide the highest quality of breast imaging services. The mammography van staff ensures that women with abnormal findings are scheduled for follow-up care.

“Our team is committed to serving women who might not otherwise have access to mammography services,” says DFCI Program Manager Tia Goodman, MS. Goodman oversees daily van operations and maintains community partnerships alongside Breast Imaging Supervisor Maureen Akisik, RT(R)(M)(CT). “The mammography van is a vital part of our Breast Imaging department,” says Akisik. “The seamless care we provide to patients at Dana-Farber is extended to the women we serve on the van.”

About 13 percent of patients in 2015 had their first-ever mammogram on the van.

Luiza Souza and Kerline Saint-Fleur provide culturally competent care and a welcoming environment to patients served on Dana-Farber’s Mammography Van.
Partnership Brings CANCER CARE to the Community

On a fall morning at Whittier Street Health Center, Ludmila Svoboda, RN, BSN, MA, OCN, is clarifying some confusion about a patient’s medical tests.

Ernesto Medina, a former Dominican farmer who lives in Roxbury, missed a CT scan of his lungs, despite reminder calls and letters, and Svoboda is trying to figure out why. Speaking with him in Spanish, she realizes that Medina mixed up the screening at Dana-Farber with a different test at another Boston hospital. She schedules a scan for that afternoon, makes sure Medina has a ride, and later checks that the appointment went smoothly.

Svoboda, a Dana-Farber oncology nurse, is at the heart of a unique program forged by Dana-Farber and Whittier, a community health center that serves more than 30,000 patients from Roxbury and surrounding neighborhoods and provides outreach and education to an additional 20,000 residents. Svoboda helps patients navigate language, cultural, and other barriers to receive the cancer care they need. “Our program is about leveling the playing field,” Svoboda says. “We believe everybody should have access to state-of-the-art cancer diagnosis and treatment.”

Dana-Farber Community Cancer Care at Whittier Street Health Center, which opened in 2012, is designed to reduce disparities by connecting patients from low-income, diverse, and medically vulnerable communities to cancer prevention, diagnosis, education, and treatment services—and by shortening wait times for care. The program builds on a partnership between the two organizations that dates back to 2003, with visits by Dana-Farber’s Mammography Van and the establishment of a cancer survivorship clinic at Whittier. Today, Dana-Farber Community Cancer Care includes a cancer clinic, breast and lung cancer screenings, smoking-cessation counseling, genetic testing, and access to clinical trials for developing new therapies.

“The practice of embedding a subspecialty medical oncologist in a community health center has shown early positive results.”

— Christopher Lathan, MD, MS, MPH

and medically vulnerable communities to cancer prevention, diagnosis, education, and treatment services—and by shortening wait times for care. The program builds on a partnership between the two organizations that dates back to 2003, with visits by Dana-Farber’s Mammography Van and the establishment of a cancer survivorship clinic at Whittier. Today, Dana-Farber Community Cancer Care includes a cancer clinic, breast and lung cancer screenings, smoking-cessation counseling, genetic testing, and access to clinical trials for developing new therapies.

“These investments in our community and patients have made a

Lamar Booth (at right) receives compassionate care at Whittier Street Health Center from Dana-Farber nurse Ludmila Svoboda, RN, BSN, MA, OCN.
Dana-Farber Community Cancer Care at Whittier Street Health Center is the centerpiece of the Institute’s Cancer Care Equity Program, established to address persistent health disparities faced by local communities. Growing to meet patient needs, the Dana-Farber-Whittier program now offers:

- A mammography (breast X-ray) suite at Whittier managed by Dana-Farber.
- Genetics evaluations for patients with a family history of cancer, delivered by a Dana-Farber geneticist and genetics counselor.
- Low-dose lung CT screening and smoking-cessation counseling.

huge impact in addressing cancer disparities,” says Frederica M. Williams, president and CEO of Whittier Street Health Center. “We are grateful for Dana-Farber’s leadership and commitment to the underserved communities in Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and other low-income neighborhoods that face numerous barriers to health, and to the Community Benefits team for their steadfast support.”

**BRIDGE TO CANCER CARE**

Based on the fifth floor of Whittier’s bright, modern building, Dana-Farber Community Cancer Care features a twice-monthly clinic staffed by medical oncologists. They see patients that are referred by the Whittier primary care physicians and who have cancer symptoms (perhaps a lump, abnormal blood test, or weight loss); need follow-up care for a previous cancer diagnosis; or are at higher risk of cancer from smoking or other causes. Patients with suspected cancers are offered streamlined referrals to Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women’s Cancer Center for more tests and their treatment. As of June 2016, the program had cared for approximately 350 new patients and 200 for follow-up visits.

“The practice of embedding a subspecialty medical oncologist in a community health center has shown early positive results,” says director Christopher Lathan, MD, MS, MPH, who helped develop the program and also leads Dana-Farber’s Cancer Care Equity Program.

“This is a true collaboration with primary care physicians, OB/GYNs, and dentists at Whittier who refer their patients to us. We serve as a bridge between the two organizations.”

Dana-Farber Community Cancer Care was a life-saver for Mary London. She says doctors in New York had detected a kidney mass but recommended watching it. Her new Whittier physician referred her immediately to the cancer clinic, and she went to Dana-Farber for diagnostic tests and then surgery at Brigham and Women’s Hospital to remove the carcinoma. Today London, who is originally from Trinidad, is grateful for her second chance. “Moving to Boston is the best thing I have ever done,” she reflects. “Dana-Farber saved my life — the doctors, the nurses — and I’m very thankful to be alive.”

London appreciates the many patient support services Dana-Farber offers, from social work counseling, to support groups, to the Blum Family resource center. The Institute gives her peace and strength, and “Ludmila [Svoboda] is my angel,” London says. “She led me to great doctors and made appointments for me. I love how Dana-Farber has people like her to help patients like me.”

“These investments in our community and patients have made a huge impact in addressing cancer disparities.”

– Frederica Williams, MBA, President & CEO, Whittier Street Health Center

Mary London says Dana-Farber and Whittier Street Health Center saved her life.
Most people go to the beach to relax. Dana-Farber staff and volunteers go to teach people about skin cancer. Each year, the Institute’s Sun Safety Program organizes free educational and screening events at local beaches, as well as schools, universities, community health centers, and other venues — especially those serving diverse and medically at-risk populations. The program aims to reduce the alarming rate of skin cancer, the most commonly diagnosed cancer in the U.S. Most cases can be prevented.

Individuals with fair skin are at higher risk, but anyone can get skin cancer, notes Sabrina Gonzalez, senior community outreach specialist with Dana-Farber’s Community Benefits program. “Skin cancer does not discriminate, so we created a specific educational sheet for people of color, who are often diagnosed at later stages,” Gonzalez says. “Taking care of your skin and protecting yourself from ultraviolet rays is so important, no matter what skin tone you have.”
Community Benefits reached more than 1,300 community members at sun-safety events in 2015 as part of a comprehensive campaign against skin cancer that involves physicians, staff members, volunteers, and community partners. The strategy also includes contributing to the city of Boston’s initiative to provide sunscreen in public parks, and successfully advocating for policies to limit indoor tanning (see related story, p.19).

During a typical screening event, participants take a quiz about sun safety and have their faces checked with a digital camera that highlights sun damage to the skin. They then board the Blum Family Resource Center Van — one of Dana-Farber’s two mobile health vans — and receive a full-body skin exam by a dermatologist from Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women’s Cancer Center (DF/BWCC). Participants with abnormal findings are offered fast-track follow-up appointments at DF/BWCC, and everyone leaves with sun-protection materials, including sunscreen, lip balm, and a Red Sox cap.

“Screenings like these are critical for detecting skin cancer early, when it is more treatable,” says Gonzalez. “Through this outreach program, we’re empowering people to take control of their own health.”

Jennifer Y. Lin, MD, a melanoma specialist with Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women’s Cancer Center, testifies before the Massachusetts state legislature about the dangers of indoor tanning by minors.

Use of tanning beds before age 35 can raise one’s risk of melanoma by nearly 60 percent.
Reducing the **BURDEN** of Tobacco

Quitting smoking is frustratingly hard, especially if you’ve been smoking for decades and have other stressors in your life, like poverty. But as Dana-Farber Senior Community Outreach Specialist Sabrina Gonzalez knows, giving up tobacco can change your life. “It’s the best thing people can do for their health,” says Gonzalez, the smoking-cessation counselor with Community Benefits. “Smoking affects every organ in the body. When people quit, they’re able to think better. They get sick less. They have more energy.”

Gonzalez supports patients at Whittier Street Health Center in Roxbury, one of Dana-Farber’s longtime partners in the community, promoting tobacco cessation and helping smokers successfully quit. The program is part of Dana-Farber’s comprehensive approach to tobacco control—a strategy that involves leading advocacy efforts, conducting tobacco-related research, and implementing evidence-based programs designed to curb tobacco use among adults and youths in our surrounding communities and beyond.

This work is critical, as smoking is the most preventable cause of death and disease in the U.S., cutting short the lives of **480,000** Americans each year. Smoking is the most preventable cause of death in the U.S., cutting short the lives of **480,000** Americans each year.

**Advocacy**

Although smoking rates have fallen among U.S. adults in recent decades, they remain high in certain populations, among them men, young adults, disabled people, those who are less educated or living in poverty, and certain racial and ethnic groups.

As a member of the Tobacco Free Mass Coalition, Dana-Farber advocates for policies to limit tobacco use in the Commonwealth, with a specific focus on reducing youth access to tobacco and nicotine products. For example, the Institute supports legislation to raise the minimum sales age of tobacco products to 21 statewide and to regulate electronic cigarettes.

**Smoking is the most preventable cause of death in the U.S., cutting short the lives of 480,000 Americans each year.**

**There are 600 ingredients in a cigarette.**

**When burned, cigarettes create more than 7,000 chemicals.**

**At least 50 of these chemicals are known to cause cancer.**
Youths Campaign for SMOKE-FREE Spaces

Trinh Britton, a youth counselor with Boston Asian Youth Essential Service (BAYES) in Chinatown, has worked with young people on anti-smoking projects for years. With help from Dana-Farber, BAYES took this mission to the next level.

In recent years, the community-based agency trained a cohort of teenagers who, in turn, promoted smoke-free policies and educated Chinatown residents about the hazards of smoking. The youths researched what’s inside tobacco smoke (7,000-plus chemicals), circulated petitions, met with property managers and elected officials, pitched stories to the media, gave presentations, and created “live smoke-free” posters, bags, and other promotional materials. Thanks in large part to their advocacy, two large housing developments – Mass Pike Towers and Tai Tung Village – began working toward smoke-free environments through lease agreements with tenants.

BAYES Executive Director Jane Leung says the youths’ energy and passion helped open minds in the Chinatown community – an impressive feat, given the popularity of cigarette smoking in many Asian cultures.

“It’s rewarding to see this project grow, to know that we made this happen,” says youth volunteer Erica Lam. Before joining the project, BAYES member Tony Mei did not know that tobacco smoke can waft through a building, spreading chemicals to people, furniture, and carpets. “Now I realize that second-hand smoke is dangerous, especially for kids and pregnant women,” Mei says. “It’s just toxic.”

FAAN, a nurse scientist in Dana-Farber’s Phyllis F. Cantor Center for Research in Nursing and Patient Care Services, conducts research on tobacco control, smoking cessation, and quality of life during treatment for cancer, with an emphasis on lung cancer.

Clinical Programs
Dana-Farber has established several patient-focused programs designed to reduce smoking and tobacco-related cancers among community residents. Dana-Farber launched a lung cancer screening program at Whittier Street Health Center in 2015. The goal is to improve the rate of early detection by providing high-risk patients with low-dose CT scans, a standard tool for detecting lung cancer. Patients eligible for the screening are offered quit-smoking services at the center. Dana-Farber itself is a smoke-free organization, inside and out. It supports patients who want to stop smoking and covers the cost of tobacco-cessation services for its employees.

LINK BETWEEN TOBACCO USE AND CANCER

- Cigarette smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in the United States.
- Smoking causes about 90 percent (or 9 out of 10) of all lung cancer deaths in men and women.
- Smoking can cause cancer almost anywhere in your body.
- Smoking harms nearly every organ of the body and affects a person’s overall health.

(e-cigarettes), the popular flavored devices that deliver nicotine and other potentially harmful chemicals as vapor instead of smoke. Other advocacy efforts focus on increasing resources dedicated to tobacco cessation and prevention.

Youth Engagement
Community Benefits works with local agencies to build capacity and mobilize young people to enhance the health of their communities. In recent years, Dana-Farber has focused on tobacco control through youth civic engagement by helping organizations train youths as peer leaders and advocates around tobacco policies in Boston. These enthusiastic trainees successfully pressed for a citywide ban on the sale of single cigars and cigarillos, and for agreements from major housing developments to adopt smoke-free policies (see box above).

Research Expertise
Dana-Farber faculty members conduct important research on a broad range of tobacco-related issues. Among the faculty is Glorian Sorensen, PhD, MPH, director of the Center for Community-Based Research, who leads national and international studies focusing on tobacco use in workplace settings. Meanwhile, Mary Cooley, PhD, APRN-BC,
HPV is extremely common; at least 70 percent of adults are exposed to it at some point in their lifetime. Although HPV often goes away on its own, certain strains are linked to cancers of the cervix, head and neck, and genitals. In fact, almost all cervical cancers, as well as 70 percent of oropharyngeal cancers, are believed to be caused by HPV.

Fortunately, a vaccine can safely prevent most HPV-related cancers. The three-dose vaccine is ideally given to boys and girls ages 11 and 12, and may be given up to age 26. Unfortunately, HPV vaccination rates are well below the national goal of 80 percent, at roughly 50 percent for girls and 25 percent for boys in Massachusetts in 2016.

Recognizing this public health problem and opportunity to promote prevention, Dana-Farber has teamed up with several local agencies to educate — and vaccinate — community members who are disproportionately affected by cancers associated with HPV.

Mobile vaccine clinics
In fall 2015, Dana-Farber launched a groundbreaking HPV outreach and mobile vaccination program for high school students, in partnership with the Boston Public Health Commission. As part of the campaign, Community Benefits staff led workshops for students and parents at the commission’s School-Based Health Center serving the New Mission and Boston Community Leadership Academy high schools in Boston. They explained the safety and effectiveness of the HPV vaccine in preventing cervical, oral, and other cancers among men and women. Dana-Farber nurses then visited the schools to provide free vaccinations to eligible students aboard the Blum Family Resource Center Van, and returned to administer the follow-up doses.

Medically underserved populations are at higher risk for HPV-related cancers (see box), and mobile clinics like these help reduce barriers to care and prevention by providing accurate and culturally appropriate education and convenient immunizations. “These pilot clinics were so successful that we plan to partner with more School-Based Health Centers,” says Sarah Gunn, MS, Dana-Farber senior community outreach specialist.

THE IMPACT OF HPV

- **NEARLY 80 MILLION AMERICANS** are infected with the human papillomavirus (HPV), and another **14 MILLION** are newly infected each year.

- Cervical cancer is the most common HPV-related cancer among women. **MORE THAN 90 PERCENT** of these cancers are caused by the virus.

- Oropharyngeal (middle throat) cancer is the most common HPV-related cancer among men. An estimated **70 PERCENT** of these cancers are linked to the virus.

- Latina and black women have the highest rates of HPV-associated cervical cancer locally and nationally, and they are typically diagnosed at a later stage.

“Our School-Based Health Center Program is tremendously grateful to Dana-Farber and Boston Public School’s Health and Wellness departments for collaborating with us on this initiative.”

– Philomena Asante, MD, MPH, director of the Division of Child and Adolescent Health for the Boston Public Health Commission
The Institute has been engaged in HPV-related research, community outreach, and education since the HPV vaccine first became available in 2006. The Center for Community-Based Research, for example, did early work on how to create effective messaging about the importance of getting vaccinated for HPV cancer prevention.

Dana-Farber hosts an annual educational summit on HPV-related cancers for medical and public health professionals that features presentations by Institute physicians on the latest advances in diagnosis and treatment.

Dana-Farber is a founding member of the Massachusetts Coalition for HPV/Cervical Cancer and HPV-Related Cancers Awareness, a consortium of health and advocacy groups. In 2016, Dana-Farber was one of 70 leading cancer centers in the U.S. calling for increased HPV vaccination. In a joint statement, the institutions collectively recognized low vaccination rates as a public health threat and called upon the nation’s physicians, parents, and young adults to take advantage of this opportunity to prevent many types of cancer.

In 2016, Dana-Farber was one of 70 leading cancer centers in the U.S. calling for increased HPV vaccination.

“Students completed their three-part HPV vaccine series, and boys received as many vaccines as girls. This program demonstrates the impact of combined education and resources to empower young adults to actively engage in cancer prevention.”

TRAINING YOUTH LEADERS
In an earlier HPV outreach effort, Community Benefits collaborated with Sociedad Latina, an organization that supports Latino youths and families in Boston’s Mission Hill neighborhood. The summer program trained a group of high school students to be youth leaders for HPV and cancer prevention. Using an evidence-based sexual health curriculum, it stressed the importance of healthy relationships and avoiding risky behaviors to reduce the chance of HPV infection. Participants researched and gave presentations about the virus, the vaccine, and the link to cancer. In addition, many of their parents learned about HPV-related cancers — and heard their teens’ presentations — through evening workshops held in Spanish and English at Sociedad Latina. The evaluation of this program showed that it increased the youths’ knowledge and interest in getting the vaccine.

“In the Latino community, these are conversations we don’t really have in our countries,” says Alexandra Oliver-Davila, executive director of Sociedad Latina. “It’s important to have them in a place of trust. The message of this program is about cancer prevention. We want to help young people be safe and healthy. We have to keep talking about this.”

Community Benefits and Sociedad Latina have collaborated over the years on other health and public policy issues, such as nutritious eating and tobacco control, notes Oliver-Davila. “Dana-Farber is one of our strongest partners.”

In 2016, Dana-Farber was one of 70 leading cancer centers in the U.S. calling for increased HPV vaccination. Eileen Duffy-Lind, RN, MSN, has played a far-reaching role in HPV activities, including the Sociedad Latina and school vaccination programs. “This is the only vaccine that can prevent cancer,” says Duffy-Lind, who lost a sister to cervical cancer and founded a nonprofit to promote education about HPV-related cancers. “We have to get the most current, data-driven information about HPV out to parents and young people so they can make the most educated decision. It’s a decision that could change their lives.”

LATINA AND AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN HAVE THE HIGHEST RATES OF HPV-ASSOCIATED CERVICAL CANCER IN THE U.S.

Boys and girls can be vaccinated between ages 9-26. The ideal age is 11-12.
MISSION AND VISION
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, founded 1947

The mission of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute is to provide expert, compassionate care to children and adults with cancer while advancing the understanding, diagnosis, treatment, cure, and prevention of cancer and related diseases. As an affiliate of Harvard Medical School and a Comprehensive Cancer Center designated by the National Cancer Institute, the Institute also provides training for new generations of physicians and scientists, designs programs that promote public health, particularly among high-risk and underserved populations, and disseminates innovative patient therapies and scientific discoveries to our target community across the United States and throughout the world.

Vision
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute’s ultimate goal is the eradication of cancer, AIDS, and related diseases and the fear that they engender.

Community Benefits Mission Statement
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute’s community outreach mission contributes to the Institute’s goal of advancing the understanding, diagnosis, care, treatment, cure, and prevention of cancer and related diseases by:

- Ensuring that patients from diverse backgrounds receive equitable cancer care and treatment, including but not limited to, education about the importance of clinical trials participation.
- Establishing quantifiable, evidence-based, and sustainable programs in cancer prevention focusing on at-risk, underserved, and diverse populations.
- Providing expertise in cancer care to city and state health departments, community-based agencies, and health care providers.
A two-time cancer survivor and Dana-Farber volunteer, Thelma Burns helps to give voice to the patient experience.