

PRELIMINARY STUDIES

From its inception in 1895, the NMA has focused on healthcare issues involving equal patient access to high quality treatment and physicians of African American descent. The NMA serves as the collective voice of physicians of African descent and as a leading force for parity in medicine, the elimination of health disparities, and the promotion of optimal health. NMA launched the Cobb Institute in 2004 to develop, evaluate, and implement strategies to promote wellness and eliminate health disparities and racism in medicine. The Cobb Institute conducts data-driven research, makes policy recommendations where appropriate, and serves as a resource for NMA members and the greater healthcare community.

The Cobb staff believes it is imperative to determine the quality of healthcare delivered to underserved communities by solo and small practices and to identify the challenges solo and small group practices face to stay in business and deliver quality care. With its direct access to NMA members the Cobb Institute is poised to do what the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) cannot, which is to (1) analyze the impact of these practices on curbing health disparities and (2) determine the factors that will keep them solvent.

Cobb Institute conferences and contributions to research

As part of its mission to conduct research and promote discussions that reduce health disparities in the United States, the Cobb Institute has contributed the following to our national conversation on quality healthcare for all:

Annual NMA Colloquia

In partnership with the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, each year the NMA chooses a timely health topic of import to the African Community around which to host its Colloquium. The Colloquium is “a leadership training and advocacy forum, structured to conduct focused exploration of critical health policy issues that impact African Americans, and provide a forum for the development of NMA health policy positions to be advanced at the local, state, and federal levels.” Dr. Davis and Ms. Muhlenburg are members of the planning committees for this event.

Annual NMA Convention and Scientific Assembly

Each year the NMA convenes the most prominent medical scholars, scientists and practitioners from around the country in the nation's largest and most renowned scientific assembly on health issues affecting minority and underserved populations. Dr. Davis and Ms. Muhlenburg are members of the planning committees for this event.

Contrasting African Americans Who Enrolled and Who Did Not Enroll in Medicare Part D

Dr. Davis is performing a study that contrasts characteristics of African American seniors in the Greater Jackson Area who enrolled and who did not enroll in Medicare Part D. Assisted by Jackson State University School of Public Health and the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, Dr. Davis will conduct focus groups with and interview 400–500 seniors for this study.

Containing the HIV/AIDS Pandemic in the U.S. African American Community: Thinking ‘Out of the Box’

The Cobb Institute, along with the UCLA AIDS Institute and the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, convened a planning meeting on May 17-18, 2007. A group of 50 key experts, medical thought leaders, researchers, advocates, and practitioners began the process of

setting an HIV research agenda and action plan for the Cobb Institute and the NMA to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the African American community.

Sarasota, Florida Town Hall Meeting on Medicare Part D and P4P

During a Town Hall Meeting co-sponsored by the Cobb/NMA Health Institute, the Gulf Coast Medical Society, and the Florida State Medical Society on Saturday, January 13, 2007 in Sarasota, Florida, a well informed and interested group of 120 health providers, community activists, and patients participated in lively discussions of Medicare's Part D prescription drug program and P4P and their impact on health disparities. Building on the success of this meeting, a second Town Hall meeting has been scheduled in Sarasota for January 2008.

Consensus Panel Paper on Smoking Cessation

The NMA and the Cobb Institute convened a Smoking Cessation Consensus Panel in 2006 to report on the effects of smoking and tobacco control initiatives in the African American community. Panel members met December 7–10, 2006 and discussed how to more effectively reach African Americans with anti-smoking messages.

Consensus Report of the National Medical Association: Addressing the HIV/AIDS Crisis in the African American Community: Fact, Fiction and Policy

The NMA HIV/AIDS Consensus Panel met for two and a half days to discuss primary prevention strategies, care, and treatment, funding, research, advocacy, existing legislation and policies, and collaboration on HIV/AIDS issues relevant to the African American community.

All Hazards Preparedness in the African American Community

On June 17, 2006 the W. Montague Cobb/NMA Health Institute convened an expert panel of NMA members and others to address the issue of disaster preparedness and Hurricane Katrina's disproportionate impact on minority communities. The objective of the meeting was to develop a framework to inform and guide the presentations at the August 5, 2006 Mazique Symposium at the NMA Convention in Dallas, Texas.

Prior Work of Project Staff:

Dr. Sheila J. Davis, MD, MS—Dr. Davis will serve as Principle Investigator for this study, at 18% FTE. She will oversee the day-to-day operations of the project including selection and dissemination of review materials, preparation of rough drafts of documents, and coordination of activities of consultants and staff.

Sheila J. Davis is Associate Director of the Cobb Institute. As such, she serves a Principal Investigator for a major Institute initiative—a Medicare Part D study designed to increase access to prescription drug coverage in the Medicare-eligible African American population. Previous professional experiences include Dr. Davis's work at Summit Health Institute for Research and Education, Inc. (SHIRE), where she managed an Office of Minority Health grant to improve cultural competence in health care delivery settings, and a National Library of Medicine-funded campaign to promote health and wellness among Montgomery County, MD youth in order to reduce their risk of developing type II diabetes. Dr. Davis published a study on the use of peer health educators in primary settings while she served as a research scientist at Morgan State University.

Dr. Davis was also a member of the writing team for the 1998 Update of the Healthy People 2000 Progress Review. As a technical writing fellow at the University of Pennsylvania, she taught undergraduate engineering students the principles of technical writing. At the Quality Education for

Minorities (QEM) Network, Dr. Davis coauthored an Office of Minorities Health–funded study of the Spelman College mathematics and science programs, and she designed and coordinated a National Institutes of Health–funded public health summer internship program for undergraduates.

Dr. Davis completed a BS in Chemical Engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She then earned an MD and a MS in Bioengineering and completed an internship in pediatrics at McGill University in Montreal, Canada.

Dr. Randall C. Morgan Jr., MD, MBA—Dr. Morgan will serve as Co-Investigator and help oversee this study, at 5% FTE. He will provide leadership for the conference planning and take responsibility for its final outcomes.

Randall C. Morgan, Jr. is the Executive Director of the Cobb Institute and practices orthopedic surgery in Sarasota, Florida. Dr. Morgan served as the 95th president of the NMA from 1996 to 1997 as the first board certified orthopedic surgeon to hold that position.

Dr. Morgan is a true pioneer in his profession. He practiced medicine in his hometown of Gary, Indiana for over 20 years and helped found The Orthopedic Centers of Northwestern Indiana, for which he served as president from 1990 to 1996. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery and the American Board of Managed Care Medicine. Dr. Morgan has been recognized for his contributions to medicine and society by several institutions. Among his many accolades, he was named “Physician of the Year” by the NMA, Northwest Indiana Chapter, in 1986 and received the Martin Luther King Jr. Legacy Award for National Service and the Joseph Pitts Award for Community Service from the Gary Branch of the NAACP.

Dr. Morgan received his Bachelor’s of Arts in Chemistry from Grinnell College and his MD from the Howard University College of Medicine. He then completed a residency in orthopedic surgery at Northwestern University. In 2001, Dr. Morgan received an MBA from the University of South Florida.

Ms. Faith Muhlenburg, MPA—Ms. Muhlenburg will serve as the Project Director for this study, at 25% FTE. She will assist Dr. Davis with her activities.

Faith A. Muhlenburg is the Project Director for the Cobb Institute. Ms. Muhlenburg manages ongoing programs and projects to effect positive and sustainable change in the health status of people of African descent. She enjoys working in underprivileged communities and makes every effort to position the Cobb Institute to align with other organizations and key partners who will support its mission and goals.

Prior to joining the Cobb Institute, Ms. Muhlenburg worked as a contractor for AstraZeneca Pharmaceutical, where she supported a new initiative to address health disparities in minority communities in the Washington, D.C. area. She was instrumental in the development of a youth initiative (Youth Ambassadors Academy) designed to empower African American youth with the tools necessary to address issues such as HIV/AIDS, STD prevention, incarceration, and other social ills.

Ms. Muhlenburg’s professional experiences also include positions with Fairfax County Mental Health Services, Fairfax County Domestic Violence Program, Reston Interfaith Services, the

National Center for Victims of Crime, and Prince William Correctional Facilities.

Prior Work of Consultants:

Dr. Suganya Sockalingam, PhD, MSc—Dr. Sockalingam will serve as the conference’s moderator/facilitator.

Suganya Sockalingam is cofounder and executive director of TeamWorks[®] a consulting firm which provides training and technical assistance on issues related to Cultural Diversity, Cultural Competence, Crosscultural Communication as well as Conflict Resolution and Leadership Strategies. She also facilitates focused dialogues, consensus building, strategic, and action planning workshops on issues related to health, social services, and education. She focuses on creating an environment in which health care consumers/clients and their families, providers, and advocates can dialogue meaningfully to create innovative approaches to address health and social services access and utilization.

Dr. Sockalingam is a senior consultant to the National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC), Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development, Washington, D.C., where she provides technical assistance to local, state and federal agencies with regard to the design implementation, and evaluation of culturally and linguistically competent service delivery systems. She also functions as a senior consultant to Summit Health Institute on Research and Education (SHIRE), an organization committed to addressing health disparities in underserved populations through research and education.

Prior to her current position, Dr. Sockalingam was Associate Director to the National Center for Cultural Competence and Director of the Office of Multicultural Health at the Oregon Health Division. In these positions, Dr. Sockalingam developed cultural competence training modules for health and educational agencies. These modules include conducting an agency needs and strengths assessment, developing culturally competent services and programs, and developing culturally and linguistically appropriate education materials at a low literacy level.

As the Cultural Competency Specialist for the Washington State Department of Health from 1992 to 1996, Dr. Sockalingam developed culturally and linguistically appropriate education materials and implemented multidisciplinary training programs. She has also conducted training activities such as Cultural Competence in WIC Service Delivery for the National Association of WIC Directors, Cultural Competence for the National Health Services Corps, Providing Culturally Appropriate WIC Services for the Western Regional WIC Directors Conference, and Changing Health Delivery

Dr. Sockalingam received her doctorate in human nutrition from Washington State University and her master’s degree in foods and nutrition from the University of Madras in India.

Ms. Wanda Robinson—Ms. Robinson will edit the final research documents.

Ms. Robinson has had over 30 years combined experience in information technology documentation support and management, creative writing, and proposal development. She has assisted in the development of system design documents, test plans, implementation plans, and user manuals. Other writing projects include abstracts, brochures, newsletters, final study reports,

proposals to both the public and private sectors, and case evaluations for the D.C. Office of Human Rights.

To be Determined—The Cobb Institute will outsource data compilation and synthesis tasks.