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LRI Expands Education Program to Accelerate Lupus Diagnosis and Treatment

LEAP Aims to Reduce Healthcare Disparities in Underserved Populations

The Lupus Research Institute (LRI) is proud to launch the Lupus Education Advancement Project (LEAP) to reduce healthcare and racial disparities among minority and rural populations through education, increased awareness, and improved communication among healthcare providers, patients and the general public. LEAP is funded by a grant of \$500,000 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health.

LEAP expands on the successful “[Teaching Fellows in Lupus Project](#)” piloted in 2014/2015 as a part of [The Lupus Initiative](#)[®], a national program to reduce health disparities in patients with lupus by educating healthcare providers and medical students. The new project goes a step further to overcome specific barriers to patient referrals within different types of healthcare networks. LEAP includes education in pediatrics, raises public awareness about lupus signs and symptoms, and leverages social media to foster better communication between patients and healthcare providers.

The new program will be implemented at:

- Geisinger Health System, PA by Dr. Alfred Denio
- Montefiore Medical Center, NY by Dr. Irene Blanco
- Harlem Hospital Center, NY by Dr. Amanda Sammut
- University of California, Irvine, CA by Dr. Sheetal Desai

Public awareness and education activities will be led by the Hispanic Communications Network and local lupus agencies Lupus LA and the Lupus Foundation of Pennsylvania as well as the Lupus Research Institute.

“LEAP helps fulfill the original vision of The Lupus Initiative, to provide healthcare professionals nationwide with the tools to recognize, diagnose and treat lupus,” notes LRI President and CEO Margaret Dowd. “We look forward to this broader impact that can overcome challenges within individual healthcare systems so patients are diagnosed as early as possible. We are excited to support innovation in patient/provider communications to improve disease management.”

Read the full story [here](#).

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About the Lupus Research Institute

The Lupus Research Institute (LRI), the world’s leading private supporter of novel research in lupus, pioneers discovery and champions scientific creativity as it has successfully demonstrated the power of innovation to propel scientific solutions in this complex autoimmune disease.