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# Barriers and Facilitators of Prostate Cancer Screening Among Filipino Men in Hawaii

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**P**rostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed malignancy and the second-leading cause of cancer-related deaths among men in Hawaii (American Cancer Society [ACS] Hawai'i Pacific, 2010). Each year, about 800 men in Hawaii are diagnosed with prostate cancer and more than 100 die from the disease. Among Hawaii residents, Filipino men are more likely to be diagnosed with advanced-stage prostate cancer and to experience lower survival rates than all other racial and ethnic subgroups (ACS Hawai'i Pacific, 2003). With repeated use of current prostate cancer screening techniques (prostate-specific antigen [PSA] blood test and digital rectal examination [DRE]), the majority of prostate cancers are detected at a clinically localized stage (Brawley, Ankerst, & Thompson, 2009). Therefore, a high rate of advanced-stage prostate cancer among an ethnic minority group may be indicative of low levels of participation in prostate cancer screening by members of that group. A qualitative approach was employed to explore the barriers and facilitators to prostate cancer screening among Filipino men residing in Hawaii. Because Filipino Americans constitute the second-largest and fastest-growing subpopulation of Asians residing in United States (Ghosh, 2003), and because limited information exists regarding the perceptions of prostate cancer and the barriers and facilitators to prostate cancer screening in this group, the information gained from this study will serve as a foundation for addressing an important disparity in health outcomes for this growing population.

## Background

Stage at diagnosis is an important predictor of cancer survival. Nationally, the five-year relative survival rate for men diagnosed with localized prostate cancer approaches 100% (Jemal, Siegel, Xu, & Ward, 2010). In contrast, the five-year relative survival for men with metastatic prostate cancer is only 31% (Jemal et al., 2010). Among Hawaii residents, Filipino men (7.5%) are second

**Purpose/Objectives:** To examine perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs regarding barriers and facilitators to prostate cancer screening, and to identify potential interventional strategies to promote prostate cancer screening among Filipino men in Hawaii.

**Design:** Exploratory, qualitative.

**Setting:** Community-based settings in Hawaii.

**Sample:** 20 Filipino men age 40 years or older.

**Methods:** Focus group discussions were tape recorded and transcribed, and content analysis was performed for emergent themes.

**Main Research Variables:** Perceptions regarding prostate cancer, barriers and facilitators to prostate cancer screening, and culturally relevant interventional strategies.

**Findings:** Perceptions of prostate cancer included fatalism, hopelessness, and dread. Misconceptions regarding causes of prostate cancer, such as frequency of sexual activity, were identified. Barriers to prostate cancer screening included lack of awareness of the need for screening, reticence to seek health care when feeling well, fear of cancer diagnosis, financial issues, time constraints, and embarrassment. Presence of urinary symptoms, personal experience with family or friends who had cancer, and receiving recommendations from a healthcare provider regarding screening were facilitators for screening. Potential culturally relevant interventional strategies to promote prostate cancer screening included screening recommendations from healthcare professionals and cancer survivors; radio or television commercials and newspaper articles targeting the Filipino community; informational brochures in Tagalog, Ilocano, or English; and interactive, educational forums facilitated by multilingual Filipino male healthcare professionals.

**Conclusions:** Culturally relevant interventions are needed that address barriers to prostate cancer screening participation and misconceptions about causes of prostate cancer.

**Implications for Nursing:** Findings provide a foundation for future research regarding development of interventional strategies to promote prostate cancer screening among Filipino men.

only to Native Hawaiian men (9.5%) to be diagnosed with metastatic prostate cancer, followed by Caucasians (5.9%), Japanese (4.7%), and Chinese (3.3%) (ACS Hawai'i