

News Release

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TTUHSC's Rahman Awarded CPRIT Grant Funding Expansion

The Cancer Prevention & Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) recently awarded a \$2,430,998 grant to Rakhshanda Rahman, M.D., professor of breast surgical oncology at the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center School of Medicine and the founding executive director of the school's multi-campus Breast Center of Excellence (BCE) that was established in 2009.

The grant, titled, "Access to Breast and Cervical Care for West Texas (ABC²4WT)," is an expansion of a CPRIT grant Rahman was initially awarded in 2010. That grant led to the establishment of BCE's Access to Breast Care for West Texas (ABC4WT) program, which was expanded in 2014 to include cervical screening services and became the Access to Breast and Cervical Care for West Texas (ABC²4WT) program. Rahman, who is project director for both programs, said the latest award will allow BCE to offer no-cost mammograms and Pap smears to women who do not have health insurance in large geographical areas of West Texas.

"This enables us to detect cancers at a very early stage so that they are curable," Rahman said. "This expansion will allow us to reach 60 counties in the Texas Panhandle, South Plains and central West Texas."

As the first breast center in West Texas to be accredited by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers, BCE launched the ABC4WT program to provide underserved populations in the Texas Panhandle with access to mammogram screenings and related health information. As more needs within the region were identified, the program in 2014 morphed into ABC²4WT and is now able to provide cervical cancer screenings, HPV vaccinations and Pap tests to women across West Texas.

Due to the program's success, BCE received additional CPRIT funding to develop ABC4WT dissemination products in 2016 that would be available to other institutions and organizations interested in developing education, outreach and service programs modeled after ABC4WT.

Since 2010, BCE has educated more than 26,800 women, provided more than 9,500 breast and cervical screening and diagnostic services and detected 123 precursors and cancers. When added up, Rahman said the CPRIT grants have allowed BCE to provide more than \$5 million worth of breast and cervical cancer care to the area's underserved population.

"The need within this population is great because about 47 percent do not have health insurance," Rahman said. "Ethnic minorities that make up a large proportion in this region have access issues that will be overcome by this grant."

Rahman also is medical director of the UMC Southwest Cancer Center Breast Center of Excellence. By combining the expertise of Texas Tech Physicians with the staff and resources of the Southwest Cancer Center, patients and families gain access to the best care, close to home.