



Western Pancreatic Cancer Research Consortium Conference

November, 2007

University of California, San Francisco

The Western Pancreatic Cancer Research Consortium (WPCRC) scientists continued to gain visibility owing to their ongoing research work. By this conference, WPCRC membership had grown to include researchers from UC San Francisco and the [National Cancer Institute \(NCI\)](#) represented by Dr. Isis Mikhail. Plans were developed for a joint study grant submission by WPCRC. Co-principal investigators were designated to be UCI GERI's Dr. Anton-Culver, UW's Dr. Melissa Austin, UCSF's Dr. Elizabeth Holly and a consultant from the NCI; i.e., Dr. Mikhail. Additionally, the ongoing UCI/UW collaborative study of early diagnostic indicators for pancreatic cancer continued to show progress. NCI has endorsed the WPCRC consortium and provided financial support for WPCRC to continue collaborative meetings.

WPCRC is a consortium, established in 2005, of clinicians and researchers joined with counterparts in the western states to conduct large studies that will yield the statistical data required to clearly identify factors associated with risk for pancreas cancer.

Since [pancreatic cancer](#) is relatively rare in the population so it takes years to conduct studies with enough patients to yield results that are statistically meaningful. To overcome this obstacle, UCI GERI has joined with Seattle researchers at the University of Washington and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, as well as UC San Francisco researchers, to form the Western Pancreatic Cancer Research Consortium (WPCRC). As patients are enrolled in new studies, data is collected with similar methods, so that they may be pooled for analysis as a larger set of research data. Causes of pancreatic cancer are poorly understood and at present, the only undisputed factors known to increase the chances of getting pancreas cancer are cigarette smoking — which doubles risk — and a strong family history of the disease.