

New PCAP Program, Comenzando Bien

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Comenzando Bien Program

The Prenatal Care Assistance Program at The Brooklyn Hospital Center (TBHC) always seeks to advance and improve on existing conditions under the direction of Egondú Onuoha, PCAP Director. Although PCAP currently services all women who are pregnant with prenatal education via the PCAP team, they know that expanding prenatal care educational outreach to the community is very important.

Ms. Onuoha is therefore introducing a new program at TBHC's Caledonian site called Comenzando Bien. This program is sponsored by the March of Dimes, and specifically designed for Spanish-speaking women. It provides prenatal education to expectant mothers. Members of the PCAP team provide extensive classes in various areas such as pregnancy and personal health, breastfeeding, labor and delivery, postpartum care, and family planning options. Classes are primarily conducted by the nurse and midwife. Other speakers will include the Social Worker, HIV counselor, Breastfeeding Coordinator, Nutritionist and Health Educator. The Comenzando Bien Program is open to all Spanish-speaking prenatal women, not just for those who attend The Brooklyn Hospital Center. The classes are conducted in an informal and relaxed setting, with bilingual speakers. Classes begin on September 14, 2005 and run through October 19, 2005. Participants receive a gift, participate in a graduation ceremony, and receive a certificate at the end of the program. For further information, please contact (718) 250-8397.

PCAP Overview & Current Events: The Prenatal Care Assistance Program covers pregnant women without health insurance or Medicaid with free comprehensive care from the beginning of pregnancy, up until two months after delivery (within a particular income guideline). Pregnant women are eligible regardless of their immigration status. There is no age requirement and minimal documentation is needed. The PCAP services provide free pregnancy test, routine and prenatal laboratory tests, prenatal vitamins and medication if needed, sonograms, dental care, health education classes, social services support, nutritional consultation and counseling, medical care and delivery, hospital care for mother and child, postpartum care up to 8 weeks after delivering, and visiting nurse services; the baby's health care is covered for a year after birth.

The Prenatal Care Assistance Program plays a very significant role for the expectant mother and her developing baby within the womb; its purpose is to help decrease infant mortality within lower economical communities. These communities consist of teenage mothers, women of lower economical status of all ages, and working women who have lower wages and are either minimally covered by insurance or not covered at all by their employer. Many of the prenatal women within PCAP are citizens of the U.S. However, a vast majority of pregnant women that are eligible for PCAP are undocumented and come from countries all over the world, such as England, France, Russia, Poland, Africa, India, and the Caribbean. These women find themselves in difficult and stressful situations - often many of the women that come no longer have support from their partners or families and have nowhere to turn. In most cases, they are in a foreign country

and do not know how to navigate the system.

LOCATION

The Prenatal Care Assistance Program is located at The Brooklyn Hospital Center within The Women's Health Center - OPD Third Floor.

- * The Brooklyn Hospital Center 121 DeKalb Avenue (718) 250-6520
- * Williamsburg Family Health Center 99 Division Avenue (718) 599-6200
- * Manhattan Avenue Health Center 960 Manhattan Avenue (718) 349-8500
- * Caledonian Community Health Center 100 Parkside Avenue (718) 940-5239
- * La Providencia Family Health Center 1280 DeKalb Avenue (718) 455-9000.

The Brooklyn Hospital Center's Prenatal Care Assistance Programs extends gynecological and prenatal care services for women of all ages and cultures, regardless of immigration status. Our staff speaks bilingual languages - English, Spanish, French/Creole, Polish, Russian and Arabic. Please call the above numbers for more information.

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