



HEALTH & FITNESS

Hospice Care Deals With Diversity

By **BRAD GROZNIK**

Doctors have to take a different approach when dealing with the borough's diversity.

While most Americans think of healthcare in the same way, other cultures do not and no where else in America is it more apparent than in Queens.

Hospice Care Network understands that cultures sometime clash and was awarded a \$195,000 grant from The Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation to fund a Queens-wide project titled "Improving Access to Culturally Sensitive End-of-Life Care for Elderly Asian and Hispanic Residents of Queens."

The first goal of the program is to dispel many of the myths that Hispanic and Asian cultures have about hospice care.

"We want people to have some advanced planning," Dr. Cynthia X. Pan, the medical director of Hospice Care Network Queens, said. "Just because you talk about it doesn't mean it's going to happen."

Dr. Pan, who joined Hospice Care in 2006, said in some respects Hispanic and Asian cultures are polar opposites when it come to dealing with a terminally-ill family member.

"Latino people want family members home," she said. "In Asian culture, they

don't want to burden their families by staying at home."

Dr. Pan is on an awareness mission to let Latinos know hospice care is the quickest way to get a family member back home and, for the Asians, it is the best way for a family member to find a long-term facility.

Dr. Pan, a Chinese-American who grew up in Latin America, is fluent in English, Chinese and Spanish. Along with Priscilla LeMarie, who was recently hired as the Project Manager the program and is also bilingual, the two are hoping to build new relationships with the communities that make up 50 percent of the borough's population.

Dr. Pan said the idea surfaced after the center took a census of the people they were currently serving and discovered Hospice Care Network only served 3 percent Latinos and 3 percent Asian.

Dr. Pan said the center needed a new approach.

To request materials or learn more about "Improving Access to Culturally Sensitive End-of-Life Care for Elderly Asian and Hispanic Residents of Queens," call (718) 939-2273 and ask for Priscilla LeMarie. To learn more about Hospice Care Network, visit www.hospicecarenetwork.org.



Dr. Cynthia X. Pan