F4.1: Unexpected Challenges in Developing Asian Women’s Health Research Network (ASIA-WH) in the U.S

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**Introduction:** To correspond to the efforts of the Taiwan and Korean sides to develop an international collaborative organization among researchers working with Asian women, the U.S. side initiated its efforts and has made consistent progress during the past two years. Despite the efforts and progress made so far, the U.S. side met unexpected challenges during the process. The purpose of this presentation is to discuss the unique challenges that the U.S. side met and make suggestions for future international collaborative efforts from the perspective of the U.S. side.

**Method(s):** Memos on issues raised during the development process were written, and group discussions on the issues were conducted through email communication and conference calls. The written memos, the minutes from the conference calls, and emails were analyzed to categorize the issues from the development process.

**Results:** First, the U.S. side needed to extend its scope to Asian researchers working not only with Asian women, but also with other study populations because very few researchers working with Asian women were identified in its initial stage. Second, the needs of the researchers in the
U.S. side were unique; the U.S. side had a urgent need for a network among researchers who came originally from Asian countries, obtained their PhDs in the U.S., and are currently working in diverse fields of research areas. Third, the goal of the U.S. side is very similar to that of an existing organization-Asian American Pacific Islander Nurses Association. Thus, the U.S. side opted to join Asian American Pacific Islander Nurses Association (AAPINA) as a research interest group to use the existing infrastructure and legal entities rather than developing a new independent organization. Finally, some issues in communication have been raised because of differences in time zones, each member’s busy schedule, and lack of face-to-face meetings. The U.S. side is currently working on establishing diverse communication channels among the current members, including group listserv via Google.

Discussion & Conclusions: The findings suggest that future international collaborative efforts need to begin with a preliminary exploration on the unique needs of potential members and on the goals and missions of existing organizations. Also, communication channels should be established early in the development efforts. Further, affiliating with an established organization with shared mission and vision may prove invaluable in the thriving of a newly embarked organization.

Abstract History:
This abstract has been presented or accepted for presentation in whole or in part at the SNRS or other scientific meeting.
American Academy of Nursing Annual Meeting, 2008

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