

HINTS Partnership Demonstration Project

Terisa Davis, MPH
Lila Finney-Rutten, PhD, MPH
Sarah Dipko, MS



Background

One of the National Cancer Institute’s (NCI) goals for the Health Information National Trends Survey (HINTS) program is to expand data collection efforts beyond the NCI-sponsored biennial national-level surveys.

HINTS datasets are not large enough for analysis at the state level; however, forming partnerships with states and/or U.S. territories to conduct localized HINTS surveys provides an opportunity for a level of analysis that until recently had not been available.

NCI formed a partnership with researchers at the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) to conduct a demonstration project of HINTS data collection in Puerto Rico. The partnership was initiated in June 2008 and included NCI, UPR, the Puerto Rico Department of Health (PRDH), the Coastal Region Cancer Information Service (CIS), and Westat.

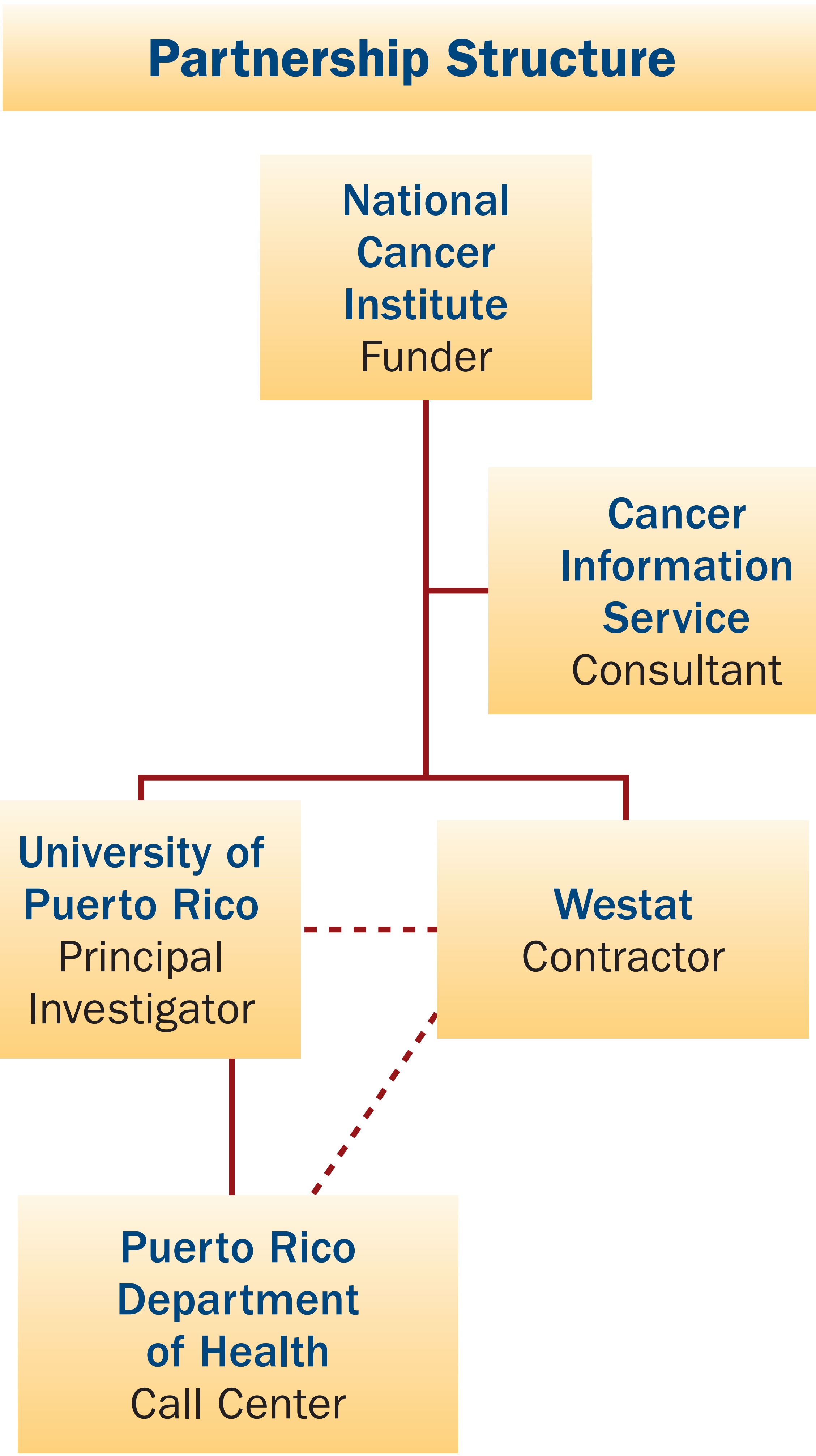
The aims of the demonstration project were:

- To identify operational issues with conducting a local HINTS data collection.
- To provide a dataset to UPR for their use in scientific research and planning cancer control activities for Puerto Rico.



Purpose

This project overview describes the partnership structure, reports on the activities conducted as part of the demonstration project, and makes recommendations for future partnerships for local or international HINTS data collection efforts.



Data Collection Activities

Data collection was conducted jointly by UPR, PRDH and Westat. (See table at right.)

	University of Puerto Rico	Puerto Rico Department of Health	Westat
Sampling		Ordered the sample from Genysis using the same file layout as Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS).	Provided advice to PRDH about ordering the sample. Assigned study identification numbers and assigned random numbers for screener selection algorithm. Broke the sample into release groups.
Instrument Development	Reviewed Spanish translation of questions. Added translation of response options and interviewer instructions.	Pilot-tested the new version of the instrument.	Reviewed the Spanish translation to ensure consistency throughout the instrument.
CATI Programming	Tested programming.	Provided specifications for programming. Tested programming.	Conducted and tested the programming.
Interviewer Training	Provided a study overview for interviewers.	Provided experienced BRFSS interviewers.	Developed training materials and led the training.
Case Management		Staffed call center with experienced BRFSS interviewers. Worked with Westat to ensure appropriate case management during the field period.	Provided CATI and interview scheduling system. Worked with PRDH to ensure appropriate case management. Provided regular reports to all other parties.
Data Cleaning	Conducted the cleaning of the data by reviewing “other, specify” responses.		
Data Weighting			Developed household and person-level weights.

CATI Operations Findings

The field period was April 27 through June 28, 2009 with a total of 603 completed interviews collected and an additional 36 partially complete interviews collected, bringing the total to 639.

Initial cooperation to both the screener and the extended was very high, with 93 percent of respondents cooperating. The weighted response rates for both the screener and the extended were above 74 percent.

Total Sample used for study = 5,880	
Screener cooperation	
Initial cooperation rate	93.3%
Refusal conversion rate	20.0%
Final cooperation rate	95.2%
Screener completes	
Completes with initial cooperation	826
Completes with initial refusal	11
Total screener completes	837
Weighted screener response rate*	76.4%
Extended interview cooperation	
Initial cooperation rate	93.2%
Refusal conversion rate	6.8%
Final cooperation rate	95.4%
Extended interview completes	
Completes with initial cooperation	600
Completes with initial refusal	3
Partial completes	36
Total extended completes	639
Weighted extended interview response rate	74.3%

*AAPOR RR3, with estimation of “e” based on observed results.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The demonstration project clearly showed that localized and/or international HINTS data collection efforts are a potential and promising way for HINTS data users to obtain new levels of data.

One recommendation to guide efforts of other agencies considering a HINTS data collection is to develop a “Partnership Guide.” Such a guide would outline the steps involved in conducting a local HINTS data collection effort and the decisions that need to be made at each step in the partnered research process.