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Heidi Hamann, PhD

## **UA Receives Merck Foundation Funds to Promote Patient-Centered Cancer Care for Latinos, Underserved**

*Collaborative effort brings together the UA College of Medicine - Tucson's Department of Family and Community Medicine, the UA Department of Psychology, UA Cancer Center and many community partners, including El Rio Community Health Center and the Arizona Community Health Worker Outreach Network.*

A new University of Arizona initiative, funded by the Merck Foundation, will expand access to high-quality cancer care for Latinos and other underserved populations in Southern Arizona.

The collaborative effort brings together the UA College of Medicine – Tucson's Department of Family and Community Medicine, the UA Department of Psychology, UA Cancer Center and many community partners, including El Rio Community Health Center and the Arizona Community Health Worker Outreach Network, to address the needs of underserved communities in the state.



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**Heidi Hamann, PhD**, associate professor in the UA Departments of Psychology and Family and Community Medicine and a member of the UA Cancer Center, is the principal investigator for the project. She will lead efforts on the five-year, \$1.99 million grant from the Merck Foundation Alliance to Advance Patient-Centered Cancer Care. Projects funded by the grant will help support patients and ensure their preferences, values and needs help guide clinical decisions related to their care.

“The Merck Foundation funding will have a profound effect on the lives of people in our region. Working together with our community partners, we can improve access to high-quality cancer care, and with better outcomes,” Dr. Hamann said.

The grant will support programs aimed at improving timely access to cancer care through improved collaboration between primary care physicians and cancer specialists, better engagement with patients and increased oncology communication training for UA medical students and other trainees in the health sciences. Funding also will enhance access to culturally appropriate, evidence-based psychosocial care for underserved cancer patients and their families.

“This grant from the Merck Foundation builds on the University of Arizona’s

strong history of collaboration with community partners throughout Southern Arizona,” said UA President **Ann Weaver Hart**. “Their support advances our work to enhance the quality of life for everyone in Arizona, and I am grateful for all this will allow the UA to accomplish.”

### **About The Merck Foundation**

The Merck Foundation is a U.S.-based, private charitable foundation. Established in 1957 by Merck, a global health care leader, the Foundation is funded entirely by the company and is Merck’s chief source of funding support to qualified non-profit charitable organizations. Since its inception, the Merck Foundation has contributed more than \$870 million to support important initiatives that address societal needs and are consistent with Merck’s overall mission to help the world be well. For more information, visit [www.merckgiving.com](http://www.merckgiving.com).

