

# Improving Cancer Treatment & Preventative Care: Health Outcomes Research at CINJ



Sarina Sheth, 2026, Public Policy

The Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ) — Cancer Health Equity Team  
Funded by CHW under the Princeton Internships in Global Health program

## Introduction

- The CINJ Cancer Health Equity team aims to promote equitable access to health care and health services.
- Epidemiological research, public policy advocacy, and community engagement are avenues by which CINJ advances cancer health equity in New Jersey.

## Objective of Internship

In pursuing this internship, I hoped to gain a deeper understanding of the healthcare landscape and structural public health disparities in New Jersey, as well as develop my research and data analysis skills specifically in the fields of population science and clinical research.

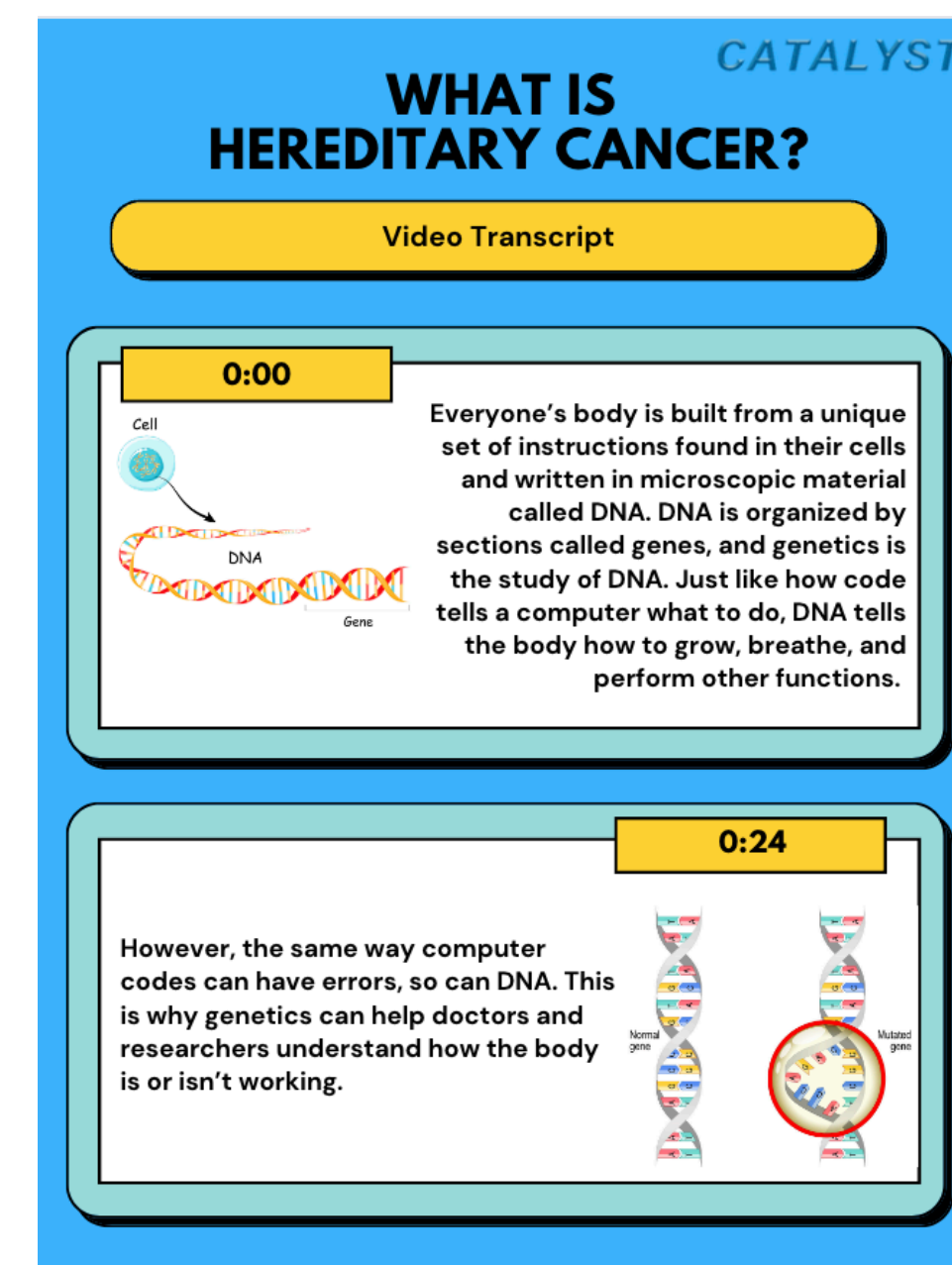
## Work profile

- Contributed to various research projects aimed at improving the quality of cancer treatment (HERO), developing digital tools for genetic testing (CATALYST), and fostering equitable access to preventative cancer screening (TELESCOPE).
- Supported projects by providing feedback from a cancer patient's perspective, cleaning data, and reviewing documents/surveys to ensure they reflect the goals outlined in the IRB protocol.

## Reflection

### Project HERO

- HERO seeks to determine whether **body-mind training** improved health and well-being of prostate **cancer survivors**.
- Reviewed **IRB protocol** and ensured it was as comprehensive as possible.
- Gained **experience with data** cleaning, data spot checks, and interpreting data dictionaries.



### Project CATALYST

- CATALYST aims to develop and test an **artificial intelligence-based chatbot** that provided genetic education and encouraged genetic testing for hereditary cancer to cancer patients.
- Reviewed and edited the **IRB protocol** to prepare it for submission to the IRB.
- Tested and provided **feedback** on the usability of the AI chatbot as well as patient surveys and questionnaires.
- Conducted **literature reviews** to supplement the chatbot's KnowledgeBase platform.
- Assisted in meetings with **AI vendor BotsCrew**, providing feedback on the conversational flow of the chatbot.
- Learned how to work and propose solutions within the **scope of a specified budget and timeline**.
- Designed infographic on hereditary cancer (pictured above) to serve as an **educational tool** for patients.
- **Attended R01** for follow-up project, Personalized Oncology Promoting Equity for Black Lives (PROPEL).

### Project TELESCOPE

- TELESCOPE encourages people with a history of heavy smoking, particularly from underserved populations, to learn more about **preventative lung cancer screening** and **tobacco control**.
- Gained insight into the **applications of bioethics**, specifically how to educate patients on the benefits and harms of lung cancer screening so they can make an **informed decision** rather than forcing screening onto patients.
- Took notes and provided feedback as a third party at a **mock interview session between a patient and healthcare professional** that aimed to educate the patient on lung cancer screening.

## Looking ahead

This internship has fueled my interest in community-based health research and solidified my plan to pursue a Masters in Public Health. I am eager to apply the knowledge and experience I have gained to my future endeavors in public health as I continue to research social determinants of health and disparities in healthcare.

## Questions

- How can healthcare providers best address structural barriers to healthcare access in order to advance cancer health equity?
- What role might technology play in healthcare, and how can we leverage that to promote health equity?

## Conclusion

This experience allowed me to gain invaluable insight into the many elements of public health research, including community outreach, cultural sensitivity, bioethics, cost-effectiveness in research projects, and health policy advocacy.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Anita Kinney and the Cancer Health Equity Team at CINJ for offering me their guidance and support. I am further grateful to CHW and the Global Health department for making this internship opportunity possible.

# Research poster

## Poster Title Goes Here: catchy and concise

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### Introduction

- The CINJ Cancer Health Equity team...
- Describe the overall situation, using bullet points
- This should frame your research so readers can understand why it is important for global health

### Objective of the Study

A one sentence overview of the aims of the research project.



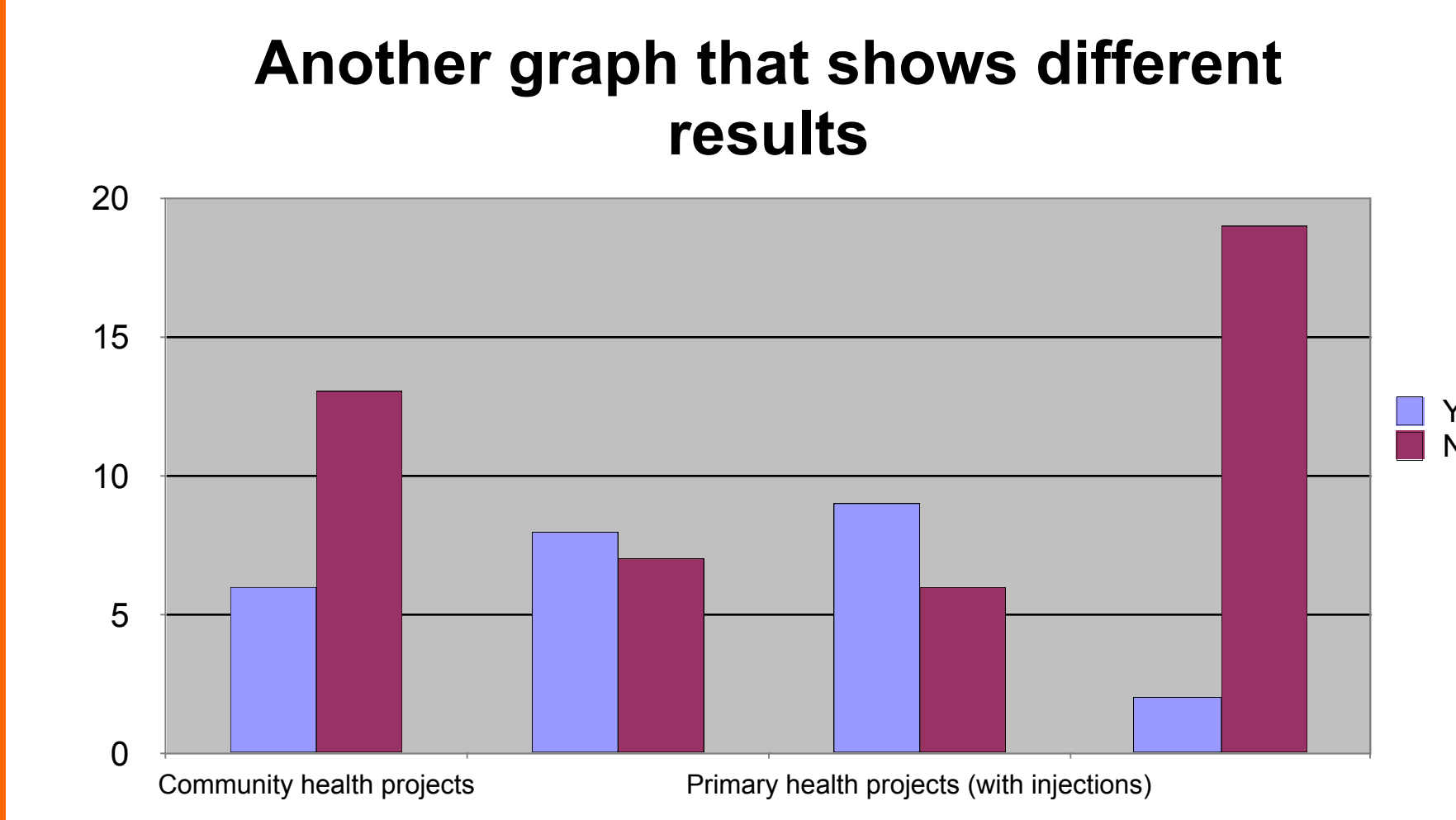
*Include photos and captions, always citing the photographer and if possible those in the picture.*

### Methods

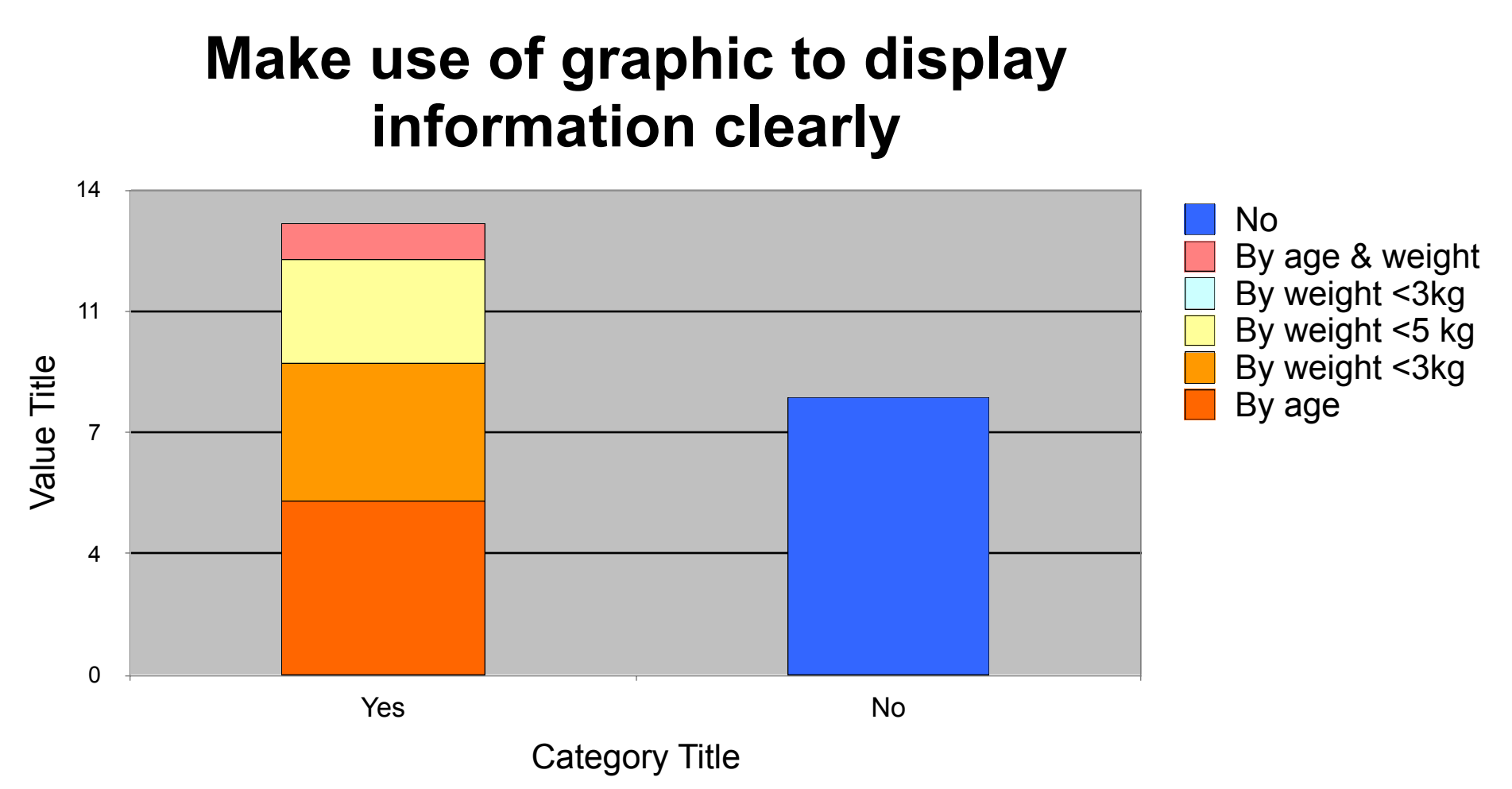
- Explain the internship/research project
- Use a new bullet point for each new concept
- Describe your role in the research project

### Results

- Provide the most interesting results from your research.
- Use the space wisely. Split, or trim down the results section if there is more information contained in other sections
- Use short text boxes
- Highlight key aspects in **bold**
- Provide a logical flow for your results



- Be ready to explain the poster in an informal setting
- Think about the key points you would raise to someone asking about your summer research
- Be ready with key results memorized
- Think about some likely questions that people will ask you



- Place text, figures and photos carefully.
- Get input from others on the how clearly understood the poster is
- Make sure your text box addresses the figure alongside of it.
- Highlight the key aspect from your graph- what you want the reader to see

#### Use tables where helpful

Response	Freq.

### Discussion

- Address some of the broader implications for these finding.
- Consider what else might be needed: more research, additional resources, policy change, etc

### Questions

- Are there questions that remain unanswered following your research?

### Conclusion

- Draw conclusions based upon the research you've conducted

### Acknowledgements

Acknowledge the organization where you work as well as supervisors. Acknowledge CHW and whoever else may have sponsored the research. Acknowledge the program (IIP, PICS, etc) through which you did the research.