Researchers at UNC's Gillings School of Global Public Health and UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center have formed a new community advisory committee.

Lineberger researcher Dr. Melissa Troester says the committee will act as a liaison between researchers and the local community.

The group includes a variety of perspectives: its members include healthcare providers, fitness bloggers, representatives of sororities, health educators and dieticians, as well as breast cancer survivors.

The announcement of the committee coincides with a five-year, $2.2 million grant awarded to Troester and Liza Makowski to study specific factors in breast cancer development.

Troester and Makowski's research focuses on an aggressive subtype of cancer that's more prevalent in young, African American patients. Troester says the current project examines the influence of obesity and reproductive history.

The 10-member committee met for the first time on October 7 in Chapel Hill; it will hold meetings at least three times a year.