

Alameda County's Voices from Vulnerable Populations: Phase II

Funding Received from National
Association of City and County
Health Officials (NACCHO)

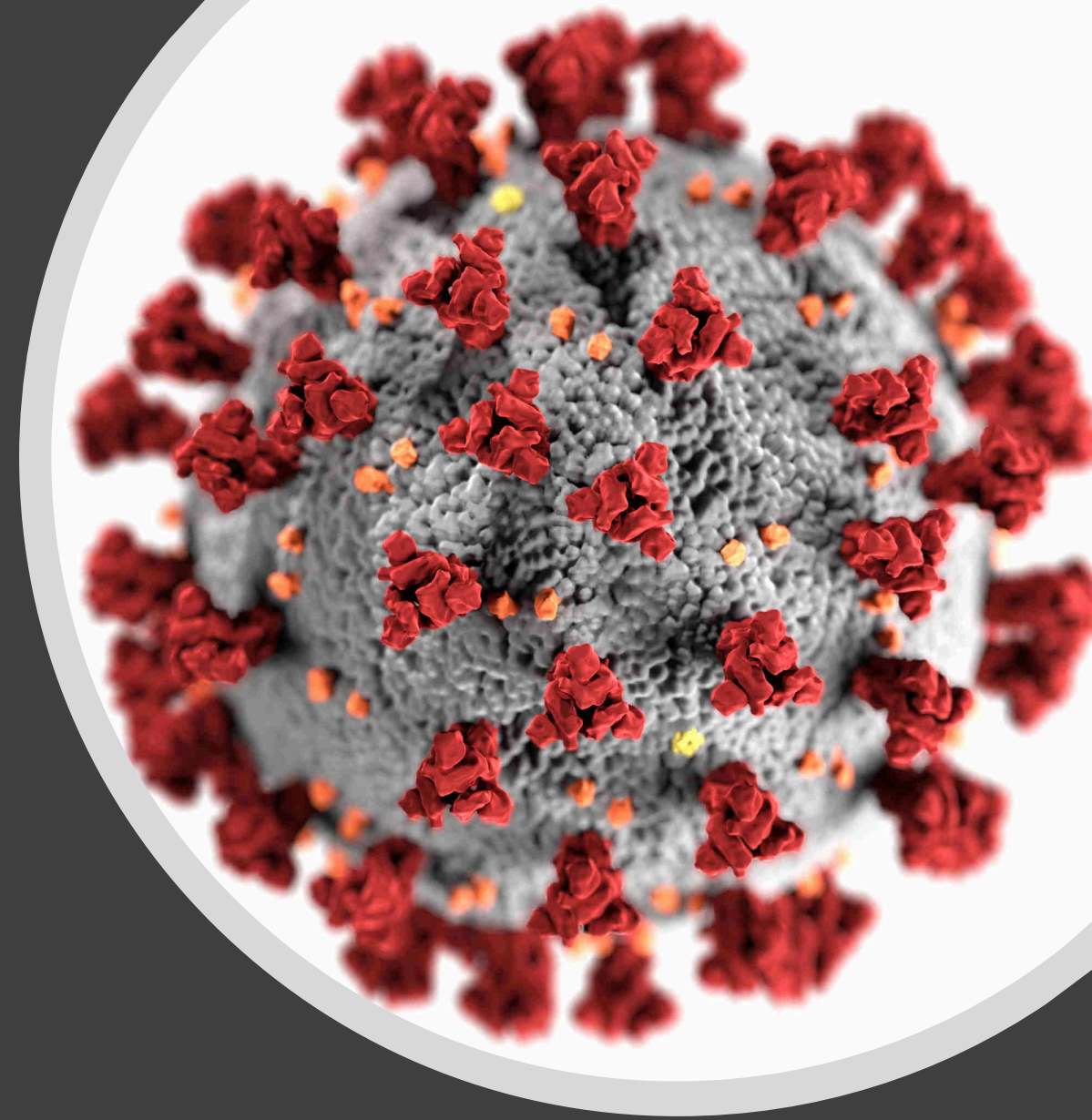
Community engagement
strategy relied on focus groups
with vulnerable populations,
specifically senior citizens and
communities of color

Two service providers, three
focus groups, ten participants

Conducted Three Focus Groups

Roots Community Health Center (1 group)—
Perspectives from the predominately African American communities near the Center

West Oakland Senior Center (2 groups)—
Senior citizens from the African American community, experiences of people of all ages with respiratory issues



Key Themes

Preferred communication
methods for wildfire
communication

Feedback on AC Alerts



Word of Mouth

Word of mouth most trusted avenue for sharing and receiving information

Trusted Agents

CBOs

Churches

Barbershops

Beauty salons

Communication strategy should be year-round

Wildfires more pressing issue than earthquakes, messages similar

Emergency alert messages should not require online sign-up (e.g. AMBER Alerts)



CITY OF
OAKLAND
HUMAN
SERVICES
DEPARTMENT

West Oakland Senior Center (#1)

Multiple outreach methods

Concerned about cumulative impacts of smoke exposure due to residents with asthma

Emergency alert messages should not require online sign-up (e.g. AMBER Alerts)

County-funded outreach efforts, led by community members



**CITY OF
OAKLAND**
**HUMAN
SERVICES
DEPARTMENT**

West Oakland Senior Center (#2)

Current communications methods included:

Word of mouth

Local news

PG&E

Emergency alert messages should address individuals, not groups and be specific about who is impacted

AC Alert should not require sign-up

Many seniors have limited access to technology

County-funded outreach efforts, led by community members

Important for asthmatics and people with other health conditions to receive timely information and support

Summary of
Communication
Findings

Sources of Information

Barriers to Use of AC Alert
by Vulnerable Populations

Feedback on AC Alert
Content

Communication Strategy
Ideas

Cumulative Health Impacts

Sources of Information

Social connections and word of mouth from trusted community sources

Television and radio news

Social media (e.g., Facebook and Twitter)

Phone calls from PG&E

Barriers to Use of AC Alert by Vulnerable Populations

Not all vulnerable
populations aware of AC
Alert

Some vulnerable
populations lack computer
skills and/or phone and
internet access

Sign-up process too
complicated

Feedback on AC Alert Content

Emergency alert messages for individuals, not groups

Terms such as “sensitive group” and “unhealthy group” unclear

Succinct information, bullet points

Hyperlinks, but not full links; tips vs more information

Provide “action items” for reader

Communication Strategy Ideas

Invest in multiple outreach methods

Compensate community residents to lead effective communications and outreach efforts

Develop year-round wildfire smoke communication strategy

Elevate wildfires to AMBER Alert or Earthquake status

Emergency alert messages should not require online sign-up

Other
Messages
Learned
Cumulative Health
Impacts

Concern about cumulative impacts of smoke exposure and air quality hazards; family and friends with respiratory conditions

Asthma impacts 20% of children between 0-5 years old

Health disparities present throughout Oakland relative to air quality

Communication Recommendations

Utilize institutions or organizations trusted by vulnerable populations

Consider other alert systems in addition to AC Alert system

Address barriers and improve the AC Alert system

Partner with community residents to get the word out

Address cumulative health impacts from poor air quality