

KCCEB - Health Equity Team



Amy G. Lam, MA, PhD Chief Program Strategist



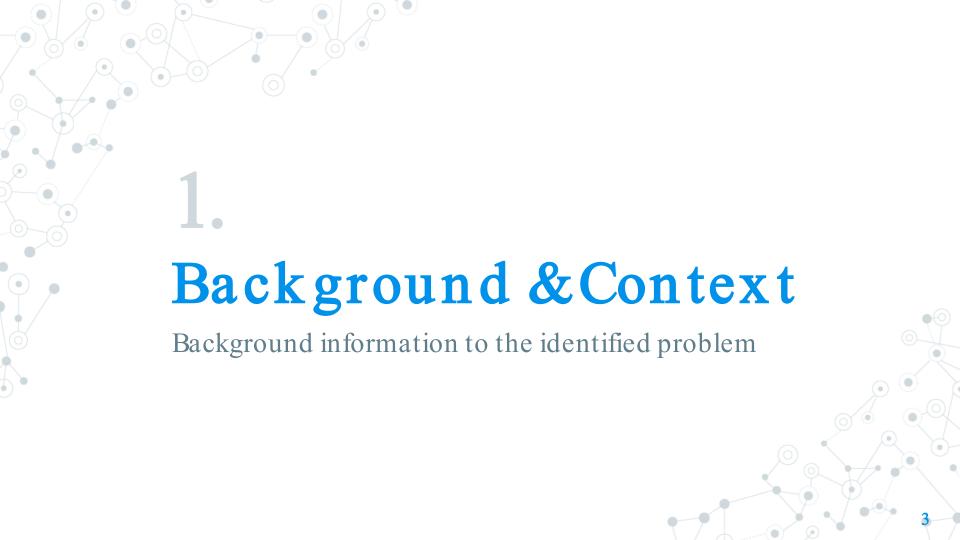
Yeri Shon, MPH, MSW
Associate Director



Art Choi, MAProgram Manager



Dana Kurlander, MS
Public Health Advocacy
Associate



Background



Alameda County, N. California

Home to over 1.67 million persons*

4th most diverse county in the nation with over 43% of residents speaking a non-English language in their home*

"Threshold" languages: English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Farsi, and Tagalog

ACPHDLEP Efforts

- Google translate function for ACPHD COVID-19 website for 10 languages (Amharic, Arabic, Simp Chin, Trad Chin, Tagalog, Khmer, Persian, Span, Viet)
- Vax Appt Scheduling Website available in 8 languages (Eng, Span, Chin, Kor, Viet, Tagalog, Arabic, Persian)

RICE Collaborative

- Opportunity to improve LEP accessibility standards.
- Web content Accessibility Guidelines:
 Perceivable
 Operable
 Understandable
 Robust

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Our local Public Health Department's information about COVID testing, vaccine education and vaccine sign-ups are not readily accessible in non-English languages. Challenges include: a) Lack of guidelines and policies around threshold language accessible in the Public Health Department; b) Inconsistency in which languages information is translated into, c) Lack of timely translation and dissemination of urgent public health information (i.e. vaccination appointments, testing sites information, etc), and d) Lack of quality control and accountability of translations.

How do we improve language equity and accessibility in our local public health department especially with regards to public health emergencies?

Lack of language equity/accessibility in Public Health Department Exacerbated in public health emergencies

Challenges

Lack of guidelines and policies around threshold languages in the Public Health Department

Inconsistency of which languages information is translated into

Challenges

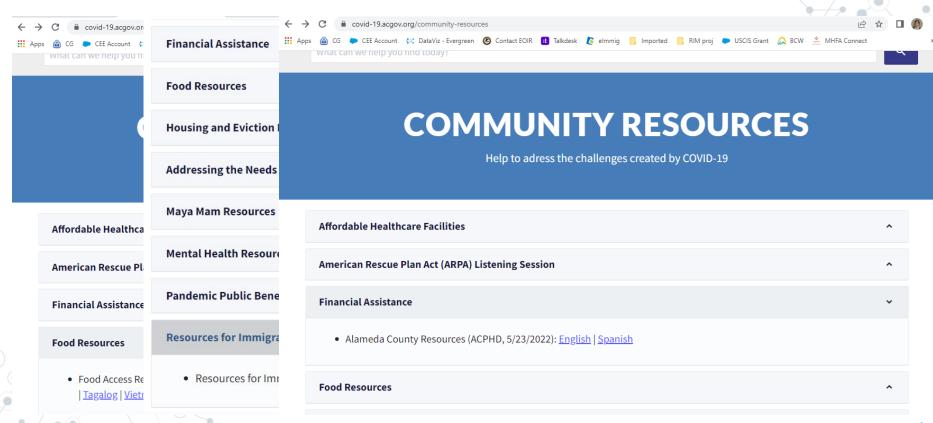
Lack of timely translation and dissemination of urgent public health information (i.e. testing sites information, vaccination appointments, etc)

Lack of quality control and accountability of translations.

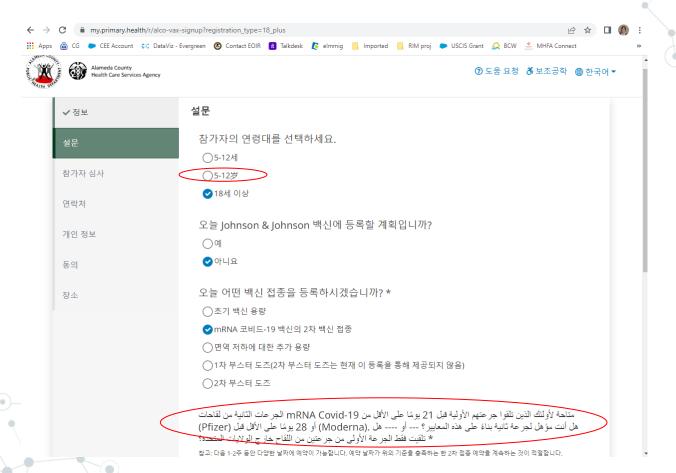
LEP Community Experiences On The Ground

- Can't sign up for a vaccine and COVID testing
- Can't read information in different languages on county website for vaccine information
- For Alameda County Public Health Department's (ACPHD) general website and COVID-19 website, the county provides google translation in Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Khmer, Korean, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.
- Smaller languages completely shut out of access (ex., Tigrinya, Nepali, Tibetan, Burmese)
- Challenges for non-literate, oral-communities (ex. Mam, Khmer, Chinese)

ACPHD WEBSITE - Work in progress w/some inconsistencies



ACPHD ONLINE FORMS - Language error





Working towards solutions

Start with identifying: what is THE problem?

Understanding the problem: Conducting Environmental Scan & Review

1.

Conducting needs assessment on how our communities are doing: Lower COVID testing rates than English-speakers in Chinese, Korean and Spanish speaking communities

2.

Reviewing PHD's COVID emergency response plan and learning that Asian orgs are not at the table

3.

Understand County
structure and process
of what languages are
selected to be
translated, learning
about what
accountability
measures

Understanding the problem: Building relationships with the Public Health Department

1.

Inviting PHD to our monthly collaborative meetings to:

share their existing data on COVID testing and vaccination

learn about challenges in our communities through monthly meetings 2.

Attending County and State meetings to learn about governmental COVID-19 response 3.

Inviting county to share their direction and vision for linguistic equity and accessibility (power mapping)

What we learned

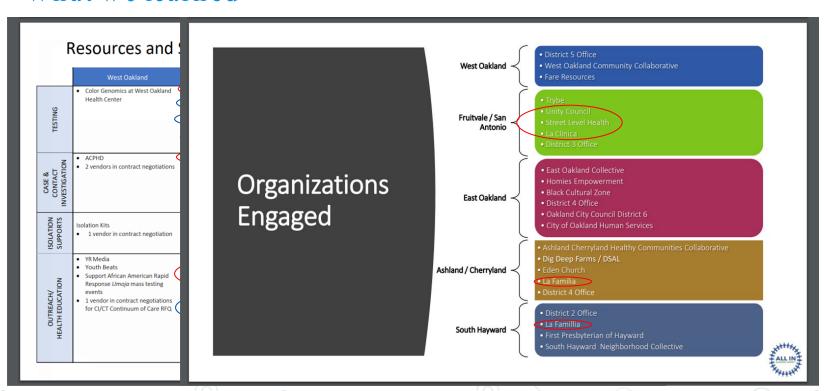
LACK OF VISIBILITY

for Asian immigrants/refugees and smaller communities LACK OF OVERSIGHT

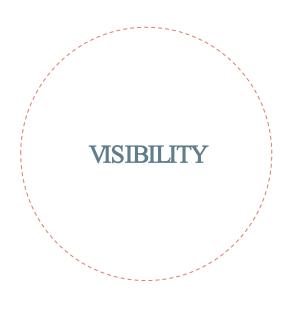
LACK OF FUNDS

for non-Spanish speaking LEP communities

What we learned



What we learned → Developing Asks



Asking for LEP communities to be one of the priority communities during PH emergencies, including:

- timely translation and dissemination of materials into threshold languages
- linguistically accessible testing and vax sign-ups and clinic visits for threshold languages
- contracting with CBOs to support smaller language communities
- consistent data collection and analysis that include disaggregated data questions and responses

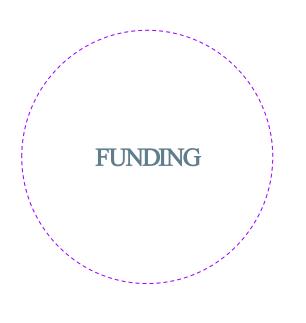
What we learned → Developing Asks



LEP Officer - a centralized body/staffthat oversees:

- Translations
- Whether threshold language guidelines are met
- Translations quality control with support from CBOs
- Learning how to include linguistic accessibility into guidelines

What we learned → Developing Asks



Assessing success of Language Line to understand its impact and if there are other ways to be more effective in meeting linguistic needs of County residents



Co-creating solutions

With the county and within our communities

County: Looking for places within the county structure where we may be more effective and impactful



County Office of Equity and Inclusion

(to be established)



Community Assessment,
Planning and Evaluation Unit



County Disabilities Accessibility Unit



Board of Supervisors offices favorable towards language equity and immigrant/refugee issues



Where do we go from here?

- Consistent meeting with PHD to share our direction and how to support them do the right thing
- Strategizing best tactics for reaching different county units
 Speaking with unit heads to learn more and share our asks
- Invite our community members to participate in Board of Supervisor Meetings to give public comment on the importance of LEP resources during public health emergencies
- Strengthening our Communities' voice
 - Educate community on their language access rights and to advocate for it (community test? Secret shopper?)

Thank you! Any questions?



