**Black Belt MRC – 0285**

**COVID-19 Education & Misinformation Response**

**Introduction:** The Black Belt MRC serves Macon County and Bullock County in Alabama. Both counties are rural, Healthcare Professional Shortage Areas. The residents of Macon County, in particular, do not have access to a hospital within 25 to 30 miles of their homes. While Bullock County does have access to a hospital in one jurisdiction of the county, there is still limited access for most residents. In addition to the lack of adequate health care options, a majority of the residents do not have access to a primary health care physician. These barriers not only create a population of residents that do not receive necessities related to their health care, but also foster a lack of trust about news/information received related to COVID-19. The residents of these communities rely heavily on faith-based organizations and trusted family members to receive information related to the pandemic. While this can be useful and quite an effective method of dissemination, it also opens a door for residents to receive false or inadequate information related to COVID-19 which can then lead to an inevitable spread of the disease. This spread would be detrimental to a communal population which relies heavily on contact between one another.

To-date, Macon County has been more adversely affected by COVID-19 than Bullock county. However, the counties are contiguous and have such a close proximity that infection could easily spread. The Black Belt MRC has elected to create a Mission Set designed to directly respond to the current climate created by the pandemic by developing a series of educational activities designed specifically for the residents of Macon and Bullock Counties. Although this is an effort to prevent the potential spread of the disease, the mission will implore Black Belt MRC volunteers to respond in a matter directly related to COVID-19 in an effort to dispel the myths and misinformation being disseminated in the rural communities.

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| **Mission Set Title: COVID-19 Education & Misinformation Response** | | |
| **Resource Description**: MRC volunteers will design, implement, and disseminate a set of educational activities that will be conducted virtually using various platforms (Zoom/Facebook/in-person) to dispel myths and misinformation about COVID-19. The faith-based community as well as other thought leaders have sometimes given false or outdated information to community members. The goal of this Mission Set is to create an educational platform centered around the most trusted individuals in the community delivering the most accurate information. MRC volunteers, including but not limited to, pharmacists, physicians, medical technologists and others will be utilized to deliver live and/or pre-recorded sessions related to COVID-19 and disease prevention. The activities are designed to engage participants and allow them to ask questions. | | |
| Resource Components: | | |
| **Personnel:** | **Type** | **Licenses or Certifications Required?** |
| * General MRC volunteers * Communications/videographer * Community health workers * Health professionals (Pharmacist, Podiatrist, Medical Technologist) | * No * No * Yes (CHW Certification) * Yes (Professional Licensure) |
| **Training Requirements:** | * Completed Volunteer Registration * MRC Orientation * ICS 100 * ICS 200 * ICS 400 * Just-In Time Training | |
| **Equipment Required:** | * Laptop * Tablets * Portable Projector * Video Recording Equipment * MiFi (WiFi Hotspot) * PPE * (Black light, food coloring, sanitizer, etc..) | |
| **Deployment Timeline:** | 48 hours | |
| **Requirements for Rotation of Personnel:** | 2-4 hours | |
| **Pre-Planning Considerations:** | **Space Requirements:** Recording location would need to be COVID-19 compliant.  **Support Requirements:** Internet access (or Wi-Fi hotspot) | |
| **Limiting Factors:** | * Internet access * Computer access * Travel distance | |

**Resources:**

* Just in Time Training - <https://cmeonline.baptisthealth.net/content/covid-19-pandemic-–-how-address-anxiety-panic-attacks-and-depression>
* CHW Training links:
  + <https://classroom.google.com/u/0/w/MTU4NzI4NTA0MDg5/t/all>
  + <https://covid19risk.biosci.gatech.edu>
  + <https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/covid19/downloads.html>

