

RIM Monthly Newsletter

Updates and resources for SCALING UP COVID-19 PREVENTION AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES WITH REFUGEE, IMMIGRANT, AND MIGRANT (RIM) COMMUNITIES

January 2023

COVID-19 CDC Data Updates

US COVID-19 data: Number of Confirmed Cases in the past 7 days: 295,140

US Monkey Pox data: Total confirmed monkeypox/orthopoxviral cases: 30,093

Highlights of the Month

United Community Action Partnership

“In the end, persistence and trust are probably the biggest things that worked well for us in getting the foothold that we have,” said Jonathan Marchand.

NACCHO had the opportunity to sit down with United Community Action Partnership’s (UCAP) Jonathan Marchand, Community Services Manager, and Heather Jeseritz, Community Services Director, earlier this month. UCAP offers everything from at-home COVID tests to vaccines, and more- but the thing that stands out the most is the personal care and support they offer to the communities they serve.

“As a community action agency, our focus is on individuals and families who are in poverty. We have a number of different programs and services that are really geared towards leveling the playing field in different areas,” said Marchand. Their goal is simple: take care of the communities that aren’t getting the care they currently need. This target population largely falls under the refugee, immigrant, and migrant communities in rural Minnesota.



Many of their community members get their foot in the door through the meat packing industry, because it's so prevalent in this area of Minnesota and offers a living wage. "It is certainly still the intersection of poverty, of folks that don't have ready access to meeting some of their basic needs," said Marchand. "Transportation, communication, education, accessing some of the basic services that a lot of our population don't even give a second thought to because that obstacle to getting that service has never been there."

What we found most inspiring is the level of care and personal interest UCAP takes in the communities they serve. One thing they focus on that a lot of people neglect is follow-up care. According to Jeseritz, it's "that follow up piece with families that has been really great in terms of building that rapport and trust within the communities. That's what UCAP strives to be- a trusted source of reliable information across the board."

"We were really looking to reduce those inequalities in morbidity and mortality by getting folks connected with those vaccination sources," said Marchand. That was a major goal for UCAP throughout this project. The work UCAP does and the relationships they have formed with their communities are invaluable. We can't wait to continue watching the impact they have on the people they serve.

News and Announcements

Strengthening COVID-19 Prevention and Mitigation Strategies among Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant (RIM) Communities RFA

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is excited to announce a new funding opportunity. To ensure the success of COVID-19 prevention and mitigation strategies and to address inequities in COVID-19 morbidity and mortality experienced by RIM communities, local health departments (LHDs) need strong and sustained community partnerships, experienced human resources, cross-program infrastructure to support logistics for testing and vaccine delivery at scale, and planning, evaluation, and financial management capacity. This funding opportunity will support LHDs to strengthen partnerships with RIM communities in their jurisdictions and to collaboratively design, implement, and evaluate innovative and sustainable approaches to prevention of COVID 19 and other vaccine preventable diseases.

The goals of this project are to improve COVID-19 prevention, contact tracing and mitigation among RIM populations, reduce inequities in COVID-19 morbidity and mortality in funded jurisdictions, implement and disseminate models and best practices for prevention and mitigation of COVID-19 that are sustainable and have potential to address other communicable diseases among RIM populations in the future, and implement sustainable approaches for community engagement and strengthening partnerships between LHDs and RIM populations and adapting public health strategies for RIM populations.

NACCHO will issue contracts of up to \$140,000 to 18 LHD and CBO sites that have existing collaborations between LHDs and RIM serving organizations developed to address COVID 19.

Applications must be submitted by February 10, 2023, at 11:59 PM ET to RIM@naccho.org and selections will occur on or around February 24, 2023. The project period will last 12 months upon execution of the contract. All necessary information regarding the project and application process is outlined in the [Request for Applications \(RFA\) attached below](#).

Strengthening Local Public Health among Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant (RIM) Communities RFA

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is excited to announce a new funding opportunity. This funding opportunity will build capacity of local health departments (LHDs) to effectively collaborate with Afghan refugee, immigrant, and migrant communities and community-based organizations for improved Afghan community public health.

This opportunity aims to build and sustain Afghan community engagement and community health planning structures, support Afghan community health assessment processes, focusing on community needs for sustainable approaches to address priority public health needs, including vaccine hesitancy, and health education, and support development of referral and linkage systems to Afghan friendly community health education, and health and social services.

This project also seeks to build capacity of LHDs to effectively collaborate with Afghan refugee, immigrant, and migrant communities and community-based organizations for improved Afghan community public health.

NACCHO will issue contracts of up to \$140,000 to up to five sites Under Tier One that have existing collaborations between LHDs and RIM serving community-based organizations, including Afghan- refugee serving community- based organization(s) developed to address emerging infectious disease, including COVID-19, and up to \$200,000 per site to up to four LHDs under Tier Two to implement activities to support jurisdictions with large or growing populations of Afghan refugees.

Applications must be submitted by February 10, 2023, at 11:59 PM ET to RIM@naccho.org and selections will occur on or around February 24, 2023. The project period will last 12 months upon execution of the contract. All necessary information regarding the project and application process is outlined in the [Request for Applications \(RFA\) attached below](#).

NACCHO's HSHH Team is Hiring!

The HSHH Team is seeking new additions! Both positions are hybrid remote-in office, but candidates must be based in the DC/Maryland/Virginia area and are required to come to the DC office at least once a week.

Senior Program Analyst, STI: We are seeking a motivated person with experience working to address sexually transmitted infections at the state or local level to fill this position. The position will be leading our program portfolio focusing on syphilis and congenital syphilis. The successful candidate will also have experience in syndemic and equity approaches to program design, implementation, evaluation, and community engagement and a strong understanding of approaches to virtual learning communities and technical assistance provision.

Senior Program Assistant, HSHH/MCAH: We are seeking a motivated person with experience in project coordination, administration, communications, invoices, and contracts. An understanding of how local health departments function is also appreciated. This position will be split between the HSHH and maternal, child, and adolescent health team.

NRC-RIM to Announce New Focus on New Arrival Communities

The National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants and Migrants (NRC-RIM) will soon announce its new, expanded focus areas to address the public health needs of new arrival communities. [Sign up for their newsletter](#) to be the first to know the details.

On Jan. 17, NRC-RIM will [host a webinar](#) that will explore how to authentically involve Ukrainian communities in public health response activities. They will welcome representatives from the Washington State Department of Health and the Nashi Immigrants Health Board, who will offer several strategies for addressing public health needs of Ukrainian communities that apply to COVID-19 and beyond.

The importance of community involvement was on display in an article published in the journal *Frontiers in Public Health*. In the article, several staff and collaborators with NRC-RIM highlighted the challenges RIM communities faced during the COVID-19 pandemic and how community-led solutions [made a positive difference](#). NRC-RIM also recently published a case study showcasing a [successful community health worker pilot](#) in greater Minnesota. In another feature, learn how the Korean Community Center of the East Bay (KCCEB) worked with their health department and other partners to [address linguistic and cultural barriers to healthcare](#).

NRC-RIM and its partners at the International Rescue Committee (IRC) have worked to address these barriers recently through its [translated COVID-19 testing resources](#), which now include translated text messages to tell communities about the newly available free tests from the U.S. government. NRC-RIM and IRC also worked together on translated flyers that explain the relationship between [COVID-19 vaccines and immigration](#). They previously published a [conversation guide](#) on that same topic.

For more information, visit [their website](#), sign up for [their newsletter](#), and follow them on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).

WHO Updates COVID-19 Guidelines on Masks, Treatment, and Patient Care

WHO has updated its guidelines on mask wearing in community settings, COVID-19 treatments, and clinical management. This is part of a continuous process of reviewing such materials, working with guideline development groups composed of independent, international experts who consider the latest available evidence and the changing epidemiology.

Masks continue to be a key tool against COVID-19

WHO continues to recommend the use of masks by the public in specific situations, and this update recommends their use irrespective of the local epidemiological situation, given the current spread of the COVID-19 globally. Masks are recommended following a recent exposure to COVID-19, when someone has or suspects they have COVID-19, when someone is at high-risk of severe COVID-19, and for anyone in a crowded, enclosed, or poorly ventilated space. Previously, WHO recommendations were based on the epidemiological situation.

Similar to previous recommendations, WHO advises that there are other instances when a mask may be suggested, based on a risk assessment. Factors to consider include the local epidemiological trends or rising hospitalization levels, levels of vaccination coverage and immunity in the community, and the setting people find themselves in.

Reduced isolation period for COVID-19 patients

WHO advises that a COVID-19 patient can be discharged from isolation early if they test negative on an antigen-based rapid test.

Without testing, for patients with symptoms, the new guidelines suggest 10 days of isolation from the date of symptom onset. Previously, WHO advised that patients be discharged 10 days after symptom onset, plus at least three additional days since their symptoms had resolved.

For those who test positive for COVID-19 but do not have any signs or symptoms, WHO now suggests 5 days of isolation in the absence of testing, compared to 10 days previously.

Isolation of people with COVID-19 is an important step in preventing others from being infected. This can be done at home or at a dedicated facility, such as a hospital or clinic.

The evidence considered by the guideline development group showed that people without symptoms are much less likely to transmit the virus than those with symptoms. Although of very low certainty, evidence also showed that people with symptoms discharged at day 5 following symptom onset risked infecting three times more people than those discharged at day 10.

Review of COVID-19 treatments

WHO has extended its strong recommendation for the use of nirmatrelvir-ritonavir (also known by its brand name 'Paxlovid').

Pregnant or breastfeeding women with non-severe COVID-19 should consult with their doctor to determine whether they should take this drug, due to 'likely benefits' and a lack of adverse events having been reported.

Nirmatrelvir-ritonavir was first recommended by WHO in April 2022. WHO strongly recommends its use in mild or moderate COVID-19 patients who are at high-risk of hospitalization. In December 2022, the first generic producer of the drug was prequalified by WHO.

WHO also reviewed the evidence on two other medicines, sotrovimab and casirivimab-imdevimab, and maintains strong recommendations against their use for treating COVID-19. These monoclonal antibody medicines lack or have diminished activity against the current circulating virus variants.

There are currently 6 proven treatment options for patients with COVID-19, three that prevent hospitalization in high-risk persons and three that save lives in those with severe or critical disease. Except for corticosteroids, access to other drugs remains unsatisfactory globally.

Health Equity Resources and News

Call for Proposals for Planning Grants- Global Learning for Health Equity Network

Have you thought about looking outside U.S. borders for innovative solutions to health equity challenges in your community? The University of Maryland's Global Learning for Health Equity (GL4HE) Network has recently launched their call for planning grants proposal to help you find the resources to do so. These planning grants are intended to help community-based organizations and health equity advocates learn about creative approaches, initiatives, or policies from countries around the world that can inform their efforts to advance health equity in the U.S.

For more information and the application link, please check out [GL4HE's proposal website](#). Applications are due by February 8, 2023!

Virtual Communities Info

Join our Virtual Communities!

How to Sign Up for Virtual Communities (VC)

- Email membership@naccho.org requesting an account
- Once membership has created you an account, email RIM@naccho.org to be added to the group
- You will then be added to the VC page and sent instructions on using the page
- It takes 24-72 hours to enroll in the VC after membership creates an account for you



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

The mission of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to improve the health of communities by strengthening and advocating for local health departments.