Ohio's COVID-19 Populations Needs Assessment

Minimizing the Disparate Impact of the Pandemic and Building Foundations for Health Equity

This document contains excerpts from the full report, which can be found here:
https://go.osu.edu/inequitable-burdens-covid-19

Executive Summary

Ohio's COVID-19 Populations Needs Assessment is a statewide evaluation that aims to improve the ability of Ohioans to prevent COVID-19 transmission and minimize its impacts on communities. Based on input from 363 stakeholders representing six Ohio populations, this document describes critical barriers these communities face and recommends strategies for overcoming each barrier. This *Needs Assessment* describes specific actions that networks of collaborators at community, local, and state levels can take to facilitate access to COVID-19 protections, reduce infections and deaths, and set the stage for long-term reduced health disparities and improved health outcomes across the state. The *Needs Assessment* can be used to inform COVID-19 response, recovery, research, and policy formulation activities.

Which **populations** are included in the *Needs Assessment*?

The *Needs Assessment* focuses on six populations, selected because they are at risk for disproportionate burdens of disease and death during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Black and African American Communities
- Latino and Hispanic Communities
- Asian and Asian American Communities
- Immigrant and Refugee Communities
- Rural Communities
- People with Disabilities

Which **public health strategies** are considered in the *Needs Assessment*?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends eight specific practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The *Needs Assessment* asked community members and representatives from each population to reflect on their community's use of each of these recommended behaviors.

- Hygiene (hand washing and surface cleaning)
- Social Distancing
- Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- COVID-19 testing
- Contact tracing
- Isolation (for infected individuals)
- Self-Quarantine (for exposed individuals)
- Healthcare Access

What are the **goals** of the *Needs Assessment?*

- Identify the unique needs of communities at risk of disparate burden of disease and death due to COVID-19

- Describe the barriers communities face to using CDC-recommended behaviors for COVID-19 protection

- Make data-driven recommendations about public health interventions that will reduce the disparate impact of COVID-19 across Ohio's communities and support long-term population wellness

- Make data-driven recommendations about how to design, resource, and implement these interventions across the state

What **methods** does the *Needs Assessment* use to achieve these goals?

Representatives of each population completed a survey composed primarily of open-ended questions about the use of CDC-recommended COVID-protective strategies within their communities. Stakeholders included leaders of ethnic, religious, and other community-based organizations, social service providers and local public health workers, healthcare providers, and other community members.

For every CDC-recommended strategy, the survey asked population representatives to describe:

- *Barriers* their community faces in following each suggested public health strategy

- *Cultural* or situational concerns that should be considered in encouraging the public health strategy in their community

- *Ideas* about what could be done to help members of their community access the encouraged practice

- *Stories* that demonstrate how the recommended practice impacts members of their community

- *Strengths* of their community

- *Sources* of health information, healthcare, and other resources trusted within their community

Data provided by these stakeholder respondents were analyzed using a multi-layer, iterative process. The research team extracted common ideas and themes shared by population representatives. Panels of experts then examined these preliminary findings to provide context for the ideas articulated by community stakeholders and ensure that the research team understood them accurately. Expert panels were composed of state-level leaders from each population, academic researchers, and public health practitioners. The research team next identified patterns that cut across the various populations and public health strategies. This yielded key recommendations designed to improve both access to COVID-related protections and long-term health outcomes across Ohio.

What are the **central findings** of the *Needs Assessment*?

The populations studied in this *Needs Assessment* face substantial barriers to using each of the public health strategies recommended to prevent transmission of COVID-19 and mitigate its impacts on communities. Respondents articulated not only the nuances of these barriers, but also the many ways they impede COVID-protective behavior, and a clear sense of urgency about the need to resolve them.

These barriers include:

- Serious gaps in access to necessary resources
- COVID-unsafe working conditions in essential jobs
- Specific public health advice inconsistent with community values
- Lack of information and COVID-related education
- Stigma and mental health challenges
- Caregiving responsibilities
- Lack of personal transportation
- Dense and poor housing conditions
- Language and communication barriers
- Racism, xenophobia, and able-ism
- Immigration-related fears
- Political beliefs
- Mistrust of government authorities and healthcare providers

Solutions to these barriers must be developed with input and assistance from members of each community and deployed in direct partnership with community-based organizations. Community centered interventions will require collaborative effort, but will alleviate barriers to multiple COVID-protective behaviors at the same time.

What are the **key recommendations** of the *Needs Assessment*?

Eight top-level recommendations emerged from *Needs Assessment* data and analyses. These key recommendations focus on actions that will have the strongest positive impact on reducing COVID-related burdens on Ohio's marginalized communities, as well as the longest-lasting public health impact for populations across the state. Each recommendation would mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 in multiple populations by improving access to multiple protective behaviors. Because they address social determinants of health and institutionalized oppression, these recommended actions will also help to reduce health disparities and improve long-term health outcomes throughout Ohio.

Top-Level Recommendations from *Ohio's COVID-19 Populations Needs Assessment*

1. Center the COVID-19 response in the organizations and cultures of local communities

2. Explicitly address economic injustice and its widespread health and social impacts by directly providing resources

3. Directly address racism and immigration-related fears

4. Strengthen employment policy and other relevant public policies

5. Increase access to affordable, low-density housing

6. Improve public and shared transportation services

7. Improve the quality of COVID-related education and increase its dissemination

8. Address language and communication barriers

The following mechanisms are suggested to help achieve these top-level *Needs Assessment* recommendations.

- Take a multi-sectoral community-based approach

- Integrate interventions across COVID-19 protective strategies

- Launch interventions at multiple levels (e.g.: state, regional, local, neighborhood, workplace)

- Expand existing centers-of-community into centers of COVID-19 response

- Create and expand community health worker capacity

- Align goals and strategies, and collaborate to maximize progress toward health equity

What will **readers** find in this *Needs Assessment* report?

The full-length *Needs Assessment* report contains:

- Details of the context, objectives, and methods of the *Needs Assessment*

- Findings and recommendations specific to each of the six *Needs Assessment* focus populations, sorted into three categories:

    - Immediate, COVID-19 specific recommendations

    - Immediate recommendations to improve the health of communities

    - Recommendations to create a social context for long-term health and wellness

- Findings specific to each of the eight CDC-recommended practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19

- Detailed explanation of eight top-level *Needs Assessment* recommendations for minimizing the impact of COVID-19 on Ohio's populations

- Mechanisms for achieving the eight top-level recommendations

- Stories and examples in the words of *Needs Assessment* respondents

- Action recommendations for key audiences of the *Needs Assessment*, including:

    - State-level leaders and legislators

    - Local public health authorities and social service agencies

    - Community leaders and organizations

    - Healthcare institutions and providers

    - Public and private funders

    - Universities, researchers, and subject-matter experts

- Lists of trusted community organizations, resources, and linkages for each focus population

For additional information or consultations about implementing the recommendations of this report, please contact CPH-COVID19NeedsAssessment@osu.edu.

Table 1. Selected Recommendations for Key Audiences: Your Role in Minimizing the Impact of COVID-19 on Ohio's Populations

	Key Audiences					
	State-level legislators, political leaders, health and social service departments	**Local public health authorities and social service agencies**	**Centers-of-community (e.g.: community organizations, places of worship, leaders)**	**Healthcare institutions and providers**	**Government and private funders, other donors**	**Universities, researchers, and subject-matter experts**
KEY RECOMMENDATION #1: Center the COVID-19 response in the organizations and cultures of local communities	Recognize the need to tailor the COVID-19 response to particular populations and communities, as a necessary supplement to the general statewide COVID-19 response.	Seek out community members and leaders to help inform your COVID-related policies, programs, and interventions.	Contribute expertise about community cultures to state-level conversations, public health organizations and social service organizations that are designing pieces of the COVID-19 response.	Collaborate with centers-of-community to provide free COVID-19 testing, education, and healthcare in their locations.	Make funds available specifically to help existing centers-of-community expand into centers of COVID-19 response.	Seek out centers-of-community and work with these local experts to develop and disseminate interventions.
	Launch funding programs and interventions explicitly designed to alleviate specific COVID-related barriers faced by particular communities. Prioritize distribution of resources based on disease burden and scientific evidence.	Articulate the COVID-related needs of the communities you serve to state-level leaders.	Volunteer to distribute supplies and educational materials, host a COVID-19 testing site, and/or host contact tracers. Partner with scientific experts, public health authorities, social service agencies, and funders to facilitate these new roles.	Collaborate with researchers, agencies, and funders to develop accurate educational materials specific to the COVID-related needs of your local communities.	Increase support to community-based organizations already contributing to the COVID-19 response.	Partner with centers-of-community to apply for funding to launch COVID-related services, interventions, and research.
	Ensure that COVID-related data is systematically collected and reported at both county and census-tract levels, to facilitate appropriate focusing and tailoring of COVID-related interventions.	Apply to COVID-specific and general funding programs to resource COVID-19 education and services in local communities.	Approach local agencies, funders, state-level authorities, and researchers to describe what your community needs and suggest collaborative solutions.	Include members or representatives of the marginalized communities you serve in developing all elements of your own COVID-19 response strategy.	Approach centers-of-community, subject matter experts, or local agencies about developing COVID-related services you can help fund.	Conduct critical, rapid research about COVID-related impacts and interventions in marginalized communities. Disseminate findings widely.
	Include members or representatives from all of Ohio's marginalized communities in the development of COVID-related policies and programs.	Approach centers-of-community to propose partnerships that will bring your services and other COVID-related support into local sites.	Role model the use of COVID-protective strategies (e.g. wearing a mask, staying 6' apart) in your own spaces and communities.			
	Help expand existing centers-of-community into centers of COVID-19 response by making funds and resources available to those centers-of-community and their collaborators.					

	Key Audiences					
	State-level legislators, political leaders, health and social service departments	Local public health authorities and social service agencies	Centers-of-community (e.g.: community organizations, places of worship, leaders)	Healthcare institutions and providers	Government and private funders, other donors	Universities, researchers, and subject-matter experts
KEY RECOMMENDATION #2: Explicitly address economic injustice and its widespread health and social impacts by directly providing resources	Advance health in all policies; advance values and goals inclusive of economic and social justice for all of Ohio's communities in all policies.	Directly distribute supplies and financial resources necessary to enable community members to practice appropriate hygiene, social distancing, mask and other PPE use, testing, and healthcare use.	Connect with state-level programs, local agencies, and other funders to bring cleaning supplies, masks and other PPE, testing capabilities, and free healthcare into the communities you represent and serve.	Establish or expand free, culturally-appropriate clinics in low-income and marginalized communities, to widen the availability of COVID-related and basic healthcare.	Provide direct funding to centers-of-community and local agencies and programs, to facilitate their distribution of cleaning supplies, masks, and other PPE.	Build on existing community partnerships to bring COVID-related supplies and resources into neighborhoods that lack access.
	Provide human and financial resources to local public health authorities, as well as state and community organizations, to develop infrastructure and programs to alleviate persistent poverty, unemployment / underemployment, and their health effects.	Coordinate linkages between funders, state-level programs, and centers-of-community to ensure that communities have sufficient access to necessary resources, including local testing sites, healthcare, essential supplies, and broadband Internet.	Organize volunteer efforts to distribute supplies and resources in the communities you represent and serve.	Expand charity care programs in existing locations that could serve low-income and marginalized populations.	Fund local free health clinics or support charity healthcare programs, to provide COVID-related and basic healthcare services in marginalized communities.	Work with local agencies and community organizations to design, fund, and run programs that provide the COVID-protective resources specific communities need.
	Allocate funds to subsidize or distribute free resources (e.g.: cleaning supplies, masks, PPE) throughout Ohio, focusing on marginalized communities and neighborhoods that currently lack access.	Partner with low-wage essential workplaces to ensure workers have access to basic healthcare, and to cleaning supplies, masks, and PPE that can be used at work and taken into home and community settings.	Volunteer to distribute supplies and educational materials, host a COVID-19 testing site, and/or host contact tracers within your physical spaces.	Add staff social workers or patient navigators to help eligible patients enroll in insurance programs and access telehealth services.	Fund free municipal broadband Internet in rural and other low-income areas that lack online access.	Provide expertise and evidence to state-, local-, and community-level organizations working on funding and designing direct resource provision programs for low-income and marginalized communities.
	Fund and organize free testing sites, free healthcare clinics, and free broadband Internet in communities and regions of the state that currently lack access to these services.	Address supply chain and affordability challenges to ensure availability of cleaning supplies, masks, and PPE throughout marginalized and low-income communities.		Collaborate with centers-of-community to provide free COVID-19 testing, education, and healthcare in local communities; provide free transportation to your service locations when needed.	Create or fund programs to provide direct financial support to individuals suffering from job loss during the pandemic, or who need to isolate or quarantine.	
	Broaden access to cash assistance, rental assistance, emergency pay, unemployment, and stimulus payments, as well as grace periods for unpaid rent and utility bills for the duration of the pandemic.					
	Legislate mandatory provision of PPE and cleaning supplies in essential work locations.					

	Key Audiences					
	State-level political leaders, legislators, health departments, and social service departments	**Local public health authorities and social service agencies**	**Centers-of-community (e.g.: community organizations, places of worship, leaders)**	**Healthcare institutions and providers**	**Government and private funders, other donors**	**Universities, researchers, and subject-matter experts**
KEY RECOMMENDATION #3: Directly address racism and immigration-related fears	Call attention to racism, xenophobia, and misinformation whenever they are articulated in public spaces, and strongly refute such statements.	Assess and acknowledge the nature of implicit bias, gaps in cultural competence, and lack of employee diversity that may affect the quality of services you provide to local communities.	Advocate for local and state policies that would help reduce the impacts of racism and immigration-related fears in your community.	Assess and acknowledge the nature of implicit bias, gaps in cultural competence and cultural humility, and lack of employee diversity that may affect the quality of services you provide to local communities.	Fund programs that aim to eliminate racism, xenophobia, and discriminatory behavior that is COVID-related or more general.	Conduct research that illuminates the COVID-related impacts of racism and immigration-related fears on communities of color in Ohio. Disseminate the results widely.
	Advance anti-racism in all policies; advance values and goals inclusive of all of Ohio's communities in all policies.	Institute required, comprehensive, ongoing programs that train your staff to identify and reverse discriminatory practices and habits, and to understand and honor the norms and cultural values of the communities you serve.	Encourage local public health authorities and social service agencies to understand and help address the impacts of racism and immigration-related fears in your community.	Institute required, comprehensive, ongoing programs that train your staff to identify and reverse discriminatory practices and habits, and to understand and honor the norms and cultural values of the communities you serve.	Fund the development and implementation of trainings to help organizations recognize and reverse discriminatory practices and honor the norms and cultural values of their communities.	Contribute your expertise to build local and state understanding of the impacts of racism and immigration-related fears on COVID-related and other health outcomes within Ohio communities.
	Require all governmental agencies to submit routine reports – including annually to the Ohio State Legislature – on their progress in addressing racism as a public health crisis.	Publicly promote mask-wearing and other COVID-protections as expressions of conscientiousness and community support instead of indicators of illness.	Collaborate with funders and researchers to further understand – and reverse – the COVID-related barriers that stem from racism, xenophobia, harassment, and immigration-related fears in your community.	Launch multi-pronged initiatives to address structural barriers and discrimination within your organization, including diversifying your workforce, mentoring and sponsoring staff at all levels, and involving your decision makers in advancing diversity-, equity-, and inclusion-related goals.	Fund research on the COVID-related impacts of racism and immigration-related fears on communities of color in Ohio.	Contribute your expertise to design and implement private, public, or multi-sector programs to eliminate racism, xenophobia, and all types of discriminatory behavior.

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KEY RECOMMENDATION #3: Directly address racism and immigration-related fears (continued)	Provide human and financial resources to local public health authorities, as well as state and community organizations, to develop infrastructure and programs to address racism as a public health crisis.	Advocate for local and state programs to eliminate racism, xenophobia, and all types of discriminatory behavior.	Serve as host sites for community health workers who connect community members to COVID-specific services.		Fund educational campaigns designed to eliminate COVID-related discrimination and harassment against people of color.	Advocate for anti-racist policies in your own institutions and across the state.
	Institute policies and procedures that ensure that personal information gathered through COVID-19 testing, contact tracing, and healthcare interactions cannot legally be transferred to any other government entities, including local police, immigration authorities, and immigration courts.	Employ people of color and immigrants as contact tracers and community health workers.				
	Advance legal mechanisms to reduce hate crimes, racial profiling, and harassment. For instance, institute mandatory mask ordinances; prosecute COVID-related hate crimes promptly; increase resources to Civil Rights Commission to investigate discrimination cases.					

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KEY RECOMMENDATION #4: Strengthen employment policy and other relevant public policies	Institute legislation or policy to require that employers provide leave time to employees who need to isolate, quarantine, or care for isolating or quarantined family members, without threat of job or benefit loss.	Help local businesses develop and institute appropriate hygiene, mask-wearing, PPE, and social distancing measures to protect employees and customers.	Ensure that your staff members have consistent access to appropriate PPE and are able to work remotely and/or practice social distancing when possible.	Ensure that healthcare workers and staff members at all levels of your organization have consistent access to appropriate PPE and are able to practice social distancing when possible.	Fund programs to help small businesses and those owned by people of color to provide COVID-related protections for their employees and abide by all regulations.	Contribute expertise to efforts to strengthen workplace-related COVID-19 protections through policy and regulation.
	Institute legislation or policy to require employers to provide cleaning supplies, masks, other PPE, social distancing ability, and remote work options as appropriate to each job and workplace.	Help local businesses establish leave policies and financial supports for employees coping with income reductions due to isolation, quarantine, reduced hours, or job loss.	Ensure that your employees have access to leave time and financial supports to cope with income reductions due to isolation, quarantine, or reduced hours.	Ensure that all employees of your organization have access to leave time and financial supports to cope with income reductions due to isolation, quarantine, or reduced hours.	Fund programs that provide financial supports to individuals coping with income reductions due to isolation, quarantine, reduced hours, or job loss.	Help local businesses and organizations develop methods to protect their employees and customers from COVID-19 (e.g.: improving air flow, improving social distancing, expanding remote work options).
	Allocate funding to support the ability of small businesses and those owned by people of color to abide by new work-related regulations.	Ensure that staff members at all levels of your organization have consistent access to appropriate PPE and are able to work remotely and/or practice social distancing when possible.	Seek out support from funders and government agencies to provide COVID-related protections for your employees and customers and abide by all regulations.		Support advocates who are working to strengthen workplace-related COVID-19 protections through policy and regulation.	Conduct research to understand the impacts of incentives and regulations on COVID-related protections in workplaces and other locations. Disseminate the results widely.
	Institute legislation or policy to provide emergency financial supports to those who lose work time or jobs due to the pandemic.	Ensure that all employees of your organization have access to leave time and financial supports to cope with income reductions due to isolation, quarantine, or reduced hours.				Ensure that all employees of your organization have access to leave time and financial supports to cope with income reductions due to isolation, quarantine, or reduced hours.
	Monitor businesses – particularly employers of low-wage/essential workers and industries with histories of unhealthy working conditions and employee coercion – to ensure compliance with COVID-related regulations.					

	Key Audiences					
	State-level political leaders, legislators, health departments, and social service departments	**Local public health authorities and social service agencies**	**Centers-of-community (e.g.: community organizations, places of worship, leaders)**	**Healthcare institutions and providers**	**Government and private funders, other donors**	**Universities, researchers, and subject-matter experts**
KEY RECOMMENDATION #5: Increase access to affordable, low-density housing	Develop state programs to provide free interim housing to individuals who need to quarantine or isolate but cannot realistically do so within their own homes (e.g.: in motels or currently unused public spaces).	Develop local programs to provide free interim housing to individuals who need to quarantine or isolate but cannot realistically do so within their own homes (e.g.: in motels or currently unused public spaces).	Support and publicize free interim housing programs to assist individuals who need to quarantine or isolate but cannot realistically do so within their own homes.	Assess housing security, housing density, and access to COVID-safe situations at home among your patients; connect those experiencing gaps to social programs that can help.	Fund programs that provide free interim housing, or provide vouchers for temporary accommodations, to assist individuals who need to quarantine or isolate but cannot realistically do so within their own homes.	Provide expertise and conduct research to help develop and evaluate temporary housing, rental assistance, and related programs.
	Suspend evictions, increase access to rental assistance, and pause utility payments to keep low-income individuals in their current residences.	Connect individuals to rental assistance and utility payment programs to help keep people in their current residences.	Collaborate with agencies and funders to establish rental and utility assistance programs that help low-income community members retain their current residences.	Assess housing security, housing density, and access to COVID-safe situations at home among your staff; connect those experiencing gaps to social programs that can help.	Fund programs to provide food and supplies, Internet access, and interpretive technology to individuals isolating or quarantining in interim housing situations.	Collaborate with local agencies, community-based organizations, and funders to design evidence-based programs to improve access to COVID-safe housing.
	Increase support to shelters to help them safely house more individuals who are housing insecure.	Establish additional COVID-safe capacity in shelters and provide them with necessary supplies to accommodate more housing insecure individuals.	Provide guidance and resources to help community members living in dense housing situations increase COVID-safety measures at home.		Create rental and utility assistance programs to help low-income individuals retain their current residences.	Contribute expertise about effective housing support programs that could serve as examples for programs in your region.
	Expand community-based alternatives to reduce the proportion of individuals with disabilities living in congregate care settings.	Expand community-based alternatives to reduce the proportion of individuals with disabilities living in congregate care settings.	Work with interim housing programs to ensure cultural appropriateness (e.g.: allowing isolating individuals to bring a caregiver or family member along if necessary).		Fund programs that distribute guidance and resources to help community members living in dense housing situations increase COVID-safety measures at home.	
	Reduce or eliminate sentences for minor offenses to reduce jail and prison overcrowding.	Provide guidance and resources to help individuals living in dense housing situations increase COVID-safety measures at home.			Fund initiatives to build more affordable housing and convert existing housing to affordable units.	

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KEY RECOMMENDATION #5: Increase access to affordable, low-density housing (continued)	Establish subsidies and incentives to build more affordable housing and convert existing housing to affordable units.				Fund programs to create community-based alternatives that reduce the proportion of individuals with disabilities living in congregate care settings.	
	Monitor businesses – particularly employers of low-wage/essential workers and industries with histories of unhealthy working conditions and employee coercion – to ensure compliance with COVID-related regulations.					

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KEY RECOMMENDATION #6: Improve public and shared transportation services	Increase investment in public transit systems across the state, to add routes and destinations, increase the frequency of buses on routes, decrease costs to riders, and increase COVID-19 safety measures on vehicles.	Provide transportation support to help local residents shop for necessities, access healthcare and social services, and move safely around the community.	Provide transportation support to help local residents shop for necessities, access healthcare and social services, and move safely around the community.	Provide transportation support to help local residents access COVID-related and general healthcare services.	Invest in public transit systems to add routes and destinations, increase the frequency of buses on routes, decrease costs to riders, and increase COVID-19 safety measures on vehicles.	Contribute expertise to help convert public transit and ride-share vehicles to minimize the transmission of COVID-19 among riders and drivers.
	Increase investment in programs that allow healthcare providers, public health agencies, and social service agencies to provide transportation support.	Help ride-share drivers and local transit services increase COVID-19 safety in their vehicles by adding plexiglass barriers and enhancing cleaning routines.			Support ride-share services to operate in rural areas.	Contribute expertise to agencies, healthcare providers, and community-based groups launching transportation support initiatives.
	Incentivize ride-share services in rural areas.				Fund ride-share drivers and local transit services to add plexiglass barriers and enhanced cleaning routines that will increase COVID-19 safety in their vehicles.	Conduct research to assist in the development and evaluation of transportation support programs.
					Provide funding to help community-based organizations, healthcare providers, and social services agencies launch transportation support services.	

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KEY RECOMMENDATION #7: Improve the quality of COVID-related education and increase its dissemination	Authorize and invest in programs to create comprehensive educational materials about COVID-19 and recommended protective strategies, tailored to reflect the values and norms of Ohio's various communities, and featuring role models from those communities.	Collaborate with community leaders and subject-matter experts to design and disseminate educational materials tailored to be appropriate to specific communities and cultural groups.	Collaborate with subject matter experts, local agencies, and funders to design and disseminate educational materials appropriate to your community.	Customize and disseminate COVID-related educational materials that are tailored for the specific cultural communities you serve.	Fund the work of community-based organizations and local agencies to develop tailored educational materials for specific Ohio communities.	Contribute expertise to the work of local and state partners developing educational materials, about COVID-19 itself, COVID-protective strategies, and customizing these strategies to reflect the concerns of specific communities.
	Disseminate culturally specific educational materials through a variety of media and venues, in partnership with local agencies, community organizations, healthcare providers, and/or academic institutions.	Assist in developing training programs to help healthcare, social service, and public sector workers serve all of Ohio's communities in culturally appropriate ways.	Advocate for the development of COVID-related educational content that addresses specific cultural priorities and needs of your community.	Institute ongoing educational programs to improve the ability of staff at all levels of your organization to effectively serve local residents from various communities and cultures.	Fund widespread and ongoing dissemination of both general and culturally specific COVID-related educational materials.	Work with local, regional, and national media to assist with delivery of COVID-related information in simple language accessible to the public.
	Authorize, fund, and implement a comprehensive mass media campaign to continually disseminate clear, credible, consistent information about COVID-19 from public health experts.		Encourage community members to engage in the development and dissemination of educational materials, and to serve as examples and role models of COVID-protective behaviors.			Collaborate with local agencies and community leaders to design and disseminate educational materials appropriate to specific communities.
	Develop training programs to help healthcare, social service, and public sector workers serve all of Ohio's communities in culturally appropriate ways.		Collaborate with local agencies and healthcare providers developing training programs to improve the ability of their staff to deliver COVID-related services to members of your community effectively.			

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KEY RECOMMENDATION #8: Address language and communication barriers	Establish and invest in programs to rapidly translate COVID-related guidance and updates from state-level departments, the Governor's office, and the CDC into the primary languages spoken by Ohio populations.	Hire (or employ through shared staffing arrangements) local community members to work as multilingual staff or translators providing services in the languages spoken by local populations.	Connect individuals fluent in the languages of your community to local agencies and healthcare institutions, to work as translators or be trained for contact tracing or healthcare roles.	Hire (or employ through shared staffing arrangements) local community members to work as multilingual staff or translators providing services in the languages spoken by local populations.	Fund training and hiring initiatives to involve local community members as staff members or translators within local agencies or healthcare providers.	Contribute expertise about the importance of translating educational materials to public health agencies and healthcare providers developing these materials.
	Invest in programs to hire and train native speakers of all the primary languages spoken in Ohio to work as contact tracers, healthcare providers, and translators throughout public health agencies, social service agencies, and healthcare settings.	Make COVID-related materials you develop and disseminate available in all the languages spoken by local populations.	Connect individuals fluent in the languages of your community to local agencies and healthcare institutions that develop COVID-related educational materials.	Ensure that COVID-related informational materials are available in all the languages spoken by local populations.	Fund programs to translate COVID-related educational materials into the primary languages spoken in Ohio.	Contribute expertise about the importance of providing healthcare and social services in the native languages spoken by Ohio populations.
	Provide ASL and other interpretive services to ensure that individuals with disabilities can understand COVID-related information provided by state agencies and leaders.	Utilize plain language and visual aids in all COVID-related materials you develop.	Advocate for translation of all COVID-related materials into the languages spoken within your community.	Utilize plain language and visual aids in all COVID-related materials you develop.	Assist social service agencies and healthcare providers to hire translators and interpreters.	Contribute expertise about the importance of using plain language, visual aids, and other methods to make educational materials easy to understand.
		Ensure that any remote or phone-based translation services you employ provide high-quality, accurate, and culturally competent translation.	Advocate for text-alternative communication methods (e.g.: storytelling) when those are valued in your community.	Ensure that any remote or phone-based translation services you employ provide high-quality, accurate, and culturally competent translation.		Advocate for programs and funding to translate COVID-related materials, and to provide translation and interpretation services in healthcare and social service settings.
	Ensure that ASL and other interpretive services are available to facilitate communication between service providers and clients with disabilities.		Ensure that ASL and other interpretive services are available to facilitate communication between providers and patients with disabilities.		Assist in accurate translation of educational materials into the primary languages spoken by Ohio populations.	
	Allow patients with disabilities to bring an interpreter or trusted companion to all appointments.		Allow patients with disabilities to bring an interpreter or trusted companion to all healthcare interactions.			