

# AAQOL Commission Health Workgroup

## Members:

Commissioner Kavita Radhakrishnan (Lead)  
Commissioner Vince Cobalis  
Commissioner Catherina Conte

**Scope of Workgroup:** To address health and wellness needs of underserved Asian American communities residing in the city of Austin

**Date of Meeting:** July 11, 2017

**Location of Meeting:** ACC Highland Campus

## In Attendance:

Commissioner Kavita Radhakrishnan (Lead)  
Commissioner Vince Cobalis  
Community member - Veena Vishwanath from APH (call-in)

## Topics Discussed:

- **Next meeting August 8 @ AARC? UT? 12:30 – 1:30**
- **Discuss UT health survey; survey data analytics and format that is of value to APH as well as to other organizations**
  - We discussed the value of AAQOL survey data to city public agencies like APH. The survey data has been valuable in a summary report format to public agencies like APH to inform their preliminary community needs assessment. In fact, APH already uses the rich qualitative data from AAQOL survey as a supplement to other data sources such as ICC dataset to identify health needs of Asian Americans in Austin. However, the non-randomness of the AAQOL survey dataset precludes its use to conduct further epidemiological analysis by APH in the current format. For future use of the current dataset, Veena suggested that sub-contracts could be issued to conduct deep analysis of the data with a specific program focus in mind, for example diabetes health care access by Korean-Americans, or housing arrangement Asian-Americans distributed by age. The value of such deep dive is also dependent on the data available in the original survey.
  - To further clarify the future use of AAQOL survey data, we plan to invite Dr.Jang to our August month meeting in order to get her perspectives on possible future uses of the AAQOL survey dataset and its relevance in a public portal.
- **Discuss preparation of a consolidated list of all health fairs and free health clinics relevant to Asian Americans in Austin, the value of such a list and dissemination of such information to Asian Americans in Austin**
  - A list of health fairs was developed during the AAQOL initiative survey by Dr.Jang's students and updated by Commissioner Cobalis.
  - Also, the health workgroup will closely work with the Navigator program to obtain a list of resources of free health fairs and clinics of relevance to Asian Americans

- Also, Veena Vishwanath will send calendar dates for neighborhood center outreach health fairs organized/supervised by APH. In addition, we will connect with Victoria Bailey, nursing coordinator at APH who identifies and organizes manpower and resources to conduct these health fairs.
  - The health workgroup will also connect with Victoria Bailey to connect Asian American Nursing Student Association at UT School of Nursing as possible resource at these health fairs.
  - APH also has a form which community members can use to request health fairs for desired biometrics of health parameters (e.g.: blood pressure check-ups, blood glucose check-ups)
- Asian American Mental health issue awareness and referrals – identify resources and begin development of a plan of action
  - New ICC data obtained by APH appears to have identified unmet mental health needs in communities including Asian Americans that were not identified previously in earlier or other population surveys.
  - There is a need to connect with existing mental health resources available in the city such as ATCIC, Mobile Crisis Outreach Team (MCOT), and EMS for conversations on the unique mental health challenges in the Asian-American community, including stigma, fears about privacy and confidentiality, tracking and monitoring of severe mental illness, residency status among others. Information from such conversations can help inform outreach efforts on mental health awareness in the Asian American community.
  - Future steps – Invite representatives from ATCIC, MCOT, AFFSA and EMS to attend health workgroup meetings. Hold joint meetings of relevant organizations to address unmet mental health needs of Asian Americans.
- Invite attending community members to offer priority health issues that the Health workgroup should focus on during the year
  - Continued advocacy for efforts advocated and supported by the AAQOL Commission such as language access, community health navigator program etc. Advocacy needs to be paired with marketing efforts. Measures are also needed to track progress of such initiatives, status of their funding, and their marketing efforts as well as planning on how public departments will be funded in the future to continue such initiatives. For example, the city of Austin is leading an effort to centralize language access – translation and interpretation – to which other departments can have access.
  - Advocacy for engaging Asian Americans in events, leadership roles, hiring in critical positions. The Health Equity department now has 2 Asian Americans which is helping a lot to advocate the needs of Asian Americans.
- Discuss Annual Report
  - Achievements for 2016 – 2017 included

- a) Provided feedback on the AAQOL survey initiative
- b) Obtained data and presentation from APH on prevalence of chronic disease, substance abuse and other mental issues among the Asian-Americans in Austin / Travis county with a breakdown by specific sub-population. The presentation by APH identified challenges in assembling such data on Asian-Americans from state-level or national-level surveys due to the proportionately small number of Asian Americans sampled in such surveys. APH also provided data on the % of Asian Americans served by contracts such as the Health Equity or General Fund Social Services. Finally, APH provided details about their initiative to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate materials and their progress in providing such translated materials to the Asian American community.
- c) Working with HHSD about number of Asian American staff. Currently the Health Equity department has 2 Asian American staff which is making a positive impact on health interests of Asian Americans in Austin.
- d) Monitoring progress of the initiatives recommended for city funding by the AAQOL commission by inviting reports on their progress. The CHW Navigation program links Korean, Vietnamese, and Burmese residents to health-related services and benefits. 92 clients were served in the first 6 months of 2017, already exceeding the annual goal of 75 clients, with significant increases in client knowledge and self-sufficiency. The fiscal support to CPIO for language access advocated by the AAQOL commission has been very useful for agencies like APH who are one of the primary users of translation of public health documents and interpretation for public health services to the Asian American community.
- e) Identifying budget priorities for the 2017 – 18 fiscal year related to health needs of Asian Americans in Austin including continued fiscal support to the AARC non-profit's Community Health Navigator program and the CPIO translation efforts.
- Intended major goals for 2017 – 2018 include
  - a) Advocating and increasing awareness on unmet mental health needs of Asian Americans, sensitizing available mental health resources in the city such as ATCIC and MCOT to the unique mental health needs of Asian Americans, and finally liaising between Asian American non-profit organizations such as AFFSA with ATCIC, MCOT and even Austin city EMS to advocate for addressing unmet mental health needs of Asian Americans in Austin.
  - b) Identifying and consolidating information and resources on free health clinics and fairs relevant to Asian Americans and identifying ways to disseminate that information in the public domain
  - c) Advocacy for continuing support, fiscal and otherwise, of AARC non-profit's Community Health program, and obtaining periodic reports on their progress, outcomes and sustainability.
  - d) Advocacy for continuing support, fiscal and otherwise, of the CPIO's translation/interpretation of Asian American languages, and obtaining periodic reports on their progress, outcomes and sustainability including addressing

how public departments will be funded to meet language access needs in the future.

- **Issues to address in upcoming months**  
**Overarching aim is to identify Asian American specific resources as well as to identify resources available for the general community that can be tweaked and tailored to the Asian American community.**
  - Develop list of health fairs and free health clinics for flu shot clinics as well as other health screening – both Asian American and general community
  - Identify avenues to increase mental health screening for Asian Americans in Austin
  - Explore the Austin City EMS' Community Health Worker program to address the health navigation needs of the Asian American community in addition to Asian American non-profit organizations.
  - Senior Home Meal Delivery
  - Address shortage of culturally competent Certified Nurses' Aides
  - Address children's health needs in the AISD system (Nu)
  - Explore invitation to community members in the Health Workgroup (potential members: Luan Nguyen-Tran, Ann Okamura, Veena Viswanathan, Joy Arthur, Dr.Sanjana Malpani, someone from AISD, someone from Health Navigator program, someone from Austin Travis County EMS CHW program)