

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: November 14, 2017

Location of Meeting: AARC, Cameron Road

In Attendance:

Commissioner Kavita Radhakrishnan
Commissioner Vince Cobalis
Community Member – Hailey Easley (AARC Non-profit CHN program)
Community Member – Ly Binh (Health Equity Unit – APH)
Community Member – Sinying Chan (Health Equity Unit – APH)
Community Member – Kitty (PCC)

Topics Discussed:

- 1) Representatives from the Health Equity Unit (HEU) at Austin Public Health talked about their roles and responsibilities and the activities they have undertaken to learn about health disparities in the Asian American community. We also had a discussion on how the AAQoL commission can assist them in their efforts.
- 2) Most importantly, the survey commissioned by AAQoL and the results have been useful to the Health Equity Unit to inform their activities.
- 3) HEU's Activities included
 - i) conducting screening and education outreach,
 - ii) organizing flu shots at Asian American places of worship such as the Vietnamese Church or the Indian temple
 - iii) Citywide training for professional interpreters funded by the city. It was an intensive three-day interpreter training for qualified bilingual City's staff.
- 4) Commissioner Cobalis requested information on how many Asian Americans were served by grants approved by APH to community groups who conduct social services. HEU's Ly Binh stressed the need to conduct outreach among Asian American social services groups to make them more aware of APH's grant availability and processes. With such outreach, more Asian American groups are availing of grants now more than before.
- 5) Commissioner Cobalis also talked about the need to restructure the RFP process to focus on cultural aspects by non-profit groups as well as forcing

legacy non-profit groups to outreach more to the underserved Asian American groups.

6) Potential priority goals that were discussed for the Health Workgroup are as follows:

- i) Longitudinal data collection of health status of Asian Americans – Follow-up surveys to the AAQoL survey conducted to Dr.Jang at a regular periodic rate will allow comparison of health trends across the different Asian American groups over the years.
- ii) Mental Health – i) Outreach related to raising awareness about the issue and access to resources. ii) Sensitizing existing providers to unique mental health needs of Asian Americans iii) Organizing a centralized database of Behavioral health providers who are themselves bi-lingual or have good resources of Asian American language services
- iii) Also, the AAQoL can help assist coordination of services to Asian Americans by the various public and non-profit entities in the city by helping to establish and solidify a network. The hope is Commissioners will continually inform Council members about measured to reduce health inequities which in turn will inform policies and directives that will trickle down to various departments such as the Health Equity Unit.