

Multicultural Advisory Committee of the State of Utah's COVID-19 Response

Meeting Minutes

Friday, October 23, 2020 | 3:00 - 4:00 P.M.

Google Meet | Online

Members: Chair Nubia Peña, Co-Chair Byron Russell, Co-Chair Ze Min Xiao, Aden Batar, Asha Parekh, Celina Milner, Dulce Díez, Dustin Jansen, Emma E. Houston, Jess Anderson, Dr. Len Novilla, Mike Haddon, Ming Wang, Neelam Chand

Absent: Deneiva Knight, Jake Fitisemanu Jr., Juan Becerra, Dr. Marc Babitz, Mayra Cedano, Mikelle Moore, Rebecca Chavez-Houck, Silvia Castro

Guests: Angelo Papastamos, Antonella Packard, Brooke Zollinger, Ciriac Alvarez-Valle, Claudia Loayza, Emilie Ebert, James Yapias, Jeannette Villalta, Jenny Hor, Jill Love, Dr. Joél Arvizo-Zavala, José Borjón, Karen Peterson, Katherine Potter, Mayra Cardozo, Megan Waters, Nicholina Womack, Oreta Tupola, Ramy Ahmed, Rossina Lake, Rozanna Beanlly-Sagg, Taysha Tiatia, Terry Foust

Welcome – Byron Russell, Co-Chair

Byron Russell welcomed attendees to the meeting.

COVID-19 Transmission Index – Jess Anderson

- The Transmission Index is a proper measurement of the COVID-19 situation in each individual county.
 - Uses the 7-day average positivity rate, the 14-day case rate per 100,000, and county hospital capacity
 - Based on this metric, decisions are made on a county-by-county basis, to be placed within High, Medium, or Low levels.
 - 22 out of 29 counties are in the High level
 - Hospitals are at capacity, and began load leveling. Load leveling means redirecting patients to hospitals with hospital availability.
 - Levels of transmission and positive cases in diverse communities, especially in Hispanic communities, are continuing to be driven down, and are trending in a good direction.
 - The positivity rate for the Hispanic community has dropped from 45% to 28%.

Utah Department of Health Update – Dulce Díez

- The state of Utah reached 100,000 cases of COVID-19 and 567 deaths, with 1.5 deaths per day, a new high.
- 313 people are hospitalized with COVID-19 with 109 in the ICU. Those who enter the ICU stay for 30 to 40 days on average.
- The main concern is the rate of hospitalization and hospital capacity. Approximately 5% of those diagnosed with COVID-19 are hospitalized, and 1% require ICU treatment
- Approximately 30% of patients between the ages 35 to 65, that were diagnosed with COVID-19, are still experiencing symptoms and chronic inflammation.
- Many cases of reinfection are the same infection reappearing months later.
- Despite decreasing, the rate of transmission among diverse communities is still higher than the state average.
 - The number of hospitalizations and deaths are still much higher, possibly due to health inequity.
 - Communication, as well as the work of Community Health Workers, has been key in the lowering rates of transmission among diverse communities.
 - Combined with the respect and understanding for leadership, as well as work from many organizations, the rate of transmission has been brought down.

COVID-19 Community Impact – Oreta Tupola & Jeannette Villalta

- A summary of the work of Community Health Workers in Utah's most vulnerable populations.
 - What do community members want?
 - Community members are tired of negative messaging and are looking for more positive messages going forward
 - The communities are now aware of what they cannot do, but would like to know what they can do
 - A desire for more diverse and better messaging, in terms of platform and content

Multicultural Advisory Committee of the State of Utah's COVID-19 Response

- An emphasis on mental health, especially for those in isolation
- Better medical attention, not only with testing and treatment, but with financial support
- Supplies, such as cleaning supplies, oximeters, or thermometers
- Support for deceased family members, such as funeral costs
- Help for parents with children at school, whether digitally or child care
- The economic impact of quarantining and isolation
- Bridging the impact of the digital divide, such as a lack of devices or digital literacy
- Community Health Workers' Concerns:
 - Frustration with testing process and access
 - Community access to wrap around services
 - Contact tracing limited due to staff capacity
 - Funding support to meet community needs after December 31st
 - Continued representation in future discussions surrounding health inequities

Salt Lake City School District Update – James Yapias

- An update regarding the initiatives undertaken by the Salt Lake City School District to address digital equity
 - Through the purchasing of computers, every student out of the 22,000 in the Salt Lake City School District has access to a computer if needed.
 - Over 500 computers were donated to families to keep.
 - To address the issue of connectivity, over 1,500 hotspots have been purchased.
 - The hotspots can be accessed by parents' requests to their child's school.
 - 1,000 Wi-Fi connections have been bought, and 250 have been distributed, meaning 250 families have full paid Wi-Fi for an entire year.
 - The issue of digital literacy is being addressed by working with community partners, such as University Neighborhood Partners and the Salt Lake City Library, to set up hotlines staffed with digital navigators.
 - Teachers and volunteer coordinators have also helped with this effort.
- The Salt Lake City School District has been able to provide over 180,000 people with food assistance.
- A campaign has begun to ensure every individual can have access to a free flu shot.
- Schools have the resources to provide family support, from food security to mental health services.

Next Meeting

Friday, October 30, 2020 from 3:00–4:00 P.M. through Google Meet with updates from:

- Communications
- Health Equity
- Language Access