

ASIA PACIFIC CULTURAL CENTER

Establishing a Hub for Connectivity: Offering Opportunities and Resources for Health

Asia Pacific Cultural Center is a center for cultural exchange providing programs and services that promote the greater awareness, understanding, equity, and inclusion of the Asian and Pacific Islander people.

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH), through funding from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) OT21-2103 COVID-19 Health Disparities Grant](#), is partnering with community rooted organizations to advance health equity. As part of this initiative, Asia Pacific Cultural Center helps ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, resources, and information for impacted communities while addressing the social determinants of health.

As a multicultural organization, Asia Pacific Cultural Center works to bridge communities and generations by serving the needs of refugees, immigrants, children, youth, low-income, elders, and seniors through arts, culture, education, and business. In addition to COVID-19 outreach and preventative services, the organization addresses other social determinants of health, including food and housing support services.

Based in Tacoma, Washington, the organization has a statewide network, leveraging far reaching partnerships with diverse organizations including locally-based Asian American and Pacific Islander institutions as well as a number of faith-based organizations.



COVID-19 Burden on Asian and Pacific Islanders

The COVID-19 pandemic had a disproportionate effect on Asian and especially Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander peoples.

Due to the prevalence of COVID-19 in the Asian and Pacific Islander community, the Asia Pacific Cultural Center has established recurring mobile vaccination clinics for these communities. The organization also worked with partners to distribute personal protective equipment to those in need.

Asia Pacific Cultural Center also recognizes that mental and physical health messaging can be incorporated into ethnic cultural events and activities for the over 47 different countries and cultures the organization represents. This unique position, fostering diverse connections across various groups and ethnic origins, allows for authentic community engagement, paving the way to address health in a more equitable manner.

Partnerships

Asia Pacific Cultural Center works with many partners, including local health jurisdictions, regional, national, and international agencies.

Audience

Intersectionalities: Immigrants, refugees, children and youth, seniors and elders, low-income



Holistic Approach to Health

Outside of COVID-19 prevention and outreach activities tied to the CDC Health Disparities Grant, Asia Pacific Cultural Center believes in a holistic approach to addressing the needs of their community by prioritizing the social conditions that impact health.

For example, the organization is heavily involved in mental health support services. Key partnerships between Asia Pacific Cultural Center and other agencies have allowed the organization to expand its culturally rooted mental health resources to provide individualized support to members of Asian and Pacific Islander communities. Additionally, the organization works to incorporate culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate messaging for chronic diseases such as heart attacks, stroke, and diabetes during community events including the annual Asian and Pacific Heritage month in May.

These are some of the many ways Asia Pacific Cultural Center is addressing health holistically.

Challenges

One of the challenges the organization continues to face is working with public health data in broad racial/ethnic groups. Disaggregating demographic data would allow the organization to better understand distinct race/ethnic health disparities and implement more culturally relevant health campaigns for specific community groups to advance health equity.

Sustaining Efforts

Asia Pacific Cultural Center foresees maintaining COVID-19 outreach and education as a priority area. Even now as the COVID-19 emergency phase has passed, Asia Pacific Cultural Center wants to make sure people know that COVID-19 is still a threat. They see a need to continue informing their community on the importance of the annual COVID-19 vaccine as way to limit spread of the disease.

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We're not just about culture and arts anymore, we're serving the entire person...they know who they are, and we have their trust

-Faaluaina Pritchard.

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Within DOH, the effort to sustain partnership with Asia Pacific Cultural Center is led by the Community Investments and Engagement (CI&E) team within the Center for Community Relations and Equity (CRE). Funding from the CDC Health Disparities Grant supports partners like Asia Pacific Cultural Center through the [Community-Driven Outreach \(CDO\) Initiative](#). The CDO Initiative aims to improve equitable access to COVID-19 information, vaccines and prevention resources among communities disproportionately affected and to help these communities build their capacity for future emergencies.