



SEPTEMBER 2020 | AHSC COVID-19 RESPONSE REPORT

Six Months of Pandemic Response

In February 2020, when COVID-19 concerns in the U.S. began to increase, AHSC moved quickly to reach and support Asian community members without relying on our facility as a meeting place.

The organization purchased “internet phones” that allow multiple staff to make calls from the same designated number for each language group. With these phones and other mobile connection devices in place, AHSC was able to train staff to provide support while working from home.

Because of the fast shift in technology and training, Asian Health & Services was able to quickly transition to a new kind of service delivery to respond to emerging needs. While many of our regular programs were disrupted by the building closure, AHSC redeployed staff in temporary task groups called COVID-19 Asian Response Teams (CARTs).



The work of the COVID-19 Asian Response Teams is designed to deliver by phone and video contact all the components of AHSC’s integrated, holistic service model – social engagement, public health information, and support for health needs. This report accounts for impact achieved and lessons learned during six months of diligent outreach to the Asian community during the pandemic.

— Holden Leung
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



“In six months of pandemic conditions, we have invented new services to reach isolated Asian people, built new connections with thousands of households, and provided a lifeline for many who have been scared and alone.”

CART TEAMS

Composition of AHSC’s COVID-19 Asian Response Teams

- 4 Community Health Workers
- 1 Behavioral Health Counselor

A total of four teams each specialize in a different Asian language

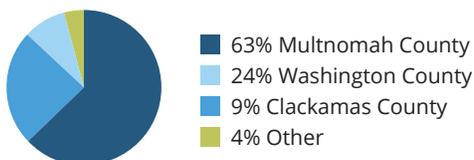
- Mandarin
- Cantonese
- Vietnamese
- Korean

Impact over six months of AHSC's COVID-19 response

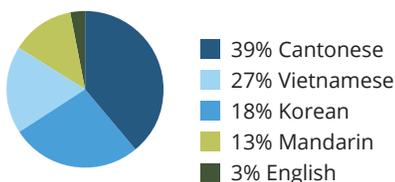
- 18,000 | personal contacts provided, using phone or video
- 5,000 | unique individuals received support
- 1,896 | meals or grocery boxes were delivered based on identified needs
- 75 | people were able to be referred for services – 44 for mental health and 31 for cancer support

COMMUNITY SERVED

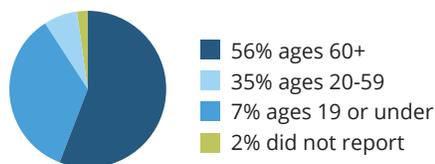
Geographic Diversity



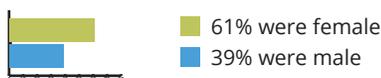
Language Diversity



Age Range



Gender



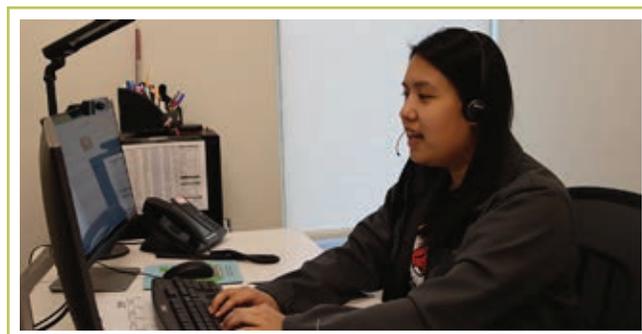
Asian community's needs identified during the pandemic

The list below shows frequently identified needs during personal calls to Asian households during the past six months. While many people have experienced these challenges during the pandemic, Asians have experienced significant barriers due to the need for culturally specific support in a familiar language.

- Anxiety/stress while caring for a sick loved one
- Loss of appetite and insomnia
- Missing social connections with friends and families
- Worried about family in other countries.
- Has a medical or dental concern but cannot seek treatment because it's "not urgent"
- Feeling isolated and depressed
- Has chronic health issues and feels "trapped" at home
- Laid off and experiencing financial difficulties
- Cannot access needed food/supplies
- Experiencing marital stress

Key lessons learned over six months

- Many older Asian adults will continue to experience isolation and need support for many more months – until there is little or no risk of COVID-19 infection.
- Backlash against Asian populations has increased anxiety for many Asian households and this has made it harder to access needed supports.
- It is important to build trust over time. Many people who reported they were doing fine on the first call were more willing to share concerns after the caller had built a personal connection through follow-up calls





Packing food boxes to be delivered during the pandemic.

Priorities for the next six months

- Anticipate increased needs and higher level of isolation during the winter season, including impact of flu and colder weather.
- Integrate phone and video outreach into existing AHSC services, including cancer patient support and mental health counseling.
- Maintain a dedicated workforce of multi-lingual Community Health Workers for phone and video outreach to older Asian adults.

Funding for Covid-19 Asian Response Teams

Asian Health & Service Center is deeply grateful to all who have helped financially support our relief efforts during the pandemic.

Special thanks to:

Oregon Community Foundation
COVID-19 Recovery Fund

Murdock Charitable Trust

CareOregon

FamilyCare Health

AARP

The Collins Foundation

MRG Foundation

Providence

Multnomah County and
Washington County

In the months ahead, AHSC will continue to seek funding to respond effectively to longer-term impact of the pandemic on isolated and vulnerable Asians, with a focus on older adults and those with underlying health challenges.

Contact

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COMMENTS

“Thank you very much for your wonderful services to provide our Vietnamese seniors the full grocery bags of special fresh nutrition food... With full bags of different kinds of food, we can make the healthy meals at home. Your help is always appreciated.”

The food boxes “are very fresh and very practical for Asian cooking. We are very touched that in the current difficult circumstances, AHSC still worries about the lives of the elderly people...”