The COVID-19 pandemic has ushered in a new moment for public health. Scaling up our response to address the pandemic has exposed the gaps in our public health infrastructure and emergency response. At the same time, the disproportionate impact on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities has come into stark relief. While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has led the charge nationally, local health jurisdictions (LHJs), healthcare institutions, philanthropy, and organized community groups have been leading and taking rapid action to manage the response on the ground. The Public Health Alliance of Southern California (Public Health Alliance) developed several rapid response resources and tools to support LHJs and other groups on the frontlines. These tools and resources support strengthening our public health infrastructure, addressing equity and advancing critical data, including an update to our mapping tool the Healthy Places Index with COVID-19 indicators.

**COVID-19 HPI RESOURCE MAP**

A complement to our California Healthy Places Index (HPI) map, the COVID-19 HPI Resource Map provides actionable data for an equitable response - including planning, prevention, and resource allocation - and a just recovery. It includes the first public, centralized repository of COVID-19 outcomes by race/ethnicity in California. The tool enables exploration of the multiple factors that can influence COVID-19 outcomes. It includes measures of COVID-19 cases, deaths, hospitalizations, and ICU usage; neighborhood demographics; population vulnerability; chronic medical conditions; and community conditions. This resource is updated daily.

**EQUITY SNAPSHOTs**

In an effort to elevate critical equity concerns emerging as a result of COVID-19, the Public Health Alliance launched a new resource series called “The COVID-19 Equity Snapshot.” Developed as rapidly evolving resources, the snapshots are designed to assist our partners in advancing equity and elevating the power of public health in response to the COVID-19 crisis in real-time.

**VACCINE EQUITY VIDEO SERIES**

The Vaccine Equity Video Series is a multi-media resource for local health jurisdictions (LHJs) and other local leaders that elevates promising and replicable practices for equitable vaccine distribution. The series showcases community-informed and equity-centered practices that specifically aim to reach disproportionately impacted low-income communities and communities of color. The series delivers information in a quick and informative way by
utilizing video and written materials to highlight important vaccine equity strategies. These are meant to demonstrate and inspire our partners and LHJls to replicate these efforts in their own communities. The video series features LHJ and community-based partnerships to reach older Black adults in Long Beach, farmworkers throughout the Eastern Coachella Valley, and Black and Latinx residents in the City of Chicago (through the City’s Protect Chicago Plus Plan), among many more. This series has also been promoted by the American Medical Association and presented at the American Public Health Association’s Annual Conference.

GUIDE FOR LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS TO ADDRESS RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION DURING COVID-19

In response to a rise in reports of racism and discrimination against API communities as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Public Health Alliance of Southern California convened the Equity Subcommittee on Addressing Discrimination and Racism to help support local health departments in advancing a welcoming and inclusive framework within their own jurisdictions and across Southern California. As hate and misinformation about COVID-19 continue to grow, health departments and community members are reporting an increase in experiences of physical, verbal, social, and economic discrimination against Asian Pacific Islander (API) communities. Chinese American and other API communities have already begun to witness attacks on individuals linked to stories about the virus. Local health departments have a critical role to play in actively rejecting and preventing discrimination and racism and working to promote the health and safety of all people living in our communities.

The Alliance Subcommittee, with input from Berkeley Media Studies Group, developed a set of rapid response guidelines to be considered for implementation by your department. Below are initial guidelines and practices departments can adopt internally:

1) Internal/Departmental Communication Materials:
   1. Photos/Images: Consider the types of photos being used to communicate stories, messaging and advice about the coronavirus. Avoid using photos of individuals that could further reinforce discrimination or bias against individuals impacted by racism and xenophobia (in this case, API communities).
   2. Written Materials: Ensure all internal and external messaging regarding the coronavirus reiterates your department’s commitment to creating a welcoming and inclusive place for all staff and community members to work together and obtain health support and information. Consider sending proactive communications to Department staff and community members with factual, scientifically based information, and actions they can take to protect themselves and others to prevent api discrimination and racism.

RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

The Public Health Alliance and many of our member local health jurisdictions have issued statements and declarations that racism is a public health crisis. Our organizational statement is available here.

DENOUNCING VIOLENCE AGAINST THE AAPI COMMUNITY

Dear Friends of the Alliance,

The Public Health Alliance of Southern California (Alliance) is outraged and saddened by the tragic murders of 8 members of the Atlanta community late Tuesday evening, the majority of whom were Asian American. These tragic murders are the most recent in a year of increased, hate-fueled violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (APIs) both here in California and across the nation. We strongly denounce racism, violence and hate crimes against our API community members here in Southern California and across the nation.

Hate crimes against Asian Americans reported in major US cities spiked by 150% over the past year. According to Stop AAPI Hate, a coalition that works to track and respond to hate, violence and discrimination against APIs in the United States, from March 19, 2020, until February 28 of this year, they received reports of 3,795 “hate incidents” against the Asian American community. This is likely an undercount due to individuals not wanting to or feeling fearful of reporting incidents. In response to early reports of verbal and physical assaults against members of our API communities, the Alliance responded with a rapid response resource for local health departments to address anti-API discrimination and racism in the pandemic response.

In addition to our guide, the Public Health Alliance also put out a statement and recommendations for LHJls to address and denounce violence against the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Community.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITES:

Questions? Please contact info@thepublichealthalliance.org