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Organizational News

Data Disaggregation- A Step to Reducing Health Disparities in AA and NHPI Communities

APPEAL has been a strong advocate of greater data disaggregation among the Asian American (AA) and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (NHPI) communities. Through testimonials to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), published research papers, and extensive collaborations with partners, APPEAL has constantly urged for more data disaggregation.

For far too long, AA and NHPI communities, which comprise of 43 different ethnicities, have been treated as a single group in health surveys. This aggregation of data has masked health differences and perpetuated the “model minority” myth. For example, the aggregation of AA and NHPI smoking rates has suggested that these communities have the lowest smoking prevalence among major racial/ethnic groups. In actual fact, however, the smoking rate of Vietnamese and Filipino men is higher than the national average.

“Disaggregating data for specific ethnic AA and NHPI groups is crucial for providing a more accurate portrayal of the health needs of our diverse communities,” said Rod Lew, executive director of APPEAL.

Recently, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has initiated steps to improve data collection and reporting on AA and NHPI communities. Earlier this month, the HHS released its final data collection and reporting standards on race, ethnicity, primary language, sex, and disability status. Under the new standards, the Asian category in HHS sponsored health surveys will be expanded to seven groups (Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean,

Vietnamese, and Other Asian). The NHPI category will be expanded to five groups (Native Hawaiian, Guamanian, Chamorro, Samoan and other Pacific Islander).

APPEAL hopes that other federal and state agencies will embrace HHS's positive action in tackling tobacco disparities. "We applaud the data disaggregation efforts of HHS," said Rod Lew, executive director of APPEAL. "We would like to see these same strong data disaggregation standards applied to data collection in the joint FDA-NIH tobacco study," he added. APPEAL, along with the other National Tobacco Control Networks Consortium partners, has petitioned National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the FDA to collect disaggregated data in their recently announced tobacco control study. While NIH and FDA have not yet responded to this petition, APPEAL hopes that its recommendation will be given serious consideration.

PROMISE Network- Tobacco Control

APPEAL Honors Minnesota Partners in a Reception

To celebrate eight years of successful partnerships in Minnesota and honor LAAMPP Fellows and community members, APPEAL hosted a reception in Saint Paul, Minneapolis, on September 26, 2011. More than 45 individuals attended the event.

APPEAL and its community partners through their cross-cultural programs have made great strides in advancing the health of African, African-American, American Indian, Asian and Pacific Islander, Chicano/Latino, and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) communities throughout the state. The reception highlighted the successes of two of APPEAL's cross cultural programs: the Leadership and Advocacy Institute to Advance Minnesota's Parity Priority Populations (LAAMPP) and The Technical Assistance for Priority Populations to Implement a Norm change on Tobacco (TAPP- INTO).

Ani Koch, a LAAMPP Fellow who attended the event, said they were grateful that they had the opportunity to apply the skills they learned from LAAMPP in their current position as Director of Programs for the Rainbow Health Initiative. "LAAMPP has been instrumental in helping me strengthen my leadership capacity, which has allowed me to be an effective tobacco control advocate and policy change agent in the community," Ani said.

Minnesota Commissioner of Health, Dr. Ed Ehlinger, presented the welcome address. He spoke of his commitment to addressing health disparities at the state level. Other speakers included David Willoughby, Chief Executive Officer, ClearWay Minnesota; Dr. Marc Manley, Vice President and Chief Prevention Officer, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota; VJ Smith, LAAMPP II Fellow, and APPEAL Board Chair, Betty Lee Hawks.

The strong partnership that APPEAL has established in Minnesota has enabled us to facilitate leadership growth and strengthen the capacity of the community to respond to issues of tobacco disparities. APPEAL would once again like to thank its partners for their continued support in highlighting health issues of priority populations and in working towards achieving health parity in Minnesota.

In keeping with APPEAL's mission of tobacco control, the reception was held at Mai Village Vietnamese Restaurant, the first restaurant in Minnesota to ban smoking in its premises.

Asian Community Organizations Collaborate to Institute Policy Change

APPEAL, in its role as a technical assistance provider to Statewide Tobacco Education & Engagement Project (STEEP), in Minnesota, has helped facilitate organizational policy change. In September, five partners of STEEP held a signing ceremony to announce the adoption of joint policies on tobacco, healthy eating and active living.

First, the organizations agreed to limit tobacco use on all agency properties. Second, the organizations endorsed a policy that ensures access to healthier food options at all events led or sponsored by the partners. The tobacco policy was developed specifically to strengthen provisions of the Minnesota Freedom to Breathe Act.

The five STEEP partners that adopted the common policies are: Association for the Advancement of Hmong Women in Minnesota, Lao Advancement Organization of America, Lao Family Community of Minnesota, United Cambodia Association of Minnesota, and Vietnamese Social Services.

Healthy Eating & Active Living

Palau Launches “Share the Road” to Promote Pedestrian Safety

The National Asian American and Pacific Islander Network to Eliminate Health Disparities (NAPNEHD) is a program offered by APPEAL to promote healthy eating and active living. As one of NAPNEHD’s key partners, the Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Palau (CTFP) has created a new social marketing campaign that promotes pedestrian and bicycle safety.

In working with APPEAL, CTFP has recognized the importance of creating pedestrian and bicycle friendly roadways for promoting healthier lifestyles. To create such an environment, the “Share the Road” initiative was launched in downtown Koror, the largest town in the Republic of Palau, Pacific Islands. On Palau’s 17th Independence Day Celebration, the Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Palau (CTFP) and its partners (Belau Triathlon Federation, Palau National Olympic Committee and the Women-in-Sports Commission) unveiled the first of 20 “Share the Road” signs at the busiest intersection in downtown Koror.

A social marketing campaign “Get Palau Moving” is being implemented to create awareness of the “Share the Road” program. The progress of the campaign will be monitored over time through surveys.

For information on joining any of the APPEAL Networks, click [here](#).

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