



Overcoming Barriers to Influenza Vaccination: A Collaborative Approach

The Minnesota Immunization Networking Initiative (MINI)

Background

An annual vaccination is the best method of preventing influenza. However, significant racial/ethnic and income disparities exist in flu vaccination coverage in the United States. People of color and people living in poverty are less likely to receive a flu vaccine and experience increased risk for serious flu complications.¹

Community-Identified Barriers to Influenza Vaccination

- Racism and Discrimination
- Cost
- Lack of Access/Health Insurance
- Transportation
- Distrust of Health Systems
- Language Barriers

The Minnesota Immunization Networking Initiative (MINI) is a community collaborative dedicated to reducing barriers to influenza vaccination among underserved populations by utilizing the resources and trust of faith-based and grass-roots community organizations. Since 2006, The MINI program has been providing free flu shots to persons six months and older in trusted, nontraditional settings such as faith communities, schools and shelters.



Organization of Liberians in Minnesota, 2018

Our Partners

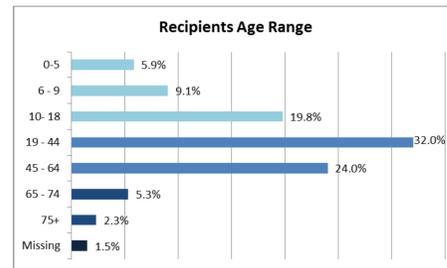
MINI is a multi-sector, community collaboration. MINI's diverse leadership team and community partners represent the communities served including African American, African, Asian, Hispanic/Latino and Native American populations. Trusted community leaders coordinate and promote the clinics.

Our partners include:

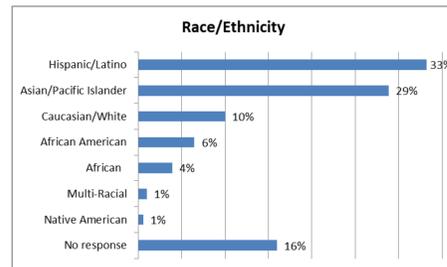
- Homeland Health Specialists
- St. Mary's Health Clinics
- Stairstep Foundation
- Portico Healthnet
- Karen Organization of Minnesota
- American Indian Community Development Corporation
- Saint Catherine University Department of Nursing
- Hadi Medical Clinic
- Liberian Nurses Association of Minnesota
- Hmong Healthcare Professionals Coalition
- Islamic Center of Minnesota
- Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota
- YWCA Transitional Housing Program
- Minnesota Department of Health
- [Many more faith based and community organizations.](#)

Our Results: 2018/2019 Influenza Season

2018/2019 Influenza Season Total Counts (September – March)	
Total Vaccinations Given	Total # of Clinics/Sites
6,288	116



Percent of recipients in each age range, 2018. Shots are provided for ages 6 months and up. We often serve families and multiple generations in one clinic.



Note: Participants could choose more than one Race/Ethnicity. "Count" and "Percent" reflect the total number of responses, rather than the total number of survey participants (n=6288)

First Flu Shot?		
Response	Count	Percent
No	5837	93%
Yes	387	6%
Missing	64	1%
Total	6288	100%

Percentage of people reporting if this is the first flu shot they have ever received.

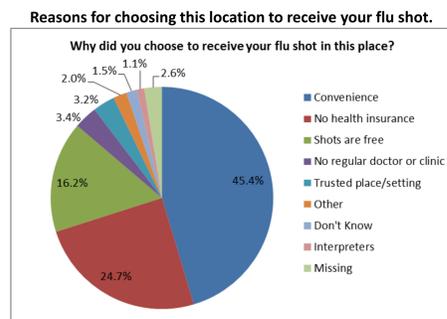


Photo Credit: Dennis Chick, 2018



Providing "Cold or Flu" education to Vietnamese American Elders.

Our Reach

This flu season, MINI provided **6,288 people a free influenza vaccine at 116 community-based clinics.**



Day of Dignity Event, Masjid An Nur, 2018

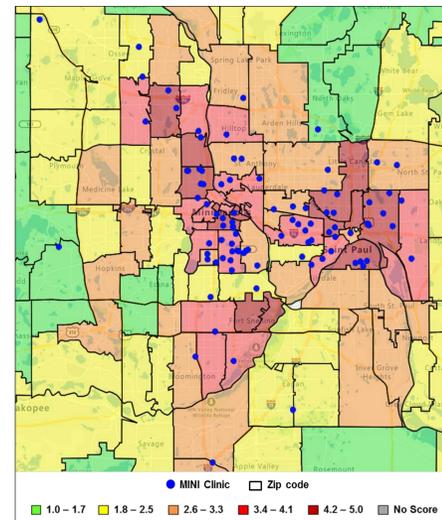


St. Anne and Joseph Hien Church, 2017

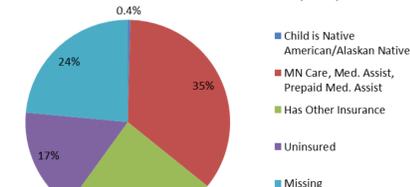
Community Need Index

A Community Need Index (CNI) Score is a tool developed by Dignity Health and Truven Health Analytics to identify the severity of health disparities by zip code. CNI Scores are based upon five prominent socio-economic barriers to healthcare access and range by zip code from 1 (low health disparity) to 5 (high health disparity). We use CNI scores to ensure MINI clinics are reaching communities in which greater health disparities may be expected and where implementation strategies could be targeted.

MINI Clinic Location and 2017 CNI Score, 2018/2019 Season

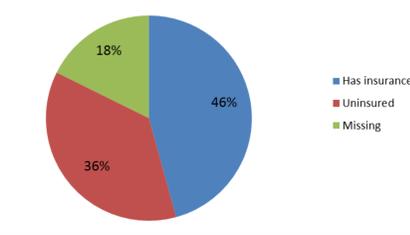


Insurance status of Children (0-18)



Insurance status of children vaccinated. The categories of Native American/Alaska native, MN Care, Med. Assist, Prepaid Med. Assist and Uninsured are eligible to receive VFC vaccine.

Insurance Status of Adults (>18)



Insurance status of adults vaccinated. Uninsured adults are eligible for UUAV vaccine.

Methods

Our Foundational Strategies Include:

- Build relationships and develop partnerships with key community partner/organizations which can organize, coordinate and promote the MINI clinics.
- Hold clinics in trusted, community-based settings.
- Make use of "Found Time." Offer vaccinations at times when large numbers of persons are already present, for example, after a worship service or at a health fair.
- Engage licensed vaccinators to work under a physician's standing orders.
- Provide free flu shots for person age six months and older.
- Ensure that interpreters and translated materials are available for clients.
- Develop influenza education materials in response to identified community needs.
- Collect answers to health habit questions at each clinic and record data for evaluation purposes.
- Enter all vaccination records into the state registry (MIIC- Minnesota Immunization Information Connection).

We have expanded on this model to offer other health promotion activities including free dental fluoride varnish and oral health education at several MINI partner sites.

Funding

- This activity is made possible by a grant from the Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative (EHD) of the Minnesota Department of Health's Center for Health Equity.
- The Fairview Foundation.
- Minnesota Vaccines for Children (VFC) and Uninsured Underinsured Adult Vaccine (UUAV) Programs.
- Delta Dental of Minnesota (Fluoride Varnish Program).



Photo Credit: Dennis Chick, 2018

Conclusion

The MINI collaborative demonstrates the feasibility of engaging with community partners and faith based organizations to reach uninsured and underserved populations with annual influenza vaccinations.

Working together, the MINI collaborative has provided over 86,000 free influenza vaccinations since 2006!

1. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and The National Influenza Vaccine Disparities Partnership (NIVDP). The National Influenza Vaccine Disparities Partnership Resource Kit. CDC website. www.cdc.gov/flu/pdf/nivdp-resource-kit-2014.pdf. Published May 27, 2015.