The Health Promoter Program: A Community Model Addressing the Unmet Needs of the Asian American Community in Montgomery County, Maryland
The Need for AAHI and Health Promoters

- Rapid growth of Asian Americans in Montgomery County
- Widening of health disparities
Asian Americans account for 5.5% of MD population

> 40% of MD Asian & Pacific Islanders live in Montgomery County

(US Census 2010)
Asian American Community
Montgomery County, Maryland

13.9% of County residents identify as Asian American (US Census 2010)

- Asian Indian 24.3%
- Chinese 26.0% (except Taiwanese)
- Korean 12.9%
- Filipino 9.0%
- Vietnamese 8.9%
- Pakistani 2.9%
- Other Asian 16.0%
**Asian American Community**  
**Montgomery County, Maryland**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Other Asian Subgroups</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percentage</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>2.50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taiwanese</td>
<td>2.10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thai</td>
<td>1.50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sri Lankan</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>1.30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cambodian</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nepalese</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burmese</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laotian</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malaysian</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Other Asian</strong>*</td>
<td><strong>3.3%</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Other Asian includes those Asian Americans who have not specified a subgroup and those who have specified more than one subgroup. 2010 U.S. Census Bureau*
Barriers to Accessing Healthcare

- Limited English proficiency
- Difficulties in understanding and navigating health care system
- Insurance status

Linguistic Isolation by Language Spoken in Montgomery County

- Spanish: 30.60%
- Indo-European: 14.60%
- Asian & Pacific Island: 26.50%
- Other: 11.00%

2009 American Community Survey
Asian Americans and Health Disparities

- **Cancer** is the leading cause of death for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

- 1 in 10 Asian Americans has chronic **Hepatitis B**, compared to 1 in 1000 Caucasian Americans.

- Asian Americans have a higher risk of developing **Osteoporosis**.

- **Diabetes** – 5th leading cause of death for Asian Americans.
Asian American Health Initiative (AAHI)

- Established FY 2005 with support from County Executive, County Council members
- Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services
- **Mission:** To identify the health care needs of Asian American communities, to develop culturally competent health care services, and to implement health education programs that are accessible and available for all Asian Americans in Montgomery County.
AAHI Strategic Targets

• Enhance Access to Culturally & Linguistically Competent Care
• Promote Community Mobilization & Empowerment
• Strengthen Partnerships & Collaborations
• Enhance Data Collection & Reporting
Affordable Care Act

• Under the Affordable Care Act, community members may be eligible for some important preventive services — which can help avoid illness and improve your health — at no additional cost to community members.
Health Promoters Program
Background

• Minority Communities Empowerment Project – Supported by DHMH’s Minority Outreach and Technical Assistance (MOTA) Grant

• Partners
  – African American Health Program
  – Asian American Health Initiative
  – Community Ministries of Rockville
  – Holy Cross Hospital
  – Maryland Commission on Indian Affairs
What is a Health Promoter?

• Commonly referred to as “community health workers”

• Lay person who is trained and expected to perform health promotion, education, and service delivery within a limited scope.

• Assist in reducing cultural and language barriers

• Actively reach out to the community for health promotion and education
Health Promoters in FY 11

- 31 health promoters
- 14 health promoters with 3+ years of experience
- 16 ethnic community represented
- Speaking 16 languages/dialects
  - Mandarin, Cantonese, Bangla, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Korean, Japanese, Sinhalese, Tagalog, Khmer, Thai, Burmese, Gujarati, etc
- Trainings on different topics
  - Cancer, Hep B, Tobacco, Advocacy, Leadership trainings, HIPPA, Social Media Training, Social Determinants & Health Disparities, health education, outreach tactics, etc...
Why are they important?

- Health Promoters are community members themselves.
- Provide AAHI access to their own communities.
- Understand the needs and health concerns of their own communities.
- Speak with community members one-on-one at events and provide education.
- Advise AAHI staff about culturally sensitive issues that need to be addressed in certain settings.
- Help bridge the gap between patient and staff by providing interpretation services if needed, thus helping to eliminate language barriers.
Health Promoters in Action

Health Promoter providing cancer education at New Covenant Fellowship Church

Health Promoter providing osteoporosis education at New Covenant Fellowship Church
Health Promoters and staff with County Executive, Isiah Leggett at a community resource fair.

Health Promoters at the Cambodian New Years providing outreach about AAHI.
Health Promoters at a Hospital’s Cancer Screening Day

Health Promoter actively outreaching to the community at the Burmese Water Festival.
Health Promoters conducting bone density screening at the Muslim Community Center in Silver Spring

Health Promoter conducting bone density screening at the Cambodian Temple in Silver Spring
Accomplishments in FY11

- 77 outreach events
- 14 ethnic communities reached
- 4801 educational encounters
- 7870 literature distributed
- 342 health service referrals
- 1688 health screenings performed
Replicate Health Promoters model?


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