NCDHHS

NCDHHS Launches Campaign to Reach Historically Marginalized Populations about COVID-19

Raleigh, N.C.

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The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is using radio and video messages to reach historically marginalized populations to share important messages about reducing risks for COVID-19. The messages are part of the Department's focus during the COVID-19 response to address the underlying causes of long-standing health disparities impacting communities of color across North Carolina.

NCDHHS is partnering with key influencers who represent the communities hardest hit by COVID-19 to deliver messages about precautions, testing and contact tracing that resonate with historically marginalized populations. The Department has been working with Radio One, whose market includes urban areas and communities of color, to air a series of preventive messages from prominent leaders, including former Congresswoman Eva Clayton, faith leader Reverend Prince R. Rivers (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NYLmzZDIzLU&feature=youtu.be) and physician Dr. Roxie Wells.

African Americans and LatinX/Hispanic communities make up a disproportionate number of North Carolina's COVID-19 laboratory confirmed cases and deaths. African Americans make up an estimated 22 percent of North Carolina's population and 31 percent (as of May 26, 2020) of laboratory confirmed COVID-19 cases and 35 percent of deaths. LatinX/Hispanic populations make 9.6 percent of North Carolina's population and 35 percent of confirmed COVID-19 cases. Disparities in health occur when the impact of a health risk is impacting a larger percentage of the population than the population's representation within the general population.

"These disparate outcomes need to be called out – and addressed. In addition to the actions we are taking to reverse these trends, we need to be sure that our communities of color are getting the information they need to protect themselves and their loved ones. I am so appreciative to partner with these prominent and trusted leaders," says Dr. Michelle Laws, Assistant Director for the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services and co-lead of the NCDHHS COVID-19 response team focused on historically marginalized populations.

In addition to the radio ads, NCDHHS is releasing video messages. The videos cover a range of topics, including mental health self-care to promote resiliency, coping strategies for historically marginalized populations and guidance on the 3 Ws: wear a face covering, wait six feet from others and wash hands often to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. People are encouraged to share the messages widely using social media and share with members of their family and communities.

Videos feature Dr. Viviana Martinez-Bianchi, MD, FAAFP, Associate Professor and Family Medicine Residency Program Director for the Duke Department of Family Medicine and Community Health and member of the NCDHHS COVID-19 Response Historically Marginalized Populations workgroup (in English (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2_ouy11P9Ek&feature=youtu.be) and Spanish (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EcbM8oZdGyo&feature=youtu.be)); North Carolina Poet Laureate Jaki Shelton Green (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECfQ2_SDITc&feature=youtu.be) ; and psychiatrist Dr. Jacquetta Foushee (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_iLZJzIqkHA&feature=youtu.be) .

For more NCDHHS videos related to COVID-19, visit the Department's YouTube channel (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCw5kLIHIJZPjetMjbjLSHQg) , and go to covid19.ncdhhs.gov (https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/) and nc.gov/covid19 (https://www.nc.gov/covid19) for the most up-to-date information on the COVID-19 response in North Carolina.

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