

AAQOL Commission Health Workgroup

Members:

Commissioner Kavita Radhakrishnan (Lead)
Commissioner Vince Cobalis
Commissioner Catherina Conte

Scope of Workgroup: To address health and wellness needs of underserved Asian American communities residing in the city of Austin

Date of Meeting: October 10, 2017

Location of Meeting: Integral Care, South Austin

In Attendance:

Commissioner Kavita Radhakrishnan
Commissioner Vince Cobalis
Commissioner Shubhada Saxena
Commissioner Molly Wang
Commissioner Catherina Conte – call-in
Community Member – Hailey Easley

Topics Discussed:

Molly Wang and Teresa Williams had prepared documents on Integral Care's policy and experiences with their language access plan.

About a year back, the Integral Care board decided to have a policy on language access in place and a language access workgroup was formed. The Language access plan has been modelled after the HHS language plan and consists of 10 elements. Each element consists of an action and a responsible unit. Additional responsibilities include developing and delivering training on cultural competency training to understand the legacy of health disparities as well as sensitize staff to the needs of clients with low-English proficiency. Commissioner Wang also notified that Integral Care is always looking for community consultants to inform about cultural competency to IC staff education sessions.

Currently, the language access workgroup at Integral Care is primarily focusing on the following challenges:

- 1) During Phase 1, the language access workgroup is focused on identifying priority documents to translate as well as other strategies to convey information succinctly and clearly in different languages. The members brainstormed on strategies to identify priority documents, offered examples such as a 1-page document on mental health first aid. Ms.Easley from AARC non-profit and Commissioner Conte also shared some ideas such as cue cards

notifying the importance of the document in the envelope and the appropriate person to call to clarify contents.

- 2) During Phase 2, the language access workgroup would like to identify languages that should be prioritized for translation. Attendees brainstormed on strategies to hire interpreters possibly through Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association (AATIA). Also, shared examples of organizations such as Asian Family Support Services of Austin (AFSSA) who hire their own translators and interpreters. Possibility explored for AARC non-profit's part-time navigators who speak Korean, Vietnamese and Burmese languages to work as part-time or contract employees at Integral Care. Also possibly asking interpreters of certain languages to come a certain day and scheduling clients the same day.

Currently, they have the most in-person translation for Arabic, Spanish language and ASL. Top 3 languages for language line usage was Spanish, Vietnamese And Arabic.

The attendees also discussed the challenge of educating the Asian American community on mental health issues in Austin:

- 1) AARC non-profit will be scheduling a training session for mental health assessment training for its' community health navigators in collaboration with Integral Care.
- 2) Ms.Easley from AARC spoke about the need for mental health education component for the CHNs. Partnering with AFSSA, AARC and Integral Care will be needed to develop these education and delivery components
- 3) The members of the AAQoL Outreach workgroup (Commissioners Saxena and Conte) talked about a strategy to target Asian American community events and health fairs held in Austin. We will need to maintain a database of all such organizations, community leaders and point person to contact, as well as possibly schedule regular meetings with such leaders. The new Population Health initiative from Del Medical School was cited as a possible resource for outreach, host calendars for events etc.