



Community Voice And Equitable Policymaking: Lessons Learned From COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

April 26, 2022

Agenda

- 1:00pm ET **Welcome & Housekeeping**
- 1:05pm ET **Building a New Normal Through Vaccine Equity Overview**
- 1:15pm ET **Community Research & Pivotal Findings**
- 1:40pm ET **Translating Research into Advocacy**
- 1:50pm ET **Q&A with Panelists**

Families USA

Working Everyday to Achieve the Best Health and Health Care for All

Families USA, a leading national voice for health care consumers, is dedicated to the achievement of high-quality, affordable health care and improved health for all. We advance our mission through public policy analysis, advocacy, and collaboration with partners to promote a patient-and community centered health system.

Working at the national, state, and community level for over 40 years.



HEALTH EQUITY



HEALTH CARE VALUE



COVERAGE



CONSUMER EXPERIENCE



Building A New Normal Through Vaccine Equity

Building a New Normal through Vaccine Equity

COVID-19's devastating impact on communities of color underscores the importance of creating change that **strengthens the health and economic well-being** of vulnerable populations.

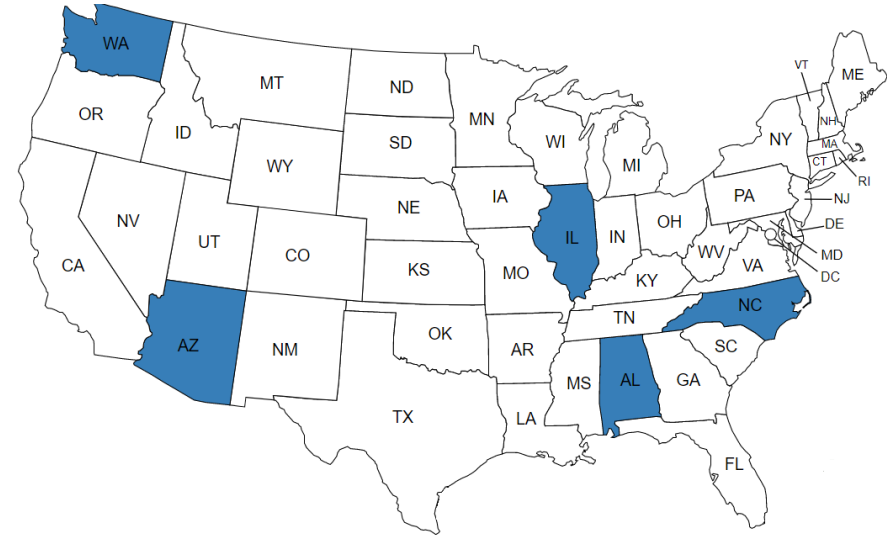
- The **Building a New Normal through Vaccine Equity Initiative** aimed to achieve two overarching goals:
 - The Sprint: Foster equitable COVID-19 vaccine distribution efforts, with a focus on communities of color
 - The Marathon: Build a foundation and inform policy to address long-standing and structural inequities that plague our health system
- Strategy: Promote advocacy for equity-driven policy change
 - Work to identify promising policy practices **AND** aid an advocacy base to realize them
 - Elevate community voices, specifically from communities of color, to drive policy agenda and advocacy strategy
- Partnership with Manatt Health and Health Equity Solutions, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation

Elevating Local Voices to State Policy Makers

Purpose: Connect with community leaders, organizers, and local influencers to change policy and increase vaccine equity

Focus groups concentrating in our five key states:

- Alabama
- Arizona
- Illinois
- North Carolina
- Washington



Goals:

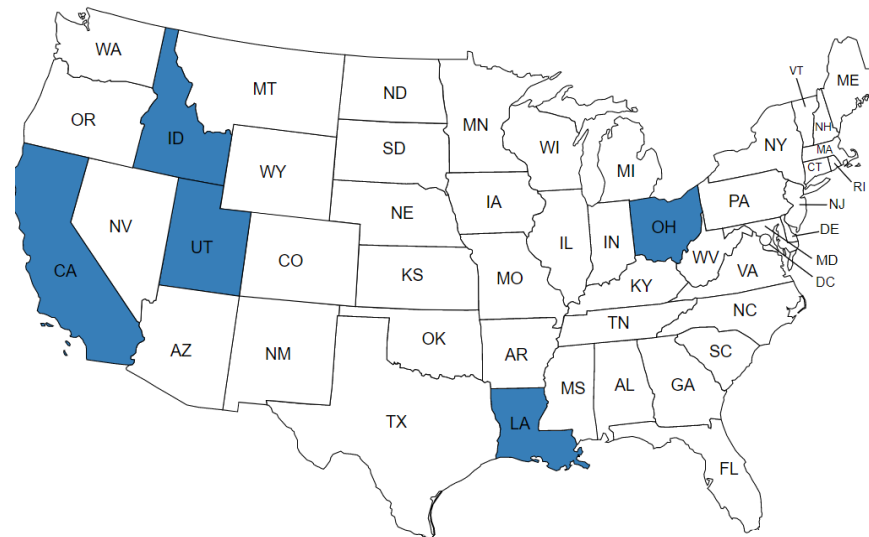
1. Identify and contextualize how policymakers can support community-engaged efforts to increase equitable vaccine distribution;
2. Identify and contextualize how policymakers can sustain infrastructures built to address long-standing health equity concerns;
3. Confirm what supports community leaders require to establish and promote advocacy efforts.

Medicaid Survey & Interviews

Purpose: Connect with beneficiaries to understand their healthcare and COVID-19 experiences

Concentrating in five states initially tracking Medicaid vaccination rates:

- California
- Idaho
- Louisiana
- Ohio
- Utah



Goals:

1. Understand the unique challenges, barriers, and needs (if any) of the Medicaid population in terms of vaccine access
2. Understand the unique challenges, barriers, and needs of the Medicaid population in terms of long-term systems change/SDOH

Elevating Local Voices: **Community Research and Pivotal Findings**

Symphonic Strategies

See the impossible. Play from the soul.

Founded in 2004, Symphonic Strategies is a professional services firm that advises **senior leaders in the public and private sectors**. Our mission is **to bring out your best**—regardless of the circumstances.

Expertise:

- Developing Leaders
- Designing Strategy
- Mobilizing Groups
- Shaping Culture
- Understanding Systems

Tools/Methodology (for organizations):

- Ecosystem Maps
- Road Maps
- Future Search
- Design Labs
- Research
- Retained Services (Management and OD Consulting)



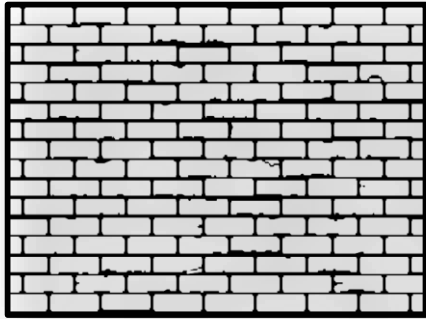
A symphonic strategy™ takes the individual, autonomous parts and positions them so they complement each other.



symphonicstrategies.com



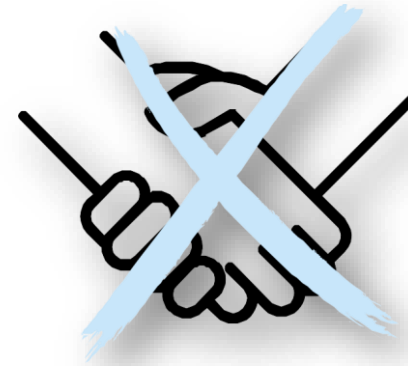
Themes of Community Findings



*Systematic
Barriers*



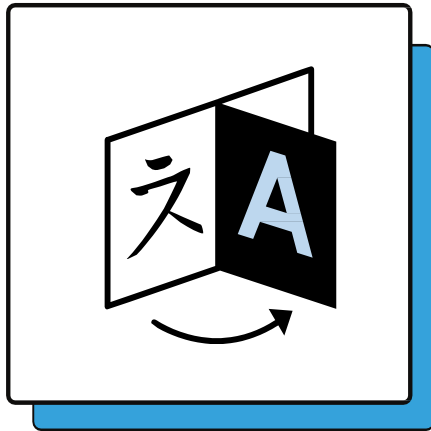
Outreach



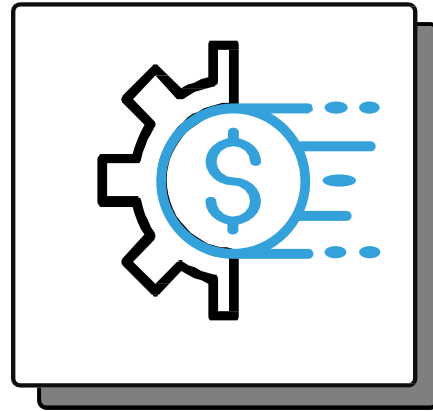
Mistrust

Systematic Barriers

Participants across the states noted systematic barriers that pervade healthcare and wider societal systems that policymakers must work with community leaders to prioritize and solve.



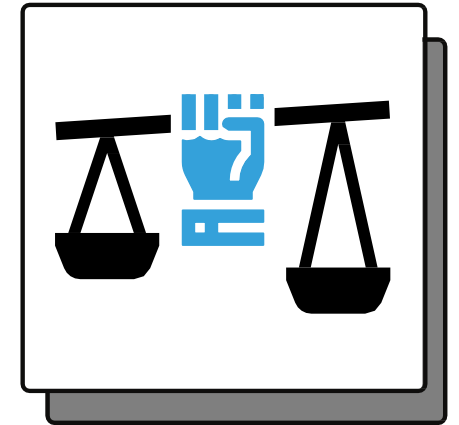
*Language
Access*



*Logistics
& Finances*



*Citizenship
Status*



*Inequitable Service
Deployment*

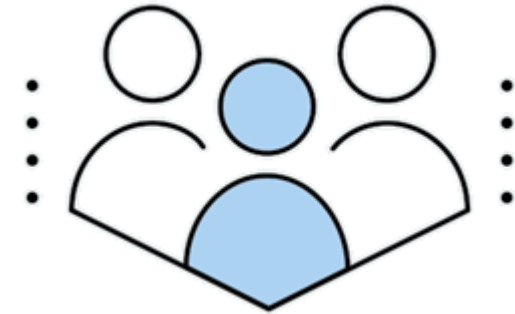
Community Recommendations: Systematic Barriers



Consider cultural values



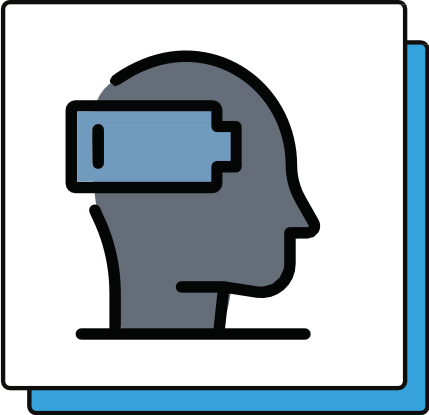
Implement flexible service delivery to avoid inequitable life interruptions.



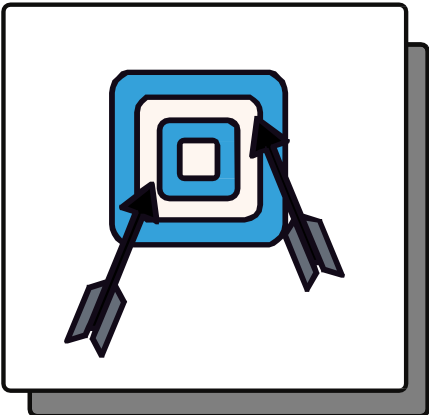
Ensure outreach efforts are truly accessible to communities.

Outreach

Participants consistently reflected on the shortcomings of local and national outreach, testing, and vaccine efforts, as well as the resulting effects on communities and leaders. These findings were most prevalent in low-income and communities of color.



Burnout



Did Not Address Needs

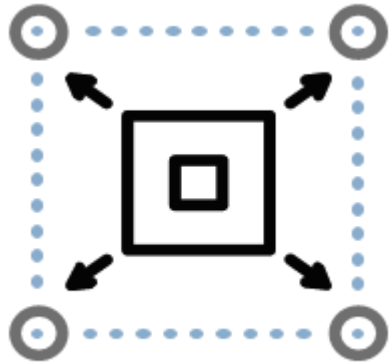


Coverage



Diverging Experiences

Community Recommendations: Outreach



Engage wider range of the community



Center outreach around immediate needs.



Limit burdens passed on to communities



Transparency around results of community engagement.

Mistrust

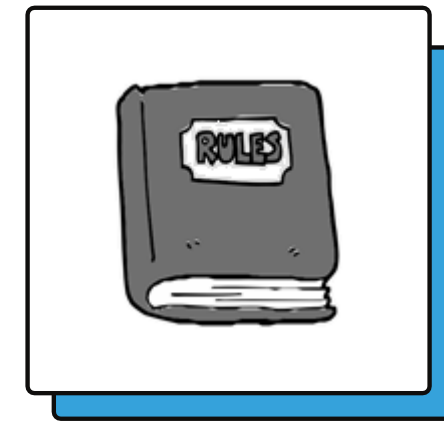
Historical transgressions toward low-income and communities of color have resulted in a deep-seeded mistrust toward policymakers and government officials. This reality has resulted in challenges that have prevented the equitable distribution of critical information and services, not only during the pandemic response, but also in larger societal systems.



*Historical Mistrust
Breeds Hesitation
to Engage*



*Proliferation of
Misinformation*



*Rules Waived by
Convenience*

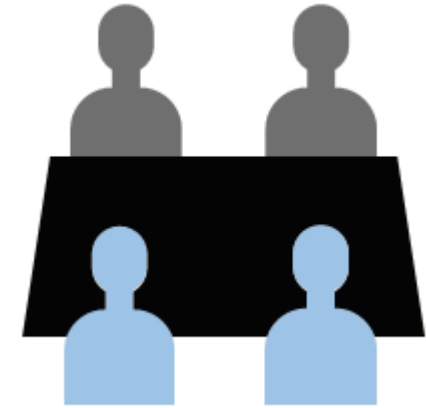
Community Recommendations: Mistrust



Increase representation amongst policy makers



Trusted leaders are invaluable resources for spreading information



Give communities meaningful seats at the table

Translating Research into Advocacy

What We've Heard

- Years of discrimination and systemic disparities have set us up for an inequitable health system and deep-rooted mistrust
- Vaccine distribution efforts have highlighted major ethnical implications with our current implementation methods and the need to develop new processes
- Missteps during the pandemic have both informed and impacted how we need to move forward



Access to health and other necessary services is a historical and contemporary issue

What We're Doing

- **Elevating lessons learned to:**
 - Broader healthcare policies (*e.g., health equity, coverage, value, and consumer experience*)
 - Other social policies outside of healthcare (*e.g., SDOH, racial equity*)
- **Continue collaborating with state and community-based organizations**
 - Ensure communities of color and other underrepresented groups are partners in creating platforms and designing policy change
- **Take action in service of community driven efforts**
 - Advocating for policies that:
 - Address the full scope of individuals' needs
 - Increase coordination of services
 - Effectively support community-based organizations

Stay Connected!

Visit us at:

- Vaccine Equity
<https://familiesusa.org/building-a-new-normal-through-vaccine-equity/>
- Health Justice
<https://familiesusa.org/our-work/health-justice-now-webinar-series/>

Email us at:

- Vaccine Equity Team
 - VaccineEquity@familiesusa.org

Our Work Stories Newsroom Insights Resources About Us Act **DONATE**     



BUILDING A NEW NORMAL THROUGH VACCINE EQUITY

COVID-19's devastating impact on Black, Indigenous, and people of color was born out of existing structural inequities in our health system and underscores the importance and urgency of creating change.

As our nation recovers from the pandemic, Families USA has launched a strategic initiative to advocate for and achieve policy

Questions?

Upcoming Health Justice Now! Webinars

Reproductive Rights Webinar – Abortion Laws: A Public Health Crisis

- *Thursday, May 5th from 1-2:30pm ET*

The U.S. Supreme Court is set to rule on a case ([*Dobbs v Jackson Women's Health Organization*](#)) that could potentially overturn Roe v Wade and eliminate a person's constitutional right to abortion. Reproductive Justice advocates teach us that reproductive oppression affects people's lives in multiple ways, and advocates must band together to champion reproductive health at all levels. For the broader health advocacy community, ahead of a momentous decision by the Supreme Court, now is the time to unite with leaders in Reproductive Justice and reproductive health.

Elevating Community Voices Webinar – Community Voices: How State Policymakers Can Advance Health Equity

- *Thursday, May 12th from 1-2pm ET*

State and community-based advocates have been working for a number of reforms to advance health equity. Health Equity Fellows will describe their recommendations for state reforms to improve access to culturally-centered care, along with their progress and victories. Reforms include coverage programs for immigrants; improvements in language access; expanded use of doulas, midwives and community health workers; and work to combat racial bias in health care.

Thank You!