

Tips for Reaching Vulnerable Populations

VACCINE EQUITY IN SOUTH CAROLINA

As vaccine roll out continues and South Carolina works to ensure vaccine equity across the state, SCHA, the Alliance for a Healthier SC, and the SC Office of Rural Health (SCORH) have compiled several resources to assist community partners in identifying and reaching vulnerable populations.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

There is a plethora of resources in communities across the state to assist in vaccine roll out, from identifying people eligible for the vaccine, reaching out to individuals, coordinating vaccine administration, and helping to overcome vaccine hesitancy.

- AccessHealth SC Networks – By linking to community health care providers, providing care management/health navigation, and partnering with community organizations, these networks could be very helpful in vaccine roll out. Find additional information here [AccessHealth SC](#).
- Federally Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics are tremendous resources that may also already be activated vaccine providers. Activated vaccine providers can be found at the National Guard map resource in the 'Data' section below as well as this DHEC website [COVID-19 Vaccine Locations](#).
- Healthy People Healthy Carolinas – These community-based coalitions engage a variety of partners to improve mortality and morbidity due to chronic disease. During the pandemic, they have also assisted in the provision of food and other necessary items. Find more information about HPHC coalitions here [Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas](#).
- SCHA and SCORH can provide a list of all providers in any county in the state. Please contact Melanie Matney at mmatney@scha.org for a list in your county.
- Blueprint for Health Communities – Blueprint for Health is a program of SCORH that brings together rural community leaders from multiple sectors to collaborate on the best ways to solve community issues related to health. More information is here [Blueprint for Health](#).
- Many vulnerable populations receive care in DHEC-licensed facilities other than the nursing homes that received vaccinations through the federal pharmacy partnership. DHEC maintains county-specific lists of these facilities. Visit [this website](#) and click on the map in order to review a list for your county. Three examples of facilities that would benefit from your assistance are:
 - Adult Day Care: These sites provide therapies in a group setting for between four and fourteen hours each day; they prevent adults from being needlessly institutionalized.
 - Community Residential Care Facility: These sites include assisted living facilities and other settings that offer personal care at a less intensive level than a nursing home would provide.
 - Habilitation: This category includes habilitation or intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities, providing room, board, and active treatment for four or more individuals.

Additional Potential Community Partners:

- Community leaders from under-represented groups
- African American fraternities and sororities
- Barbershops and salons
- Churches
- County libraries
- DHEC Health Departments
- Healthy Outcomes Plans
- Local colleges and universities
- Large employers such as manufacturing companies
- Municipalities
- PASOs (www.scpasos.org)
- Rural Health Clinics
- Schools
- United Way Agencies
- Free Medical Clinics and Community Health Workers

DATA

Data can help pinpoint locations across the state that need additional vaccine resources, and the National Guard has created a superior resource to help identify areas of need across the state, down to the zip code level. Click on this mapping resource [SC Demographics for Covid-19 Vaccination Planning](#) to find a series of helpful overlaying maps. Use the icons in the top left-hand corner to add or remove layers and to access the legend.

REMOVING BARRIERS

Removing barriers to access the vaccine, in many ways, involves taking the vaccine to vulnerable populations as opposed to having them come to you, as well as removing barriers that require making an appointment (online or in general).

- Establish satellite/mobile vaccination sites in rural and underserved communities with higher infection rate/mortality.
- Remove barriers for registering for an appointment by:
 - Providing multiple options for registering, such as phone and in person,
 - Providing extra assistance with registration to individuals who need it, and
 - Allowing day of/onsite registration.
- Work with community-based healthcare providers in addition to hospitals, such as Rural Health Clinics, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), and other physician practices, to improve vaccine availability in communities where there is little or no access points to the vaccine.

EDUCATE, INFORM AND BUILD TRUST TO REDUCE VACCINE HESITANCY

- Utilize a dialogue-based communication strategy to educate, inform, and dispel myths about the vaccine specifically with African American and Latino communities.
- Deliver messages from trusted voices/Influencers from the community, such as religious leaders, minority physicians, elected officials, community leaders, and community health workers.
- Tailor messages that are culturally and linguistically appropriate specifically for African American and Latino communities.
- Utilize all forms of mass media, social media, and other communication tools to share information about the vaccine.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

For more information about any of these tips, please contact Melanie Matney at mmatney@scha.org.