



Fast Facts: ADHS-CDC COVID Health Disparities Initiative — AHEAD AZ

The **Arizona Center for Rural Health** (AzCRH) received a two-year, \$8 million award as part of the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS)-Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Initiative to Address COVID-19 Health Disparities among Populations at High Risk & Underserved, Including Racial & Ethnic Minority Populations and Rural Communities, represented by the acronym AHEAD AZ, **Advancing Health Equity, Addressing Disparities in Arizona**.

AzCRH will leverage its **State Office of Rural Health** program, in partnership with rural public health departments, the state’s rural and Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs), Rural Health Clinics (RHCs), rural Community Health Centers (CHCs), and other rural health providers and stakeholders, including tribal-operated and Indian Health Services (IHS) providers and community health workers/representatives (CHW/Rs), to reduce COVID-19 related disparities.

Through AHEAD AZ, AzCRH will collaborate with subject matter experts in the following UArizona affiliated programs and community partners among others not listed here:

- **Mobile Outreach Vaccine Education for Underserved Populations (MOVE UP) Program**
- **Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program** and its regional partners
- **Arizona Telemedicine Program (ATP)**
- **AZ Medication Assisted Treatment (AzMAT) Mentors Program**
- **AZ Community Engagement Alliance (CEAL) Against COVID-19**
- **Pima County Health Department**
- **AZ Hospital and Healthcare Association (AzHHA)**

Activities in these efforts include:

- Developing education and training resources and toolkits to increase knowledge and awareness among rural public health system partners;
- Facilitating multimodal message design on COVID-19 prevention, vaccination, treatment and follow up;
- Developing and delivering regular, interactive synchronous and asynchronous COVID-19 health information and recommendations;
- Leveraging lessons learned from the pandemic to address the social determinants of health and improve health outcomes through technical assistance, information dissemination, and partnership building; and
- Collaborating with ADHS by serving on their AZ Health Improvement Plan Pandemic Recovery and Resilience initiative and working with local stakeholders and partners to develop community public health capacity through a Champions Program that engages local thought leaders on issues relevant to public health.

Efforts forming the key areas of focus with this initiative are the AHEAD ADHS-CDC subaward and the **Mobile Outreach Vaccine Education for Underserved Populations (MOVE UP)** program, together creating the motto, **MOVE UP and AHEAD in Arizona**.

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Overarching Strategies



1. Expand existing and/or develop new mitigation and prevention resources and services to reduce COVID-19 related disparities among populations at higher risk and underserved.

2. Mobilize partners to advance health equity & address social determinants of health related to COVID-19 health disparities among higher risk and underserved populations.

