COVID-19 Conversations

Umair Shah, MD, MPH
Executive Director,
Harris County Public Health

COVID19Conversations.org
#COVID19Conversations
COVID-19 & HEALTH EQUITY
EXPLORING DISPARITIES & LONG-TERM HEALTH IMPACTS

Umair A. Shah, M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Director & Local Health Authority
Harris County Public Health

Houston, TX
04/29/2020

#InvisibilityCrisis
Twitter: @ushahmd @HCPHTX
HARRIS COUNTY: BIG DIVERSE & COMPLEX

Harris County is the third most populous county with over 4.7 million people spread over 1,778 square miles.
Selected for the magnitude of the issue and our ability to make progress in Harris County.
OUR PREMISE: LLWWP

**LLWWP:** Health is a complex equation based on a number of inputs not limited to the clinic setting. Health takes place:

- Where people *Live*
- Where people *Learn*
- Where people *Work*
- Where people *Worship*
- Where people *Play*
HARRIS CARES:  
a 2020 Vision of Health in Harris County

PUBLICHEALTH.HARRISCOUNTYTX.GOV/RESOURCES/HARRIS-CARES
HARRIS CARES” - 5 KEY FINDINGS

1. Harris County average life expectancy is 78.7, however some census tracts are as low as 65 years and others as high as 89 years (24 year difference).

2. Several population centers live more than 15 minutes away from a Trauma Center, including those with a high Social Vulnerability Index.

3. Approximately 1 in 5 adults lacks health insurance, with some communities having more than 1 in 3 adults lacking health insurance.

4. Local experts in health overwhelmingly agree: access is the #1 challenge facing health in Harris County, and increased funding support for prevention activities is needed.

5. In Harris County, 1 in 3 youth aged 12-17 are overweight or obese. For adults, some communities have over 50% of adults classified as obese.
HCPH NEVER A DULL MOMENT

- Tropical Storm Allison (2001)
- Nation’s first Biowatch hit in Houston (2003)
- Monkey Pox found in exotic pet market (2003)
- Possible Lassa Fever on cargo ship – Africa (2004)
- Crosby Well natural gas explosion (2005)
- Hurricane Katrina Response – Astrodome (2005)
- Hurricane Rita Evacuation (2005)
- Multi-State GI illness investigation – soccer (2005)
- Fake Flu Investigation (2005)
- Salmonella Saint Paul investigation (2008)
- Hurricane Ike Response (2008)
- Hepatitis B in nursing home (2009)
- nH1N1 18 month response (2009 – 2010)
- West Nile virus (WNV) response (2012)
- Cyclospora investigation (2013)
- Rabies in Harris County dog (2015)
- Memorial & Tax Day Floods (2015 & 2016)
- Hurricane Harvey (2017)
- Measles Resurgence (2019)
- Chemical Fire (2019)
- Tropical Storm Imelda (2019)
- COVID-19 (2020- ongoing)
COVID-19 – A GLOBAL THREAT
Public
Health
Challenges
and
Solutions
Do not
Recognize
Borders
January 23, 2020
First COVID-19 in-person meeting

March 05, 2020
First 2 COVID-19 Cases in Harris County

April 28, 2020
Harris County Focus on 3 T’s: Test, Trace, Treat
COVID-19 DASHBOARD

- The HCPH COVID-19 Dashboard provides daily updates on case counts, the public has access to information on exposure types, patient demographics as well as the number of people who have recovered.
2 TESTING SITES + 4 POP-UP SITES

• Mobile units provide drive-through testing for COVID-19.

• Each pop-up site, rotate locations across the 4 precincts in Harris County (also additional testing through City of Houston).
• Using SVI, SES factors, concept of testing “deserts”, etc.
• Location of Testing sites (Mobile and Federal).
WHERE ARE PEOPLE COMING FROM FOR COVID-19 TESTING?

❤️ Clusters represent people that were tested at the Baytown facility (Red Heart).
❤️ Clusters represent people that were tested at the Katy facility (Green Heart).

- All dots on this “dot-density” map are a randomized representation using data aggregate at census tract level and does not represent individual addresses.
EQUITY-FOCUSED OUTREACH

- Apartment Outreach- 489
- Faith-Base Outreach- 51
- Child Care – 640
- Businesses- 107
- Over 39 PSA’s
- Social Media Post- ongoing
- ASK HCPH Campaign
- Leveraging Key Partnerships
Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) is comprised of 5 epidemiologists, 3 social workers, 1 physician’s assistant (PA), 1 environmental public health investigator and a data analyst.

COVID-19
Containment Plan

TEST  TRACE  TREAT

- Make testing widespread, affordable and rapid
- Recruit contact tracers
- Ensure hospitals have enough capacity to manage surge in cases

VISIT www.READYHARRIS.ORG
ADDRESSING INEQUITIES OF COVID-19 IN COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

- Long-term solutions must take into consideration where communities LLWWP.
- Use data-driven decision-making to inform strategies and solutions to mitigate long-standing health inequities in midst of an overwhelming pandemic.
- Procuring, analyzing, and visualizing data by race/ethnicity/location/age/etc. helps keep health inequities a central focus of response.
- “This is no time for politics” though the reality is that public health is inherently political.
- Remember it is ultimately about community trust and working together to get through this pandemic.
## RACE/ETHNICITY – UNDERLYING HEALTH CONDITIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/ethnicity</th>
<th>Count Deceased</th>
<th>% Deceased</th>
<th>Total Count</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>Cases with underlying health conditions</th>
<th>% of cases with underlying health conditions</th>
<th>HC pop %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaskan Native</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.47%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.74%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.77%</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>5.71%</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>5.81%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30.19%</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>29.93%</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>35.80%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28.30%</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>40.61%</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>32.31%</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-racial</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.23%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.21%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.89%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.61%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.62%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35.85%</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>22.44%</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>24.50%</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>53</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
<td><strong>2135</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
<td><strong>947</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Disclaimer:** Category Unknown not included. Category Unknown may derive from the following: (1) Incomplete data from lab reports that do not collect race/ethnicity. (2) Data from the beginning of case reporting, before race/ethnicity data was being collected. (3) Individuals who were contacted due to missing information on lab reports but did not consent to give the information.
HCPH

Priority Public Health Issues for 2013-2018

Selected for the magnitude of the issue and our ability to make progress in Harris County

THREE V’S OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Visibility • Value • Validation

#InvisibilityCrisis
PUBLIC HEALTH JUST MAKES "COMMON SENSE"

...And it takes a village...

Umair A. Shah, MD, MPH
Twitter: @ushahmd
@HCPHTX
www.hcphtx.org