DEMYSTIFYING DATA

Eliminating AI/AN Health Disparities through Understanding, Management and Training

UIHI
Urban Indian Health Institute
A Division of the Seattle Indian Health Board

PROJECT BRIEF

Background

There are unique and complex challenges that exist around accessing, collecting, managing, and analyzing urban American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) data. The 2000 United States Census reported that 67% (or 2,774,716) of AI/ANs live in urban areas, representing the largest segment of American Indians in the US today. Despite various data-related challenges, the Seattle Indian Health Board's Urban Indian Health Institute (UIHI) has been successful in retrieving and analyzing data from various sources to describe the health status of this population nationwide. Since 2007, UIHI has been funded by the Office of Minority Health's American Indian/Alaska Native Health Disparities Program to conduct some of this work through its Demystifying Data project. The project's active period ends in August 2012 and additional funding is critical to continuing this important work.

Objectives

The Demystifying Data project's objectives are to:

- Promote epidemiologic means for identifying health priorities by building UIHI capacity for public data access, collection, management, and analysis.

- Work with urban AI/AN communities to identify their top three health priorities through epidemiology data and community surveillance.

- Work with urban AI/AN communities on identifying strategies to address their top health priority using appropriate resources.

- Work with urban AI/AN communities on addressing their health priorities through technical assistance in strategy implementation and the development of related recommendations and resources.

Products

- **Visibility Through Data: Health Information for Urban American Indian and Alaska Native Communities Report (2009)**. This report includes rank lists of urban Indian health disparities measured against Healthy People 2010 Objectives.

- **National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) Study on urban Indian's access to healthcare.** This study shows that urban AI/ANs have increased barriers to healthcare access and decreased use of healthcare services compared to non-Hispanic whites. Two fact sheets summarizing the NHIS findings and a draft manuscript are in development and will be completed by the end of 2012.

- **Demystifying Data for Health Professionals Training.** This 1-day training for health professionals at Urban Indian Health Organizations (UIHOs) helps participants gain a better understanding of public health data. The training exercises show participants how to read and use scientific reports for their work, and how to use data for grant applications, program planning, presentations, and advocacy.

- **Technical Assistance and Data Reports.** During this project, UIHI responded to over 500 requests for data and/or technical assistance. Using the UIHI's surveillance system, the data sources accessed and analyzed to provide information on urban Indian health include: vital statistics records from the National Vital Statistics System (NVSS) through the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), the US Census and American Community Survey (ACS), the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBS), and a variety of other data sources.

- **Communications.** The UIHI distributes several regular communication products featuring health data specific to the urban Indian population:
    - A monthly, one-page **Communication Broadcast** that features UIHI reports or highlights urban Indian health data.
    - A **Weekly Resources and Opportunities Email (WRE)** that publicizes training opportunities, resources, grant or funding opportunities, health alerts, and other relevant announcements.
    - A periodic **Spotlight** that features a particular Urban Indian Health Organization (UIHO) program, activity, or event.

View copies of the reports and products at the Demystifying Data website:
http://www.uihi.org/projects/demystifying-data/

Contact us with any questions at info@uihi.org or 206.812.3030.

To join our weekly Resources and Opportunities e-mail list, visit www.uihi.org/subscribe.