



For Immediate Release

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Community Outreach Partnership To Enhance COVID-19 Outreach for Unique Needs Population

Oklahoma City, OK (10-14-2021):

Guiding Right, Inc. (GRI) is proposing a community outreach partnership program to enhance COVID-19 outreach, education, and vaccination uptake among African Americans in Oklahoma City, Tulsa, and Lawton. The partnership includes the Oklahoma Public Health Association & Supporters of Families with Sickle Cell Disease. The target audience is African Americans, focusing on the unique health needs of all individuals with sickle cell disease (SCD) and HIV. The partnership will utilize its successful 20+ years of community engagement among African Americans to enhance outreach, education, and service delivery components to these communities.

This project will focus on expanding and sustaining a public health workforce to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19 among African Americans in the Oklahoma City and Tulsa, and Lawton, Oklahoma areas. This includes mobilizing community outreach workers, which includes community health workers, patient navigators, and social support specialists, to educate and assist individuals in accessing and receiving COVID-19 vaccinations, and education to reduce vaccine hesitancy. African Americans comprise 8% of the state population in Oklahoma, with a majority of African Americans residing in the two major metropolitan areas of the state. The Oklahoma City CSA is comprised of 8 counties, and the Tulsa CSA is comprised of ten counties. Lawton, OK (Comanche Co.) represents another county with a significant African American populace. Data from the ASPE demonstrates extreme vaccine hesitancy within those counties, and high levels of social vulnerability.

The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely impacted the lives of citizens throughout the United States, with minority populations disproportionately impacted by the disease. Data illustrates that “black people are being admitted to hospitals and dying in disproportionate numbers from the COVID-19 pandemic” (Thebault & Ba Tran, 2020). Current evidence suggests that underlying medical conditions (i.e. hypertension, diabetes, asthma, etc.) exacerbate COVID-19, and are attributable to the increased burden of COVID-19 among minorities. The prevalence rates of these underlying medical conditions are known health disparities among minority populations (Office of Minority Health, 2020). Given the differential rates of diagnoses, hospitalization, and death by race according to both National and State-level data, additional innovative programmatic efforts are needed to address high rates of vaccine hesitancy among populations affected by COVID-19.

To learn more information, email tnoel@guidingright.org.