



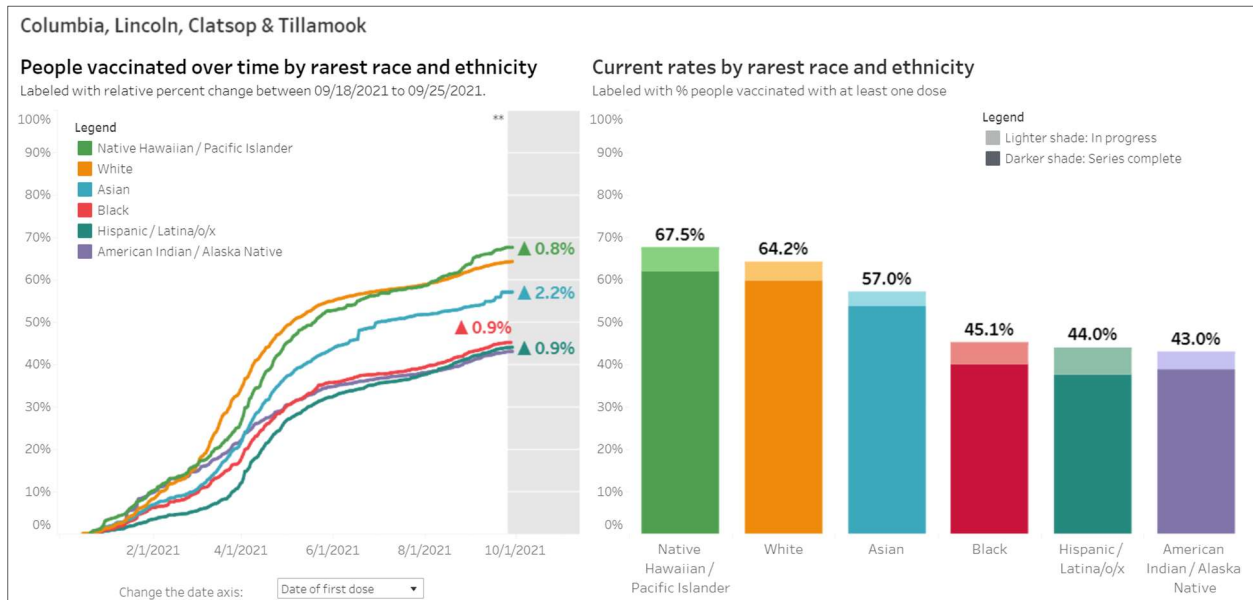
September 30, 2021

COVID-19 Equity Plan: Demonstrated Progress

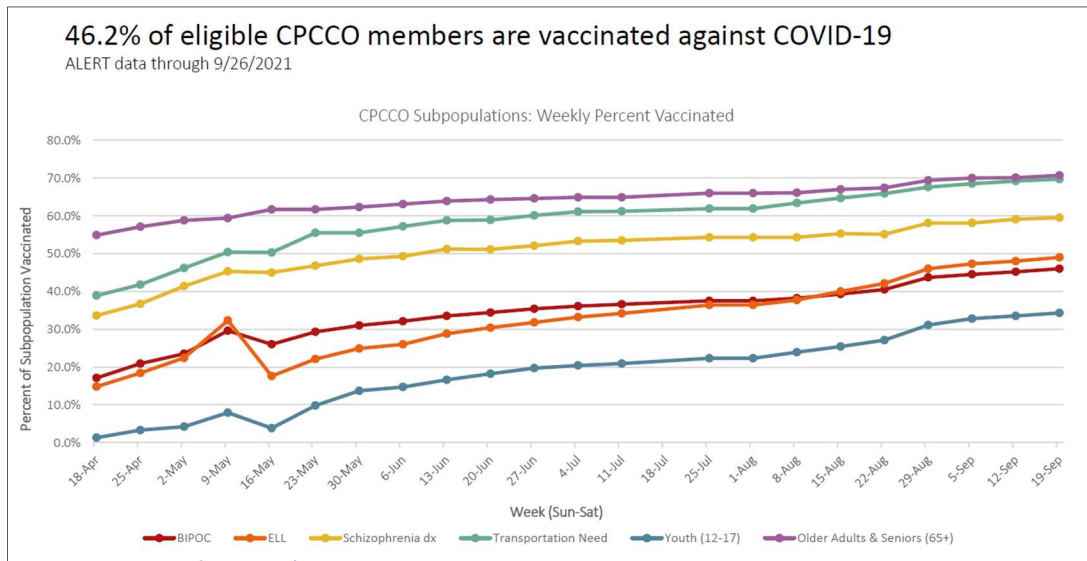
1. Please review the jurisdiction’s response to questions #1 and #2 in the accepted equity documentation, as well as recent race/ethnicity data. Describe any improvements in equity gaps as evidenced in the data. Provide a status update on progress the LPHA and its partners have made to eliminate vaccine access barriers and implement plans to close vaccine equity gaps among specific racial and ethnic populations. Please be specific, provide an example of work about which the LPHA and its partners are particularly proud, and describe any tangible impacts in the community.

Columbia County Public Health (CCPH) continues to focus on reducing and eliminating barriers to health care, including access to COVID-19 vaccinations. CCPH is using data from various sources, as well as a recently completed Regional Health Equity Assessment to inform actions, decisions, policies and partnerships, and to advocate for an equitable distribution of resources and power so that no individuals or groups have lower health outcomes because of race, ethnicity, disability, gender, income, sexual orientation, neighborhood or other social condition.

COVID-19 vaccination rates have continued to increase for all communities in our region, but data shows that much more work is needed to reach parity in our region. Current OHA data for the region demonstrates progress in the region:



Columbia Pacific Coordinated Care Organization (Clatsop, Tillamook, Columbia) data also demonstrates progress:



CCPH is overcoming barriers to access by strengthening local partnerships. First, to decrease commute time and a lack of vaccine providers in the rural parts of the county, CCPH has collaborated closely with the Mist-Birkenfeld Rural Fire Protection District to promote uptake. The agency offered vaccines throughout the spring, summer and into the fall at several locations, including at events, and onsite at the largest employers in rural areas. In addition to offering vaccine at their main fire station, the agency hosted mobile vaccine clinics at several locations, including: Vernonia Fire Station; Vernonia Scout Cabin; Vernonia School District; American Legion Hall in Clatskanie; Clatskanie Builders Supply; GP Wauna Mill; Rainier School District; Jewell School District; and many home visits. CCPH has also partnered with other local providers and community-based organizations to offer vaccination at workplaces and events; requests are received via a basic [employer form](#) that has been circulated to employers in the county with the assistance of the Columbia Economic Team.

Second, CCPH continues to monitor vaccine hesitancy and seeks to improve vaccine confidence via public messaging and partnerships. Information about COVID-19 vaccines is provided in conjunction with supplies and social services, such as rental and utility assistance and SNAP registration. Public messages focus on the positive impact of vaccinations in the community. For instance, recent social posts emphasize that in 2021 fully vaccinated Columbia County residents account for: 8% of total Columbia County COVID-19 cases; 5% of total Columbia County COVID-19 hospitalizations; and 0% of total Columbia County COVID-19 deaths. In addition, Columbia Health Services, a well-known and respected community-based organization and vaccine provider, offers vaccine education at four school-based health centers.

Last, CCPH continues to coordinate with vaccine providers to certify vaccination sites in the county provide meaningful access. CCPH staff reviews: access to public transit; onsite scheduling procedures (i.e., walk-in availability); language access plans; and outreach plans. CCPH maintains a vaccine call center to pair community members with local providers and often calls on local partners and community-based organizations for recommendations to improve access. CCPH consults leaders at Columbia Community Mental Health (CCMH), Support Advocacy Freedom Empowerment (SAFE), Community Action Team (CAT); Consejo

Hispano; Columbia Health Services; Phoenix Rising Transitions; Columbia Pacific Coordinated Care Organization (CPCCO).

### **Example 1: Vernonia and Goble Houseless Outreach Events**

Date: 9/14/21

Prior outreach: houseless and people with substance use disorders

Partner agencies: Columbia Community Mental Health (CCMH), Support Advocacy Freedom Empowerment (SAFE), Community Action Team (CAT), Community Paramedics with Columbia River Fire and Rescue and Mist-Birkenfeld Fire Protection District, Oregon State University Extension

Description:

CCPH partnered with local agencies to offer vaccinations in a local zip code that has only one vaccination provider and limited transportation. CCPH and partners supported residents with food boxes, camping equipment, harm reduction and hygiene supplies, as well as additional service forms and resource referrals.

### **Example 2: Latinx Health Fair**

Date: 6/6/21

Prior outreach: Community members who identify as Latinx, seasonal and agricultural migrant workers, and other community members who primarily speak Spanish

Partner agencies: Columbia Pacific CCO (CPCCO), CCPH, Oregon State University Extension, Community Action Team (CAT), Northwest Regional Education Service District (NWRES), Consejo Hispano, Lines for Life

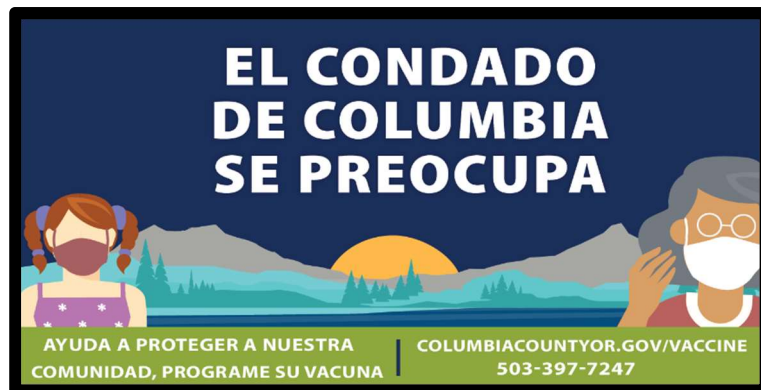
Description: Local agencies offered health education and vaccinations, coupled with music, food and access to community resources.



## **2. Please review the jurisdiction's response to question #6 and provide an update on the LPHA and its partners' work to address the vaccine needs of migrant and seasonal farmworkers in the jurisdiction and share the outcomes of these efforts.**

In short, CCPH continues to collaborate with local providers to offer vaccinations at locations throughout the county, and CCPH continues to engage with community-based organizations to assure vaccinations are accessible to all citizens. To address the vaccine needs of migrant and seasonal farmworkers, CCPH contacted agricultural employers in the county that did not respond to the agricultural employer survey, and CCPH engaged throughout the year with community-based organizations that serve migrant and seasonal farmworkers; CCPH promotes vaccine events in collaboration with partners and CCPH responds to feedback to eliminate barriers to access. Last, CCPH joined Yakima Valley Farmworkers Association, a federally-

qualified health center with an office a rural area of county, to host vaccination events. CCPH was also fortunate to host the FEMA/OHA trailer at the Clatskanie City Park; community-based organizations helped promote the drive-in event and free food boxes were available.



3. **The pandemic has demonstrated and elevated the structural barriers that perpetuate health inequities. To dismantle those structural barriers in the long-term so that health equity can be achieved across all populations statewide, transforming how public health works with communities to engage in multi-directional communication and dialogue with, share power with and center in decision making communities most affected by those inequities is essential.**
  - a. **Please provide an example of feedback the LPHA and its partners received from a community experiencing vaccine inequities, how the LPHA and its partners worked collaboratively with the community to address the feedback and then shared back with the community the outcome or resolution.**

CCPH has engaged local agencies throughout the pandemic, specifically requesting feedback on how the county can better serve populations experiencing inequities. In June, CCPH surveyed community members and leaders at community-based organizations. CCPH received overwhelming feedback that there were not enough local vaccine providers in the county, and that not all of the existing providers offered vaccinations at convenient times and locations. CCPH subsequently acquired a mobile health unit to offer vaccinations to improve capacity to offer health services at employer offices and rural areas of the county. CCPH also used a team of public health volunteers and OHSU residents to make walk-in vaccinations available during commuting hours on two nights a week.

- b. **Please provide an example of how the LPHA and its partners have shared power with and centered the communities experiencing inequities in decision making to determine strategies to increase vaccine access for communities.**

CCPH staff attend a variety of local meetings, hosted by the county and other local and regional agencies, to receive feedback. CCPH received feedback from a community leader that community members in their specific zip code were not able find vaccine information because they lacked access to the internet and/or only read print information, and also that residents didn't trust information published by government agencies; it was further reported that some residents of the zip code rarely left the immediate community because of travel times and lack of transportation. CCPH subsequently recruited volunteers who live in the community to serve as liaisons. CCPH mailed flyers to residents with utility bills and CCPH connected an EMS

provider and the local school district so that vaccinations could be regularly offered at a convenient location. CCPH has responded to similar requests throughout the year by pairing local vaccine providers and local agencies to promote vaccine uptake. In addition to local clinics, school-based health centers and pharmacies, vaccinations have been available at alternative locations, such as: Clatskanie City Park; Rainier Senior Center; Saint Frederick's Church; Columbia County Fair and Rodeo; 13 Nights on the River (local event throughout the summer); Mist-Birkenfeld RFPD Main Station; Vernonia Fire Station; Vernonia Scout Cabin; Clatskanie American Legion Hall; Clatskanie Builders Supply; Georgia-Pacific Wauna Mill; Jewell School.