

# RIDES THAT SAVE LIVES TOOLKIT

COVID-19 Vaccine Equity for Older People



## Powerful Partnerships & Creative Collaborations

Some jobs are too large and too complex for any single organization to accomplish alone; vaccinating millions of homebound, mobility-limited, and hard-to-reach older people is certainly one of them. Across the country, vaccination is being powered by partnerships, both longstanding and brand new, that leverage the skills and resources of diverse organizations. Here are some successful strategies.

- **EMS plus AAA equals house calls**

Indiana's Homebound Hoosiers program sends local Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel, overseen by the state Department of Homeland Security, to do in-home vaccinations. The Indiana Association of Area Agencies on Aging takes referrals from the state's 211 service and leverages trusted relationships to find homebound people and make appointments. Homebound Hoosiers has been presented to FEMA and CDC workshops for possible replication. ([▶ See video](#); [📄 see program manual](#).)

- **A Black church hosts a large health system**

To make vaccination comfortable and convenient, Colorado's oldest Black church, Shorter Community AME Church, partnered with UHealth to offer shots in Fellowship Hall. The minister and his wife got theirs as did more than 500 parishioners.



*The Rev. Dr. Timothy E. Tyler of Shorter Community AME Church with Dr. Shanta Zimmer, an infectious disease expert at UHealth and the University of Colorado School of Medicine.*

*Photo by Cyrus McCrimmon for UHealth.*

- **Multiple partners deliver more supportive care**

A public-private partnership (211, San Diego County, the City of San Marcos, and the Gary and Mary West Foundation, among others) powers the age-friendly vaccination clinic at West

PACE in San Diego. 211 operators make appointments by phone and help arrange transportation; seniors stay seated in one place throughout the process; caregivers are allowed inside; onsite care navigators assist those who arrive alone; and interpreters are available by phone or video.

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- **Get Out the Vote informs a new campaign**

Older people who don't use computers are at an information disadvantage. In Georgetown, South Carolina, a local branch of the NAACP used Get Out the Vote lists to call older residents and help them schedule vaccinations, then connected them with Neighbor to Neighbor, a local volunteer driving program, for rides.

- **Nonprofits and pharmacies work together**

Benevilla in Surprise, Arizona offers older clients life enrichment, not medical services, but forging a completely new partnership with a local Albertson's pharmacy allowed Benevilla to vaccinate clients at drive-through events on their own campus when most appointments were being offered miles away, in large sports arenas and even in the middle of the night. The result: personalized phone outreach, door-through-door rides from volunteer drivers, and in-home vaccination for clients unable to travel. The next innovation: combined COVID-19 and flu shot clinics.

*Photo courtesy of Benevilla*

- **Serving rural communities with multidisciplinary teams**

East Carolina University's Brody School of Medicine seeks to improve the health of underserved North Carolina residents, so sending mobile vaccination teams into rural eastern North Carolina fit the mission. Teams include students, EMTs, nurses, public health workers, and National Guard members, and trips are led by medical school faculty. (▶ See [video](#).)



- **Black CEOs lift their voices for vaccine equity**

Disproportionately high rates of harm and lower rates of vaccination among older people of color prompted creation of a coalition of organizations, all led by Black CEOs, to improve vaccine information and access for the Black community. The six groups—AARP, the American Diabetes Association, the American Psychological Association, the International City/County Management Association, the National League of Cities, and the YMCA—have a combined reach of more than 60 million Americans.

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