



Minnesota Immunization Networking Initiative (MINI) Program highlights

Background

An annual vaccination is the best method of preventing influenza. However, significant disparities exist in flu vaccination coverage for people of color and people living in poverty. These populations also experience a greater burden of chronic health conditions which increase the risk for serious complications from the flu. A recent report from the National Vaccine Advisory Committee showed persistent racial disparities in vaccination, citing lower coverage among Black, Hispanic, and Asian Americans when compared with White Americans. Poverty is a risk factor for serious influenza complications and a barrier to vaccination.

About the program

Minnesota Immunization Networking Initiative (MINI) is a collaborative led by M Health Fairview and supported by over 125 community partners. MINI works to reduce barriers to influenza vaccinations for communities facing health disparities in the greater Twin Cities area. The success of the program is due to strong and lasting partnerships with multiple faith-based and grass-roots community organizations. MINI clinics are located in community-based settings such as local churches, mosques, schools, community centers, food pantries, and homeless shelters. Influenza vaccinations are provided at no charge to participants, ages six months and older.

MINI has collaborated with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) around pandemic preparedness and response in hard to reach communities.

Since the beginning



Vaccinated over
100,000 community
members



Awarded more
than **1 million**
dollars in grants

Partners

- American Indian Community Development Corporation
- Hadi Medical Clinic
- Hmong Healthcare Professionals
- Homeland Health Specialists
- Islamic Center of Minnesota
- Karen Organization of Minnesota
- Liberian Nurses Association of Minnesota
- Minnesota Department of Health
- Portico Healthnet
- St. Catherine University Department of Nursing
- St. Mary's Health Clinics
- Stairstep Foundation
- Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota
- And many other community and faith-based organizations

Awards and recognitions

- 2021 Listed as Promising Practice by National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants, and Migrants (NRC-RIM) for partnering with faith-based organizations and providing convenient vaccine access for communities
- 2019 Quest for Excellence conference presenter
- Presented MINI model at the White House
- Published in Public Health Reports
- Published in The American Journal of Public Health
- Received the Laura Scott Outstanding Influenza Season Activities Award from the National Adult and Influenza Immunization Summit (two-time recipient)



Community Advancement strategies

Support anchor mission

- MINI grant dollars flow to five community partners. MINI also provides service-learning opportunities through clinical education hours to students who are pursuing their clinical degrees.
- Many community members that receive MINI services are recent immigrants, people whose preferred language is not English, and are uninsured or underinsured.

Address root causes and contributing factors of health conditions

- MINI addresses barriers around access to care by providing free clinical services in trusted settings in a culturally and linguistically responsive manner.

Bridge community and clinical care to improve health

- MINI partners with community organizations to bring clinical care to people where they live, learn, worship, work, and play.

2020-2021 season:



Vaccinated **6,662** community members



105 clinics



55 M Health Fairview employees **helped**

Academic partnership



- 53 undergraduate and graduate nursing students from St. Catherine University and Augsburg University

Recipient's health insurance status



- 47% of adults (ages 19 and older) were uninsured
- 65% of children (ages 0-18) were uninsured or on MN Care, Medical Assistance, or Prepaid Medical Assistance

Recipient's Race/Ethnicity



45% Hispanic/Latinx
28% Asian/Pacific Islander
10% Caucasian/White
5% Black/African American
2% African
1% Native American or Alaskan Native
1% Multi-Racial
7% Chose not to respond

Expansion of program scope

- 2021: MINI is collaborating with local community partners to ensure that underserved populations have access to the COVID-19 vaccine. In a six-week period, we provided more than 4,000 vaccinations. We will continue to offer free mobile clinics throughout the year.
- 2020: In collaboration with Ramsey County, MINI hosted walk-up or drive through COVID-19 testing events for minority communities. We provided more than 19,300 tests.
- 2019: MINI collaborated with the Minnesota Department of Health in a pilot program that provided 116 free Hepatitis A vaccines to high-risk communities in response to a nationwide outbreak that was also impacting Minnesotans. In 2020-2021 we provided an additional 100 Hepatitis A vaccines.
- 2016: MINI launched a dental program to address persistent oral health disparities. The expansion provides free dental fluoride varnish application, dental insurance navigation information, and oral health education to community members.
- 2009: During the H1N1 pandemic, MINI organized multiple vaccination clinics in diverse community settings serving individuals facing barriers such as limited access, transportation, scheduling difficulties, and mistrust. MINI and the Minnesota Department of Health also engaged with diverse community leaders and held focus groups to understand the best channels for health emergency communication during a pandemic.

