Improving Community Health: A Spotlight on Tufts MC Grant Initiatives

Tufts Medical Center has made a significant impact in improving the health outcomes of underserved communities through its community grant initiatives. The Asian Health Initiative (AHI), Dorchester Health Initiative (DHI), and COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Grants have provided educational programming on tobacco, a range of behavioral health programming including mental health support for children and families impacted by trauma, and economic support to residents to recover from the pandemic. In FY 2022, over 8,100 people were served by these grants.

Asian Health Initiative

The Asian Health Initiative (AHI) was established in 1995 to address the unique health needs of the Asian American community in the Boston area. Over the past three years, the AHI has focused on reducing smoking rates and preventing lung cancer, which is the leading cause of cancer deaths in the Asian American community. To achieve this goal, Tufts MC partnered with five community-based organizations with an intergenerational approach to smoking prevention and cessation. During this time, the AHI has served 3,698 community residents through its programs and services.

The AHI has had a significant impact on the Asian American community in Boston. In addition to reducing smoking rates, the initiative has worked to improve access to healthcare services, increase health literacy, and address health disparities. By engaging with community members through outreach and education, the AHI has built trust and relationships, leading to
increased utilization of health services and improved health outcomes. The AHI has been a valuable resource for the Asian American community, promoting positive health behaviors and attitudes toward smoking cessation. Overall, the evidence suggests that the educational interventions implemented by AHI grantees had a positive impact on improving residents’ knowledge and attitudes toward smoking cessation.

**AHI Grantee Spotlight**

The Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center (GBCGAC) is dedicated to serving Chinese seniors in the Greater Boston area, offering a wide range of programs and services that help seniors maintain their health, independence, and cultural identity. With Tufts MC’s support, the GBCGAC expanded its Smoke Free for Health Living Program, which promoted prevention and cessation of tobacco and nicotine use. The program assessed smokers’ health and behavioral needs and created individualized cessation plans, and provided one-on-one support to help the quitting process.

GBCGAC also provided educational workshops and smoking cessation clinics to 655 participants between January 2020 to December 2022. Following the workshops, the probability of a perfect score on the Knowledge Assessment on the health consequences of smoking increased by 58% for participants.

“One of the biggest health concerns for people who live and work in Boston Chinatown is smoking. The benefits of quitting smoking are widely known but one of the strongest strategies for stopping is the advocacy from a loved one. That is why, thanks to the support we received from Tufts Medical Center’s Asian Health Initiative, we have been able to provide education to our youth and families about the physical and developmental health effects of tobacco use. It is so important for them to understand the importance of smoking cessation.”

Ben Hires, CEO of Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center