

GRANT PROPOSAL for UCSF FRESNO and CITY of FRESNO MOBILE Heal PROJECT

Background:

COVID-19, a novel disease, caused by the SARS COV-2 virus, is responsible for a worldwide pandemic, which has affected all of the United States. This new disease has stressed the healthcare system and resulted in significant damage to the economy, including the healthcare system and economy of Fresno. Economic recovery and disease control will both require much better understanding of the epidemiology of the disease, especially in communities of color, which are disproportionately affected and who hold many of the essential jobs in the economy. An example of this is the recent large scale testing done in the Mission District in San Francisco by UCSF (<https://www.statnews.com/2020/05/28/sobering-finding-covid19-struck-mostly-low-wage-essential-workers-san-francisco/>). In testing more than 4000 people, about 2% tested positive. However, 95% of the positives occurred in Latinx even though they represent only 58% of the population of the district. Currently, the best tests available to diagnose the infection, either symptomatic or asymptomatic, are polymerase chain reaction tests for the viral RNA (pcr testing).

In developing testing for vulnerable and underserved populations in Fresno, one needs to address a number of issues:

1. Fixed testing sites in the city will not meet the needs of this population and will encourage the use of public transportation, which itself presents a risk.
2. There is often general levels of distrust of governmental authority in these populations.
3. Language and cultural barriers often interfere with delivering appropriate health care
4. Patients in these communities often have limited access to appropriate health care
5. Screening these populations benefits the health of the entire community.

Goals:

1. Facilitate testing done in underserved neighborhoods in Fresno using the model of mobile health care developed at UCSF Fresno by Dr. Kenny Banh. Mobile testing sites will come to the neighborhoods to obviate the problem of transportation and come at off hours or days to facilitate testing people when they are not working.
2. Provide screening services to identify underlying health issues that increase the person's risk to both the infection and more serious consequences of the infection (diabetes, hypertension, lung and heart disease) using point-of-care testing and screening evaluations.
3. Appropriately connect the people that are symptomatic and positive to health care providers using telehealth capability, which can be initiated, through the mobile sites equipped with hot spot technology.

Proposal:

Our proposal is to develop at least three mobile “clinics” that can be deployed for testing for SARS COV-2, screening for at risk health conditions, and connect symptomatic patients to health care providers using telehealth technology. The focus will be on neighborhoods traditionally underserved for health care in Fresno. This will require several steps; however, we need to begin initial screening as soon as possible. For this reason, we have developed this project in three phases:

PHASE 1 (first 30 days):

1. Develop community relationships with neighborhood organizations, churches, schools and community leaders, both elected and unelected to help carry the message to the citizens of the neighborhoods.
2. Purchase two vans equipped with test and supplies, which can be utilized to initiate the first testing sites.
3. Order two larger RV’s to be designed to provide mobile clinic facilities for phase three.
4. Purchase point-of-care testing equipment.
5. Finalize a contract with UCSF Chan Zuckerberg Biohub to run SARS COV-2 pcr testing.
6. Establish a fixed based of operations for staff by leasing existing space in the city.
7. Hire the initial medical director, the administrative director, and medical assistants. We will search for bilingual candidates to facilitate addressing language issues.
8. Train personnel in collecting samples for pcr.
9. Develop screening questionnaires and consent in at least three languages (English, Spanish and Hmong).
10. Obtain sufficient PPE and test supplies to initiate the testing.
11. Develop strategic partnerships with existing projects testing farm workers through Fresno State and UC Berkeley.

Phase 2 (31-90 days):

1. Initiate at least one and possibly two mobile testing sites that can operate 5 days per week.
2. Work out the logistics of testing in this environment.
3. Set up telehealth capability
4. Develop a strategic relationship with federally qualified health centers in Fresno to link to symptomatic patients to provide care
5. Hire or contract for social workers to assist positive patients as needed for social support
6. After 30 days, use LEAN PDSA (Plan Do Study Adapt) to evaluate and improve the processes
7. Train contact tracers to use the developing software in collaboration with other testing sites for contact tracing

Phase 3 through December 15, 2020 unless additional funding is received:

1. Launch the two mobile RV clinics to expand capacity for screening and clinical services
2. Repurpose one of the vans used in phase 2 to serve as a supply van for the other three vehicles serving as mobile sites
3. Expand services to seven days per week depending on our ability to add staff and maintain sufficient PPE and testing supplies
4. Phase 3 will continue so long as we have the resources and the need within the community.

A detailed budget is attached.