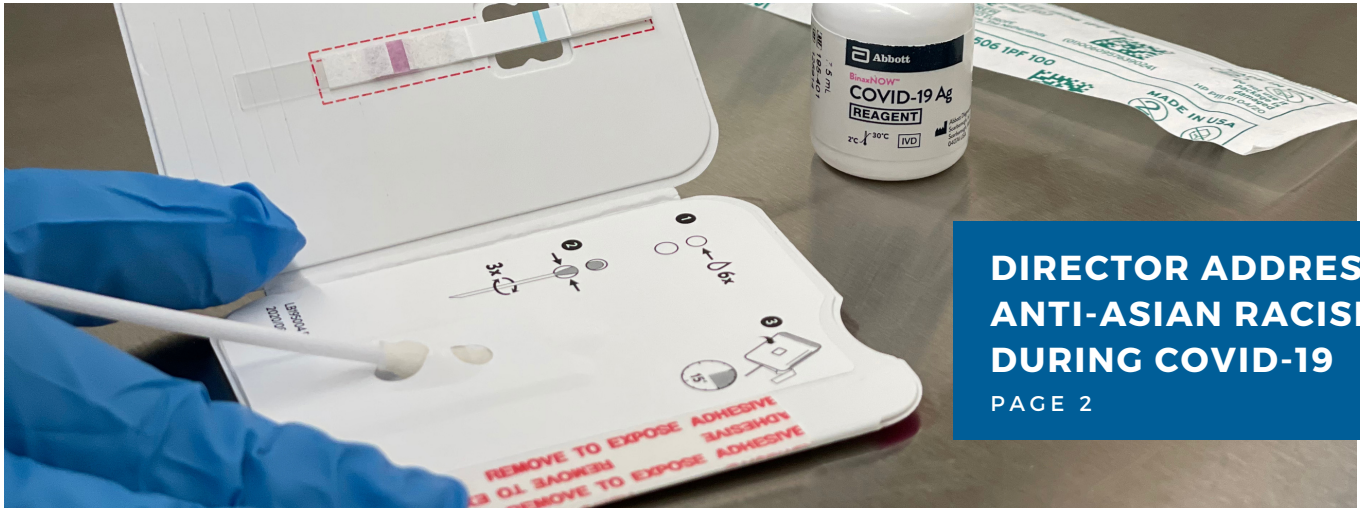


MARCH-APRIL 2021

IFH COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

BIMONTHLY NEWS FROM THE RUTGERS INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH, HEALTH CARE POLICY AND AGING RESEARCH

The Rutgers Institute for Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research eagerly shares the March-April 2021 edition of the IFH Community Newsletter. Highlights include a celebration of IFH's 35th Anniversary, our director's statement addressing anti-Asian racism, a new video outlining our work, free COVID-19 testing, community partners' experiences with getting vaccinated, and more information about the vaccines.



**DIRECTOR ADDRESSES
ANTI-ASIAN RACISM
DURING COVID-19**

PAGE 2

FREE COVID-19 TESTING AT IFH

The Institute has begun offering free COVID-19 testing at our offices in New Brunswick on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and on Thursdays from 1 to 4 p.m.

Appointments are encouraged; walk-ins are accepted based on availability. To schedule an appointment, email community@ifh.rutgers.edu or call 848-216-5565. If you reach our voicemail, please leave a message and a team member will call you back. Team members who speak Spanish are on site.

Results of the nasal swab test are provided in about 15 minutes. Individuals can have the results emailed or wait for a print-out.

Photo above: IFH Researcher Jacob Koppel Egierd processes a COVID-19 test in the Institute on March 5.

IFH WELCOMES NEW DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Mariely Moronta-Sanchez has joined the Institute and Rutgers as our new Director of Community Outreach. Mariely is a community advocate who has spent the last decade working on community impact projects through a racial equity lens.

Most recently, she was the chief of staff to a New York state legislator and focused on developing solutions centered around communities, specifically divested communities, in the state. Previously, Mariely developed and managed community partnerships for the Manhattan District Attorney's Office. She worked on a variety of community partnerships focused on amplifying the voices of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

IFH CELEBRATES 35TH ANNIVERSARY OF FOUNDING

On Feb. 17, the Institute celebrated the 35th anniversary of our founding with a special webinar presented with the Rutgers Alumni Association.

The panel discussion, “Successful Aging in the Era of COVID-19,” focused on the impacts of the pandemic on older adults. IFH Director XinQi Dong was joined by RBHS Chancellor Brian Strom and IFH Founding Director David Mechanic, as well as a panel of experts, including Susan Reinhard, Director of AARP’s Public Policy Institute, who previously served as co-director of Rutgers’ Center for State Health Policy, Paul D. Cleary, the Anna M.R. Lauder Professor and Dean Emeritus at the Yale School of Public Health, and Vincent Mor, the Florence Pirce Grant Professor of Community Health in the Brown University School of Public Health.

Watch video of the event at ifh.rutgers.edu/?p=2561.



Clockwise from top left: XinQi Dong, Susan Reinhard, Paul Cleary, and Vincent Mor.

NEW VIDEO: WELCOME TO IFH

The Institute is dedicated to improving population health through sustainable community engagement, innovative education and training, and interdisciplinary and translational scientific research.

In a new video, IFH faculty staff and community partners discuss our legacy, our mission, and our vision for the future of population health research.

Watch the full video at <https://youtu.be/hNlFZP6zGek>.



NEW DIRECTOR FROM PAGE 1

people living in public housing, addressing the needs of youth impacted by violence, and connecting disenfranchised communities to resources.

As a former adolescent mother and first-generation immigrant of Dominican descent, Mariely brings a passion for serving diverse communities and great enthusiasm to join the IFH team and help achieve the mission of improving the health and well-being of New Jerseyans.



IFH RAMPS UP VACCINE AWARENESS EFFORTS

Since the first COVID-19 vaccines were approved late last year, IFH has been conducting webinars and town halls about safety and efficacy and getting vaccinated. We have teamed up with partners including Center for Asian Health, New Brunswick Tomorrow, Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Promotions, Trenton Health Team, NAACP, Angelic Health, Parker, the East Brunswick Public Library, AARP, and Greenbriar communities. To partner with us on an event, email community@ifh.rutgers.edu.

DIRECTOR SPEAKS OUT AGAINST ANTI-ASIAN RACISM

In March, IFH Director XinQi Dong issued a statement in response to growing anti-Asian racism and violence against Asians across the country.

“As researchers who focus on Asian health, we are dedicated to understanding and addressing issues that impact Asian communities. Perhaps none have had a greater impact over the last year as the racism and hate that has fueled anti-Asian attacks across the country during the COVID-19 pandemic. ... We condemn these attacks and we are committed to combating racism, improving equity, and protecting Asian communities.”

Read the full statement at <https://bit.ly/3sL7tVM>.

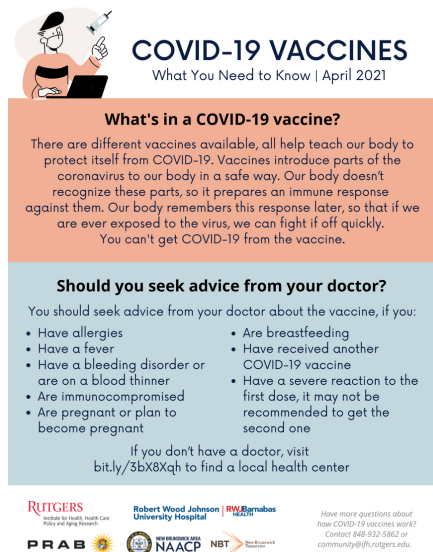
PARTNER WITH US!

To partner with IFH on events and community engagement efforts, please complete our form:
<https://forms.gle/hr8gymMXArpDvqKn8>.

IFH, PARTNERS DEVELOP VACCINE Q&AS

The Institute and partner organizations New Brunswick Tomorrow, Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Promotions, New Brunswick Area NAACP and PRAB, Inc. have teamed up to develop monthly COVID-19 vaccine Q&As.

The one-page resources focus on the latest common questions among community members related to the available COVID-19 vaccines. Check out resources in multiple languages at ifh.rutgers.edu/covid-vaccine-facts/.



ELIGIBILITY EXPANDS

As of April 5, the following people and groups are eligible for COVID-19 vaccines in New Jersey:

- People ages 55-64
- People ages 16 & up with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Educators, including support staff, in higher education settings
- Communications infrastructure support and members of the press
- Real estate, building, and home service workers
- Retail financial institution workers
- Sanitation workers providing disinfection and janitorial services
- Laundry service workers
- Utility workers
- Librarians and support staff at municipal, county and state libraries

GETTING VACCINATED: COMMUNITY PARTNERS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES

Nannan Wang with the Center for Asian Health went to Clara Mass Medical Center for her second dose of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine on Feb. 2, right after the snow storm. Yes, she had to shovel her path out of the driveway to get out. Here, she shares her vaccine story:

"Like the first time, all the medical staff on site were very friendly and welcoming. The whole process was organized and pleasant with all social distance precautions in place. At the registration desk, a staff member checked my ID to make sure I was the correct person and had come in on the correct day. The staff also asked a list of questions regarding exposure to the coronavirus and any allergies I might have.

After the injection, I waited a full 15 minutes before discharge to be certain there was no immediate reaction. A staff member came over and explained how to register with the CDC V-Safe app on my smartphone so that I could quickly notify the agency if I had any side effects. The whole process took about 30 minutes.

The side effects I experienced after the second shot were somewhat more severe than the first. The first time, I had chills overnight, and also arm pain for that day, but woke up totally fine the next day. The second time, I started to experience muscle pains about 6 hours after the shot, in addition to chills and soreness at the injection site. However, I am not sure if the muscle pains were related to the vaccine or to snow shoveling for two hours.

I am really grateful that I was one of the first to be fully vaccinated. There is some relief in my family since I am the one most likely to be exposed to COVID-19, though I am pretty careful anyway and follow all the social distancing rules. You may need to plan ahead to take a day off after your vaccine shots just in case unexpected serious side effects may happen. Fingers crossed for a quicker roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines."

MENTAL HEALTH SERIES FOR SENIORS LAUNCHES APRIL 16

The Institute is excited to partner with Rutgers Graduate School for Applied Psychology (GSAPP) to offer a five-part series for older adults on dealing with the mental health challenges of COVID-19. The series starts April 16 and will continue every Friday through May 14.

Each week, GSAPP counselors will offer a workshop on topics such as coping skills, bereavement and strengthening relationships while adhering to social distancing guidelines. Each session will include a lecture followed by a Q&A. All who register will receive a weekly take-away with information in support of that week's session. For those unable to attend, the lecture will be recorded and made available through the Institute. For non-English speakers, lectures will be dubbed and power points translated into Mandarin, Urdu, Gujarati, Hindi, Tagalog, Nigerian Pidgin, and Korean. A Spanish version of the seminars is also being planned.

Register at <https://go.rutgers.edu/tttdjcu>.

IFH FACULTY IN THE NEWS...

What Is Xenophobia—And How Does It Affect a Person's Health? Experts, including IFH Director XinQi Dong spoke with Health Magazine about xenophobia and hostility toward Asian Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Read the article at:
<https://bit.ly/2Q6ArkM>

Deciding who is right or wrong in prioritizing COVID-19 vaccines is a difficult call, even for a bioethicist, CPLB's Daniel Hausman told NJ.com about the recent efforts to get more teachers vaccinated.

Read the article at:
<https://bit.ly/3sAQNAa>

"We need swift action at every level to track and prevent these incidents and we need to empower Asian Americans and communities with supports and services," IFH Director XinQi Dong recent told Rutgers Today.

Read the article at:
<https://go.rutgers.edu/dj1fjq4>

DATES TO REMEMBER

April

Minority Health Month

- 16th - COVID-19 Mental Health Workshop 1
- 23rd - COVID-19 Mental Health Workshop 2
- 30th - COVID-19 Mental Health Workshop 3

May

- 7th - COVID-19 Mental Health Workshop 4
- 14th - COVID-19 Mental Health Workshop 5

STAY CONNECTED WITH US!

Stay tuned to our community outreach efforts by signing up for this newsletter at go.rutgers.edu/IFHCommunityNews.

Learn more about the New Jersey Population Health Collaborative, our partnerships and resources at: ifh.rutgers.edu/community.

Send questions or comments to community@ifh.rutgers.edu.

Follow us on social media @RutgersIFH



RUTGERS

Institute for Health, Health Care
Policy and Aging Research

