

How NMHA Injected a Dose of Health Equity and Access into National Vaccine Distribution

NMHA leveraged trusted home healthcare messengers with a comprehensive integrated marketing campaign to spur COVID-19 vaccination rates.

PROGRAM SUMMARY:

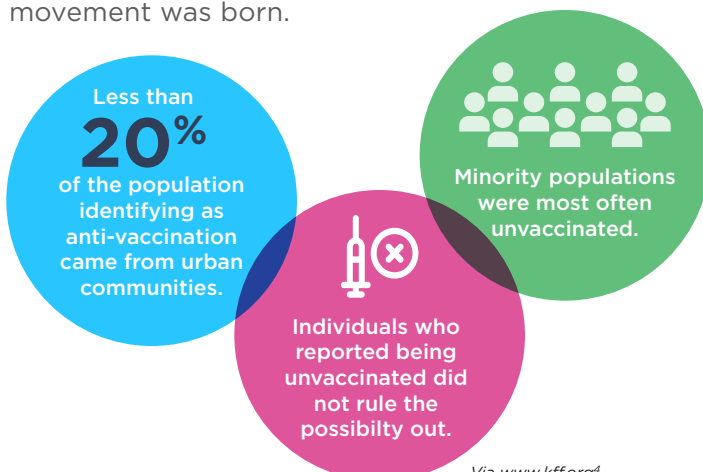
Flex for Checks was created in August of 2021 to improve COVID-19 vaccination rates in underserved communities across America. The program was wildly successful – spurring a 135% increase in vaccinations between November and December 2021. During a critical stage of the pandemic, the Flex for Checks program administered more than 69,000 vaccines.

The campaign drove awareness by leveraging education, incentives, and respected community voices to develop trust and amplify the message across social media, reaching over one million individuals.

Background

While COVID-19 vaccines became widely available in May 2021, the campaign to vaccinate America was hampered by hesitation. Vaccine hesitancy was especially prevalent among minority and medically underserved communities¹, with highest rates documented among Black Americans.

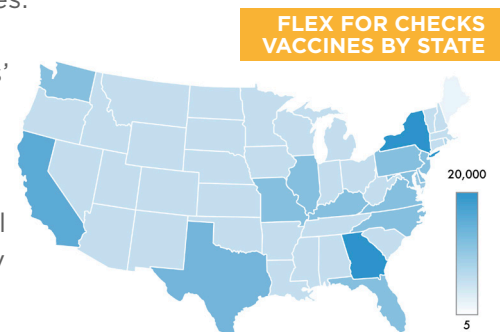
To instill public confidence and address misinformation, the NMHA received an \$11.1 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in June 2021. NMHA was tasked with deploying and supporting a community-based workforce to serve as trusted voices in sharing information about COVID-19 vaccines. On a mission to boost vaccination rates by engaging individuals within the context of their own personal vaccine stories, the Flex for Checks movement was born.



National Impact

At inception, the campaign was designed to increase vaccination participation in 12 states. However, the program's early success quickly made it a national phenomenon. Its health equity missive received an outpouring of national support and endorsement from celebrities and minority health advocates, including noted medical commentator Dr. Ian Smith and music industry powerhouse Dr. Mathew Knowles.

Flex for Checks' unique ability to engage with individuals on both a personal and community level earned trust in a way that other nationally sponsored campaigns could not. The efforts outpaced even the most optimistic forecasts, with more than 69,000 vaccinations distributed across all 50 states.

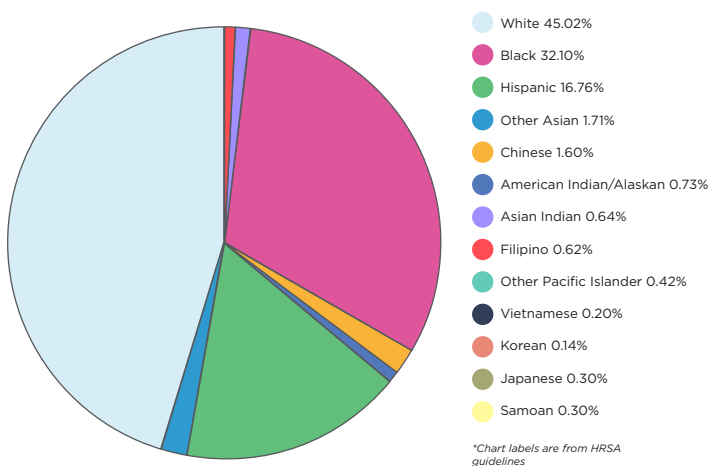


Vaccinating the Frontline

As the primary first responders for our national pandemic response, clinicians and healthcare workers were most vulnerable to infection. Because home care workers visit numerous patients every day, the impact of being vaccinated is multiplied, likely protecting thousands of lives.

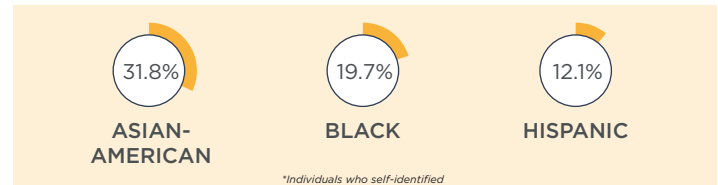
With this in mind, Flex for Checks was intentional in conducting outreach to these critical workers, and ultimately vaccinated 3,567 home care workers. In line with the campaign's goals, 58% of vaccinated individuals were from minority populations – 31% of which were Black Americans. By demonstrating their personal conviction in the vaccines' safety, these healthcare workers earned deeper levels of trust within the communities they serve.

VACCINATED WORKERS BY RACE



Addressing Racial Disparities

Vaccine hesitancy proved problematic nationwide. By campaign inception, the data showed that rates of inoculation among Black and Hispanic populations were consistently much lower than national averages.



The NMHA began by segmenting personas based on personal motivators – namely, a concern over side effects.

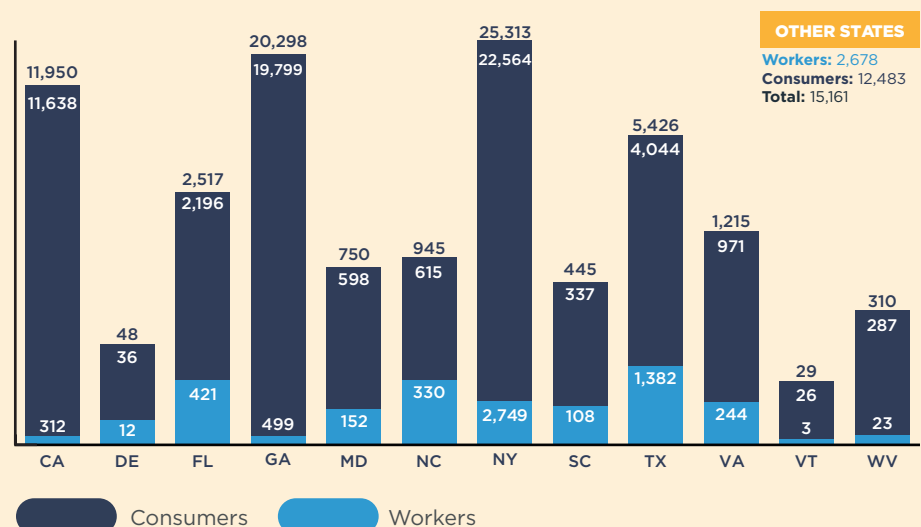
The campaign's messaging was effective. Vaccines and rewards largely were distributed to non-White populations. While the White, non-Hispanic demographic represents 59% of the U.S. population today, it comprised only 36% of the NMHA inoculations. And, while the Black demographic makes up 13.6% of the population, it received nearly 20% of campaign vaccinations. Most significantly, 6.1% of the U.S. population identifies as Asian, but 36% of the Flex vaccines were delivered to the Asian community.

FROM REGIONAL TO NATIONAL

Before it engaged the national interest, Flex for Checks initially targeted 12 states, including California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Missouri, North Carolina, New York, South Carolina, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia.

With early focus targeted on this list, the program was especially successful in those regions. Georgia was one of the top three states in total vaccinations, despite its comparatively smaller population. By demographic, Georgia accounted for the highest percentage of doses distributed among Black Americans. By comparison, in New York, only 30.2% of the Flex vaccinations went to White individuals, whereas on a state-wide level, over 56% of all vaccines administered went to White citizens.²

FLEX FOR CHECKS VACCINATIONS BY TARGET STATES





“We are supportive of NMHA as it is uniquely qualified and has demonstrated skill and expertise as evidenced in the current COVID-19 grant.”

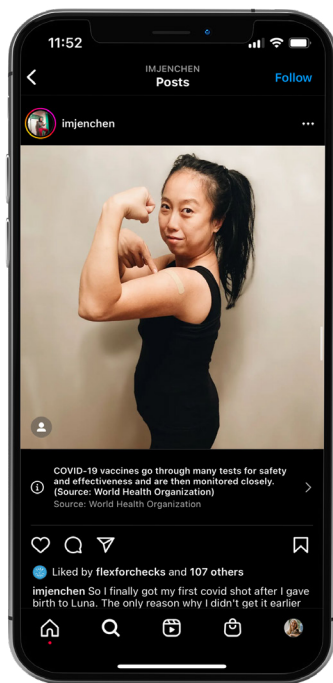
— Darby Anderson, Chief Strategy Officer, Addus

Social Media & PR Drive Success

They say it takes a village. But a good social media campaign certainly helps. The reach and scope of the Flex for Checks program was amplified through public education efforts, many of which were the focus of national PR campaigns and social media.

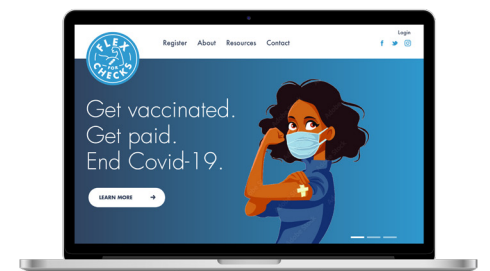
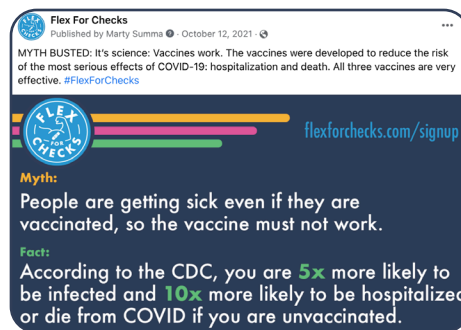
The program reached more than 718,000 individuals on Facebook and 100,000+ on Instagram – these social efforts directly contributed to 60% of Flex vaccines.

The campaigns were especially resonant among certain demographics. While Asian Americans are vaccinated at a higher rate nationally³, the Flex for Checks campaign saw high levels of engagement among an Asian American cohort. Of particular note is the rapid growth within the Chinese-American populations in New York and California, illustrating the potential impact of influencers within certain sub-populations. Celebrity endorsements from Rachael Ray, Dr. Ian Smith, and Dr. Mathew Knowles further bolstered the program.



LIVE ON RACHAEL

Dr. Ian Smith stopped by the Rachael Ray show to talk about the Flex for Checks program



National Minority
Health Association

About The National Minority Health Association

The National Minority Health Association was founded in 1988 by Dr. David L. Dalton, Chairman, and CEO of UNIVEC, INC. The NMHA deploys new programs that focus on patient-centered, value-based care, reduce costs, and improve outcomes for minorities and underserved communities, all in its mission to bring about health equity for all. To learn more, please visit www.theNMHA.org.

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¹ <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2021.770985/full>

² <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/demographic-vaccination-data> [10.6.22]

³ <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/latest-data-on-covid-19-vaccinations-by-race-ethnicity/>

⁴ <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/poll-finding/kff-covid-19-vaccine-monitor-profile-of-the-unvaccinated/>