

Building a Sustainable Action Plan for the Prevention, Detection, and Treatment of COVID-19 and Eliminating Health Disparities for the African American and Latino Communities

NBCI's Five-Year Plan

The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) has been developing a sustainable health structure for African Americans and Latinos for the past 25 years. The cornerstone of this structure is the Health Emergency Declaration (HED), which is the largest faith-based health initiative in the country for the African American community. The HED, the NBCI Clinical Trials Education Awareness and Participation Program (CTEAPP), the NBCI COVID-19 Data and Information Committee, and the NBCI Clinical Strategy Task Force will be the four columns that hold up our plan over the next five years.

The goal of the COVID-19 Sustainable Action Plan is not only to provide recommendations on resource allocation and distribution, but to deliver health messaging, clinical testing and assessments, and treatment guidelines from trusted sources to African American and Latino populations.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed deep and systemic inequities in our healthcare system that will only be resolved by education and the fair use of resources. The NBCI is part of a movement that is calling for the dissemination of verified information and equity-focused resource allocation throughout the pandemic. Policy makers at all levels must consider equity and health disparities when they decide where scarce COVID-19 resources are sent, whether those resources are vaccines, medications, PPE, or trained staff members.

The NBCI is currently working on a plan to get everyone in the African American and Latino communities vaccinated against COVID-19, implementing universal testing for the virus, and providing culturally competent mental health services for our target populations. We will continue our efforts when the pandemic is over so we can create a more equitable and just healthcare system for the future.

Ongoing action plans throughout all five years:

- Wear a mask in public at all times
- Practice social distancing
- Wash your hands frequently
- Participate in clinical trials so scientific research has good data on the African American community

January 2021 – June 2021

- Activate the NBCI's COVID-19 Data and Information Committee
- Activate the NBCI's Clinical Strategy Task Force
- Continue the NBCI's Mask Campaign for the Poor
- Work with state and local governments to make sure every African American is educated on the importance of getting a flu shot and the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Work with affinity organizations throughout the country on COVID-19 issues, access to healthcare issues, and disparities in healthcare issues including:
 - o the White House,
 - o HHS,
 - o the CDC,
 - o the NIH,
 - o Morehouse, Maharry, Drew, and Howard,
 - o the Black Nurses Association,
 - o the National Medical Association,
 - o the Cobb Institute,
 - o the Black Cardiologists Association, and
 - o civic groups.
- Promote universal COVID-19 testing during 2021-2023.

July 2021 – December 2021

- Improve access to care and help African Americans create a medical home for themselves by:
 - o finding a local clinic and a local doctor,
 - o participating in the Take Your Loved One to the Doctor program.
- Launch African American National Health Week during the last week of July every year. This year we will focus on getting all the stakeholders committed to our goals for the next five years, setting up a data collection protocol, and getting a National Health Survey approved for 40 million African Americans.

January 2022 – June of 2022

- Shining a Light in the Corners: making sure everyone has been vaccinated against COVID-19.
- Address the obstacles minority communities face when they try to get vaccinated for the common flu and COVID-19.
- Mental Health Focus: Activate the NBCI's Vaccine Board of Professionals to address the concerns of the African American and Latino communities about the safety of vaccination. Increase childhood and adult vaccination for all illnesses by 60% over the next ten years. The Board will include industry experts from pharma, the four black medical schools, and members of the NBCI's minister alliance.
- Disseminate a 40-question health survey to the NBCI's 150,000 churches and every African American in the country. Because this survey will be the first of its kind, it may take a year to coordinate the logistics. *The actual distribution of the health survey will probably take place in January of 2023.*

July 2022 – December 2022

Implement the National Black Church Initiative Health Disparities Root Causes Program that will address access to care, diet, exercise, doctor visits, smoking, obesity, cardiac diseases, diabetes, and cancer.

January 2023 – December 2023

- Tentative distribution of health survey, if not already executed.
- Health Disparities Root Causes Program – ongoing on original issues.
 - o Getting communities vaccinated for both the common flu and COVID-19.
 - o Making sure the African American community gets what it needs to maintain good health.
 - o Getting Diabetes Under Control program.

January 2024 – December 2024

Focus on obesity in African American communities.

January 2025 – December 2025

Focus on cancer in the African American communities.

We will start collecting data on the effectiveness of our programs at the end of 2021 and issue our Final Report in July of 2026 during African American Health Week.

We will send this report to President-elect Biden and Vice-President-elect Harris in January of 2021.

We will send the President and the Senate our Final Report and our next Five-Year Plan in 2026.