

NATIONAL BLACK CHURCH INITIATIVE
SUSTAINABLE ACTION PLAN TO
MAINTAIN THE HEALTH OF THE

AFRICAN AMERICAN
AND LATINX
COMMUNITIES

2020-2025: COVID-19
ERADICATING UNDERLYING DISPARITIES
IN HEALTHCARE

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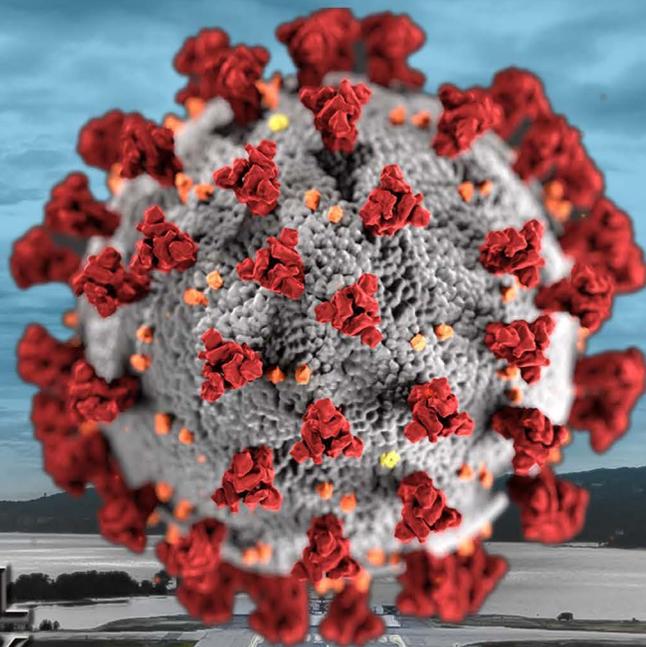


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DEDICATION



We dedicate this report first to Dr. Susan Moore, an African American physician who died on December 20, 2020, of COVID-19, after being discharged from Indiana University North Hospital in Carmel, Indiana when she complained to a White doctor that she was not receiving proper care. She was admitted to another local hospital 12 hours later, but died a few days afterwards.

We also dedicate this report to all the people who have died of COVID-19 around the world, and those who survived the disease but are suffering aftereffects that are crippling their lives.

Finally, we dedicate this report to all the doctors, nurses, respiratory therapists, emergency room personnel, and hospital cleaning staffs who have heroically nursed us through this disease, at the risk of their own lives, and will continue to do so until the last patient with COVID-19 is discharged from a hospital. Our debt to them can never be repaid.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The NBCI is deeply indebted to a number of individuals and organizations that have supported the process of putting this plan together.

They include the Rev. Sheldon Williams, senior pastor of the Co-op City Baptist Church in Bronx, New York; the Rev. Mark McCleary, senior pastor of the Liberty Seventh Day Adventist Church in Maryland; Dr. James McCoy of the Morehouse School of Medicine; Dr. Evelyn Lewis of the Lewis International Consulting Company; and Dr. Owen Garrett of the Bridge Clinical Consulting Company.

The members of the NBCI COVID-19 Data and Information Committee: Chair Dr. Joseph Webster, Dr. William Strudwick, Dr. Anthony Ibe, Dr. Lisa Fitzpatrick, Dr. Walter Faggett, Dr. Fabian Sandoval, Dr. Elena Fuentes-Afflick, Dr. Glenn Flores, and Dr. Mario Pacheco.

The NBCI would also like to thank our editorial and technical staff, including Rose Berman, Hazel Afolain, and William Joseph, who is the chief technology and multimedia manager of the NBCI.

I also want to specially thank the President of the Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) Dr. Michelle McMurry Heath; its Vice President for Infectious Diseases and Diagnostics Policy, Phyllis A. Arthur, MBA; and its Executive Vice President for Emerging Companies and Senior Vice President of Science and Regulatory Affairs, E. Cartier Esham, Ph.D.

Appreciation goes to Thomas Tighe, President and CEO of Direct Relief, Damon N. Taugher, Direct Relief's Vice President for Global Programs, and Sarah Gloria, the organization's grant coordinator.

Last but never least, we thank the member churches and the Board of Directors of the NBCI for having faith in me to lead.



“Bringing people together to serve humanity”

January 15, 2021

Dear Civil Rights and Human Rights Leaders:

The National Black Church Initiative is extremely excited to share with you an Executive Summary of our plan to encourage a hundred million of our brothers and sisters in the Black and Latino communities to get vaccinated against COVID-19. The plan is called *NBCI 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*, and it calls for cooperation and collaboration between all Black and Latino civil rights and human rights organizations.

As you well know, the NBCI and the Black church is uniquely positioned to have created this plan because of the vast moral influence we have through our 150,000 churches and 27.7 million members, who represent 37 major Black Protestant denominations. The NBCI deeply believes that this initiative must be led by medical professionals from both the African American and Latino communities, which is why we have included members of the National Medical Association and the National Hispanic Medical Association on the NBCI COVID-19 Data Information Committee. Here is a link to their deliberations on Saturday, January 9, 2021 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WeBwmxfwgPk&t=734s>

The members of the NBCI COVID-19 Data Information Committee are Dr. Joseph Webster, the Committee Chair and a gastroenterologist from Tallahassee, FL; Dr. William Strudwick, a specialist in emergency medicine in Washington, D.C.; Dr. Anthony Ibe, a family medicine practitioner in Washington, D.C.; Dr. Lisa Fitzpatrick an infectious diseases specialist who was recently appointed to the Roundtable on Health Literacy of the National Academy of Sciences; Dr. Walter Faggett, a pediatric psychiatrist and member of the Emerson Clinical Research Institute; Dr. Fabian Sandoval, a neurological researcher and CEO and President of the Emerson Clinical Research Institute; Dr. Elena Fuentes-Afflick, Vice-Chair of Pediatrics at the University of California at San Francisco; Dr. Glenn Flores, Chair of Pediatrics at the Connecticut Children’s Medical Center; and Dr. Mario Pacheco, a family practitioner in the rural southwest

and Vice Chancellor for Hispanic/Latino Health at the University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center.

You are receiving only the Executive Summary. To read the entire plan, please visit our website on February 1, 2021 at www.naltblackchurch.com. We welcome any comments, suggestions or ideas on how to make this plan better. Please do not forget to complete our survey at the back of this booklet.

Sincerely yours,
Your humble servant,

Rev. Right Most Anthony Evans
President

National Black Church Initiative Sustainable Action Plan to Maintain the Health of the African American Community 2020-2025: COVID-19, Eradicating Underlying Disparities in Healthcare

Executive Summary

The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI), a coalition of 150,000 African American churches, has crafted an innovative and community-led strategic health plan to get all 42 million African Americans in this country plus the Latino population, vaccinated against COVID-19. The NBCI was founded in 1992 to partner with organizations and officials who are trying to reduce racial disparities in healthcare. We are used to creating faith-based, cutting-edge solutions to stubborn economic and social issues. Our programs are based on reliable statistics, science-based strategies, and methods that work.

This will be the largest, faith-based mobilization of African American and Latino Protestant denominations in the country to achieve a single health goal. The NBCI has had its hand on the pulse of the African American and Latino communities for over 25 years, which is why it is the ideal organization to lead this effort.

African-Americans account for 1.4x the number of COVID-19 cases, 3.7x the number of hospitalizations, and 2.8x the number of COVID-19 deaths as White people. Those numbers are 1.7x, 4.1x, and 2.8x for Latinos (see Appendix 8). Both communities are being devastated by this virus. Because African-Americans and Latinos don't get good primary care, we have more conditions - like uncontrolled high blood pressure, diabetes, asthma, obesity, and heart disease - that make it harder for us to survive COVID-19 and produce more lingering problems after we recover from the acute stage of the disease.

The NBCI COVID-19 vaccination plan has three main goals:

1. Work with each state's public health system. Integrating our plan into each state's strategy will ensure that all the state's most vulnerable individuals get vaccinated, including those communities that have a vaccine-resistance rate above 80%. Only culturally tailored plans that speak to the concerns of each community will work.

2. Create a comprehensive outreach and education plan about the COVID-19 vaccines tailored specifically for the African American community and its reluctance to take medicine for underlying health conditions or receive vaccines.
3. Administer COVID-19 vaccines in an effective, safe, and culturally sensitive setting. Vaccine distribution must fit into the life, community, and cultural habits of the most vulnerable populations who need it, including those who work in retail, those who interact with the public on a daily basis, pregnant women, dependent children, the homeless, and individuals with compromised immunity, especially in areas where the poverty rate is above 30-40%.

ACTION STEPS

Team. The NBCI has assembled an impressive medical team of five African American and four Latino physicians under Dr. Joseph Webster, who oversees the NBCI's COVID-19 Data and Information Committee. The Committee will evaluate the scientific data Pfizer and Moderna submitted to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in their requests for Emergency Use Authorization. It will also talk with Pfizer's and Moderna's medical staffs and other health experts about how the vaccines were developed, their composition, and their individual ingredients.

All nine physicians will serve as public educators through social media, cable TV, talk shows, etc., to dispel myths and half-truths about the vaccines and to educate African American and Latino leaders and lay people about COVID-19 vaccine efficacy. We want to train trainers in all 100 major Black and Latino civil rights groups as well as other major stakeholders in both communities.

Data and Information Webinars. The nine physicians will host webinars to share information about the benefits of the COVID-19 vaccines on Zoom and other virtual platforms.

Media Coverage. The plan will be advertised to the Black and Latino communities with the help of three award-winning public relations firms: *Kelly Wright's America's Hope News Inc.*, *Stephanie Frederic's FGW Productions*, and *Carlos Alcazar's Culture One World* to handle the Latino market.

One-Page Fact Sheet

The NBCI's Clinical Strategy Task Force will produce a one-page fact sheet about the vaccines that will be distributed to the NBCI leadership and NBCI congregations all over the country. This handout will be certified and approved by the Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO): a major pharmaceutical trade group of which Pfizer and Moderna are members. The purpose of BIO's certification is to ensure that the scientific information soon to be distributed is consistent and factual. Once the one-page fact sheet is approved and certified by BIO, we will use it as the basis of our outreach campaign throughout the country.

Blast E-Mail

The NBCI will create a blast e-mail that will go to its 27.7 million members. It will contain critical information on the vaccines and locations where people can get vaccinated around the country.

Local Action

All of our local pastors will receive the following information, based on their zip code:

- . The one-page fact sheet on the COVID-19 vaccines.
- . Enough literature for all the members of their congregation plus other relevant information, like the Pfizer or Moderna websites, to which they can refer people with questions.
- . The location of the nearest local clinic, Walgreens, and other participating pharmacies from which to get the vaccines.
- . A step-by-step guide on how to encourage church members to get vaccinated.
- . Access to the telephone number of at least one of the NBCI's 250 participating physicians so they can get answers to questions from a qualified medical professional. The NBCI central staff will arrange this.

Outreach to Major Civil and Human Rights Organizations

Dr. Owen Garrick will be responsible for outreach to all the major civil rights groups in the country, including the NAACP, the National Urban League, Rainbow Push (PUSH), the National Action Network, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the National Poor People's Campaign, the National Hispanic Medical Association, and NBCI Hispanic specialists. His main task will be to answer questions and dispel concerns from these major groups concerning the integrity, ethics, safety, and value of the COVID-19 vaccines.

Outreach to African American and Latino Medical Schools and Health Establishments

Dr. James McCoy is head of the Department of Surgery at Morehouse College of Medicine and will be responsible for outreach to his medical school colleagues at the Howard University School of Medicine, Meharry School of Medicine, and the Charles Drew School of Medicine. He will also work with the NBCI's Hispanic specialist to reach Latino medical groups.

Critical Response Teams (CRTs)

Composition of a CRT Team (15-20 individuals)

- Local team leader
- Clinical Leadership – Latino and Black doctors and nurses/public health professionals
- Community representative
- Outreach workers/volunteers (5-10)
- Mental health specialists
- Church/community-based organizations
- Academic leadership - HBCU/Nursing School/School of Pharmacy

The CRTs will:

- 1) visit critical zip codes, like the major inner-city housing project Co-Op City in the Bronx that has a population of 40,000.
- 2) recruit and train members of the community, including churches and healthcare providers, to educate the public and encourage people to get vaccinated.
- 3) tap into local resources to make sure people are able to a) get vaccinated, b) identify people infected with COVID-19, c) isolate those who are infected, d) help contact trace and get people antibody tested to determine who is protected and who is still vulnerable, and e) manage emotional health.

They will also keep track of local public health teams monitoring outbreaks, share local ideas about clinical guidance, talk about how to support high-risk group living situations, staff local investigation teams, identify local clinics in their areas (especially in underserved communities), find isolation hotels for homeless people with COVID-19, find isolation hotels that will take in people who cannot isolate at home due to overcrowding or safety concerns, check consumer resources to identify which grocery stores have enough food and which stores sell masks/gloves/disinfectants, provide up-to-date information on hospital capacity and which community health centers and private practices are open or partially open, and explore the availability of the COVID-19 vaccines. They will also respond to calls and e-mails from the public, businesses, and community partners.

Special Tasks for Local Churches

We expect that 700-1,000 NBCI churches will participate in every city. Their roles and responsibilities are outlined below:

- . Ten percent of the churches will serve their area hospitals by helping critical care providers. They will clean first-responders' houses, get groceries for them, and do whatever is needed so they can focus on self-care, the needs of their families and, most importantly, the needs of their patients. The NBCI is still working out the logistics of implementing this plan and has discovered that its execution will depend on the amount of PPE available to NBCI members.
- . Two hundred churches will ensure that everyone is properly educated on how to approach community and church members with compassion, cultural sensitivity, and love. The NBCI may add an additional 200 churches to this particular role in areas with high poverty rates such as Baltimore, Cleveland, Detroit, Richmond, Memphis, and New Orleans.
- . One-hundred fifty churches in each city will help city health departments run mobile clinics, help transport people to vaccination centers to get their shot, and distribute PPE and literature as necessary.
- . The NBCI's 30 mega-churches in each state will cover everyone within a 25-mile range of their church community and are responsible for reaching out to rural areas and trailer parks near the cities of Chicago, Los Angeles, and Houston. We will provide them with all the literature for education they need.
- . We will integrate local clinics with our churches and serve as vaccination sites if necessary.

Mental Health

The NBCI will work with the Association of Black Psychologists, a professional organization founded in 1968 in San Francisco, to develop literature on mental health and how to deal with anxieties around COVID-19 and the vaccines. This literature will mirror the one-page handout and will feature contact lists, website links to local psychologists, and other resources on mental health.

We have two goals. The first is to create pop-up clinics that provide free mental health services in poor African American and Latino neighborhoods and areas where the vaccine resistance rate is 80%. The second is to ease anxieties in these communities about the COVID-19 vaccines and encourage members of the community to get vaccinated when the time comes.

The pop-up clinics will be staffed by Black and Latino ministers and mental health professionals who will offer their services for free to help people cope with the economic, emotional, and physical stresses of the pandemic. Staff members will be Black and Latino to ensure that the help we provide is culturally competent and sensitive to the concerns of the African American and Latino communities during this very tough time. The NBCI will also develop literature on mental health and how to deal with fears about the COVID-19 vaccines. This literature will feature links for local psychologists and other mental health resources in the communities we visit.

The African American population is not only dealing with health-related stressors caused by the pandemic, but societal stressors brought on by the past two years of Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests against the Trump administration and riots against murderous cops shooting down innocent Black citizens. These multiple traumatic events have created overwhelming anxiety, PTSD, and a deep need for mental health services in the African American and Latino communities.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

We are already collecting data on the effectiveness of our programs. That will continue throughout the next five years. We will issue yearly reports on our progress, and a Final Report on the First Five-Year Plan in July of 2026 during African American Health Week, which is the last week in July. We will send the President and the Senate our Final Report and our Second Five-Year Plan in 2026 as well.

We will send this report to President-elect Biden and Vice-President-elect Harris in January of 2021 and comply with all of the COVID-19 directives included in Biden's First 100 Days document. COVID-19 testing will be ongoing in all our churches during the next five years to ensure that this pandemic is under control. We also have specific health goals for each year.

FUNDING

The success of this plan will depend on the amount of funding we receive. Right now, we can implement portions of the plan; but if we are to continue past this year and be successful, we need full support. A stable civil society will depend on defeating COVID-19. We estimate that we need a grant of \$100 million at the minimum to put our plan into effect and do our part.

Register Your Organization

Name or the organization and mailing address

Website

CEO/President/ Executive Director

How many members?

Who will be your point person/ email?

How would you like to help?

Send all survey to: rachel.nbc@gmail.com

COVID-19 Organizational Survey

Has your organization suffered any loss of life due to COVID-19?

Yes

No

How many?

Have you had to lay off due to COVID-19?

How Many?

Can your organization lead his plan?

How Many?

Send all survey to: rachel.nbci@gmail.com