



Caitlin Washburn

M.P.H. Candidate, Global Health Track

caitlin.washburn@vanderbilt.edu

Practicum Site:

Metro Public Health Department / Siloam Health
Nashville, TN

Practicum Site Supervisor:

Amy Richardson, M.P.H.

Community Health Worker COVID-19 Response in Davidson County, TN

Introduction: This practicum was designed to address the disproportionate impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on immigrant and refugee communities in Nashville, TN, and was conducted in partnership with the Metro Public Health Department (MPHD) and Siloam Health. The overall objectives were to gain a better understanding of the health care challenges, to gain a better understanding of governmental response in a pandemic, and to learn about the impact the pandemic has had on these communities from both a national and local perspective.

Methods: The practicum was designed around the responsibilities of coordinator position for the Community Health Worker (CHW) COVID Response Program. Biweekly meetings with local community organizations doing frontline work in immigrant and refugee communities to share information were organized. Quality improvement activities were performed to evaluate the needs of the CHW team and the patients they served. Resources were gathered in accordance with the highest observed needs in the community.

Outcome: An extensive guide was created and used by the CHW team to connect COVID-19 patients with the resources to effectively quarantine or isolate. Presentations were provided to the CHW team, local advocacy groups, and other organizations working in immigrant and refugee communities. Spreadsheets were created to track the demographic characteristics of patient referrals and enrollees. Infographics were produced to highlight program updates and were shared with MPHD officials and the Mayor's Office.

Conclusion: This practicum aided the launch and implementation of a CHW-based COVID response program, allowed for engagement in direct pandemic response efforts, and provided experience working with both a public health department and a nonprofit health care clinic. This experience also involved promoting the CHW model at a government agency and will hopefully pave the way for the continued utilization of the model in pandemic response efforts.