

AUTHORS

Davis Chhoa, BA; Niet Khay; Ewen N. Wang, MD; Judy Young, BA

TITLE

How We Feel: COVID-19 Pandemic Experiences Among Intergenerational Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese Americans in San Francisco

ABSTRACT

Within the Asian American Pacific Islander population, Southeast Asian Americans (SEAs) report lower health care access and utilization rates due to lower rates of English proficiency, educational attainment, and median household incomes.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated many social determinants of health and barriers to health care for SEAs. The objective of this study is to determine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the utilization of health care services and identify opportunities to support SEA communities.

This cross-sectional study administered surveys and conducted focus groups with 78 participants (>= 14 years) across generations and Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese ethnicity in partnership with the Southeast Asian Development Center (<https://seadcenter.org/>) in San Francisco, CA. We identified two themes in the utilization of medical services: fear of anti-Asian violence and barriers to health care; two themes in COVID-19 prevention: utilization of COVID-19 services and COVID-19 safety precautions; and two themes in the role of community and community centers: intergenerational support and essential spaces and services. Despite the challenges posed by the duality of the COVID-19 pandemic and fear of anti-Asian violence, Southeast Asian Americans persisted with resilience to seek health services with intergenerational support and the guidance of community centers.

This highlights the significance of community-oriented health among SEAs and the value of community-led health interventions in advancing health for a historically underserved population.

COMMUNITY PARTNER

[Southeast Asian Development Center \(SEADC\)](#)

CATEGORY

Improving Health Equity, Healthcare Access, Service, and Quality