

# **SYSTEMIC BARRIERS TO REFERRAL SUCCESS IN A RURAL FRESNO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA CHW INTERVENTION**

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Presented by: Dustin Hedrick, BA

Central Valley Health Policy Institute

California State University, Fresno

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# Introduction

**Dustin Hedrick, BA**  
Pronouns: he/him/his  
Data Analyst  
Central Valley Health Policy Institute  
California State University, Fresno



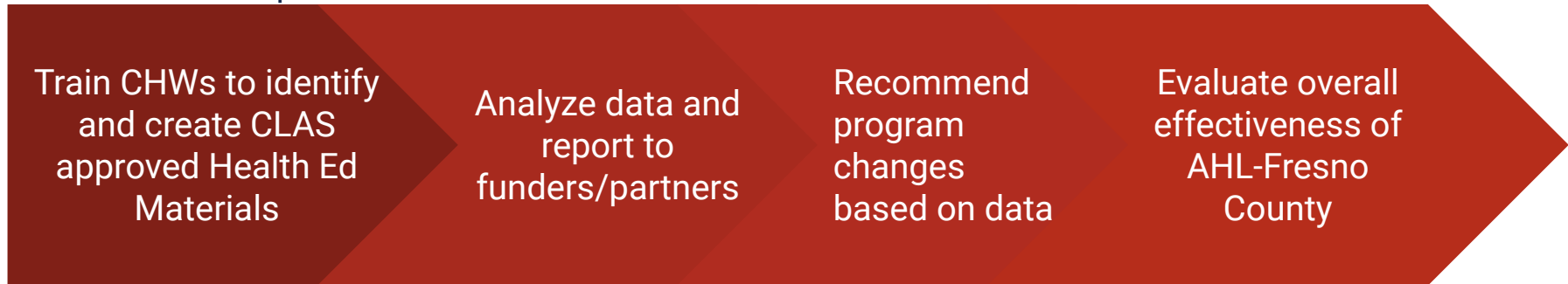
# Background

The Advancing Health Literacy (AHL) - Fresno County Project is a CHW-led initiative focused on improving health disparities in rural West Fresno County.

CHW responsibilities include:



CVHPI was responsible for:



# CHW Impact



- Distributed 15,522 health education materials
  - 4,036 related to COVID-19
- 211 COVID-19 vaccine referrals
- 3,439 individuals connected with during outreach

# Methods

## Qualitative Measures

- CHW and Supervisor Interviews (N = 27)
  - 12 CHW participants
  - 15 Supervisor participants

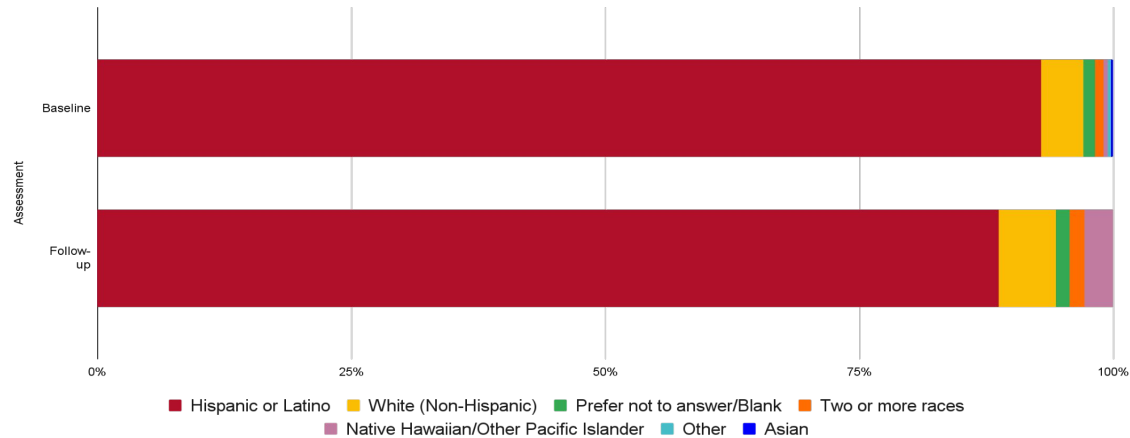
## Quantitative Measures

- Data collected from 609 unique participants
- Questions ranged from food security to patient provider dynamics
  - In the last 12 months, have you worried about running out of food before you have enough money to buy more?
  - Does your doctor listen to you carefully?

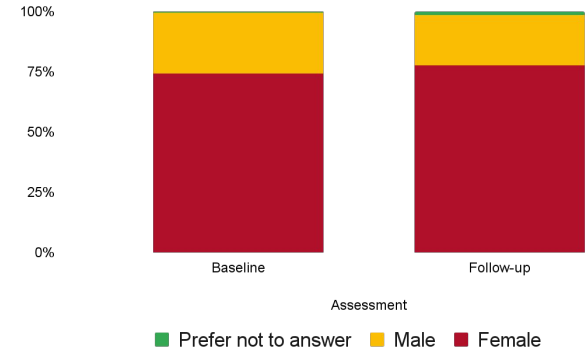
# Demographics

- A majority of participants identified as Hispanic or Latino (92.92%).
- Most participants identified as Female.
- Participants in the AHL program had a me age of 48 years old (SD 15.23).

Race/Ethnicity of Enrolled Participants

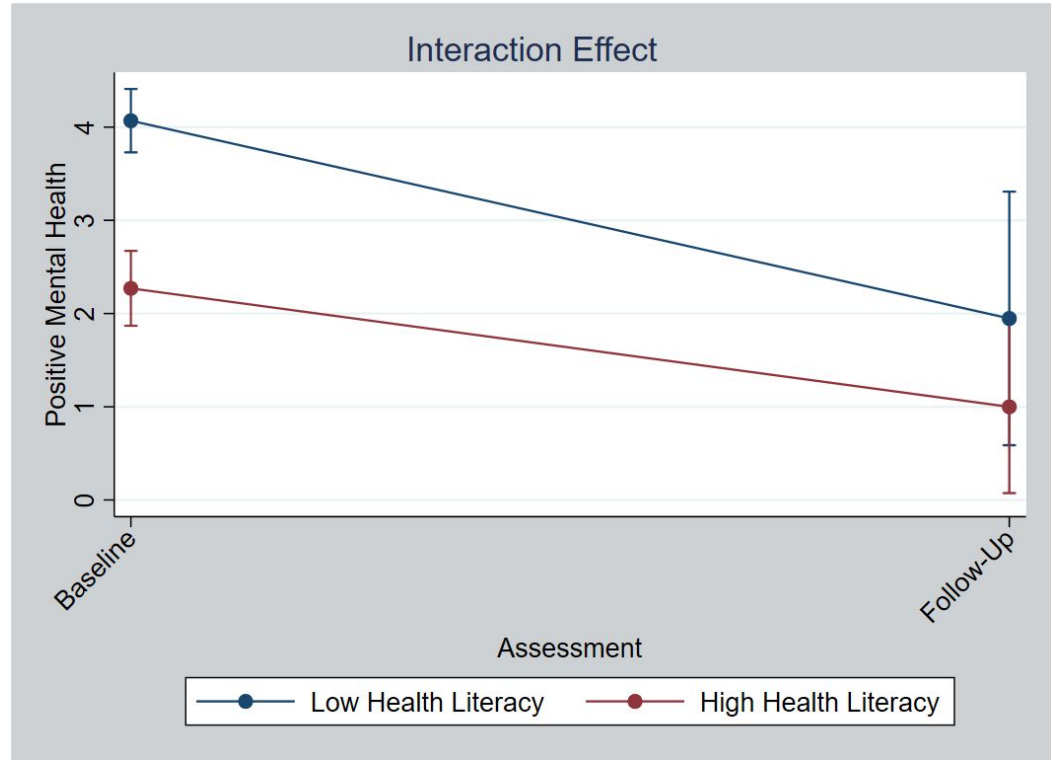


Gender



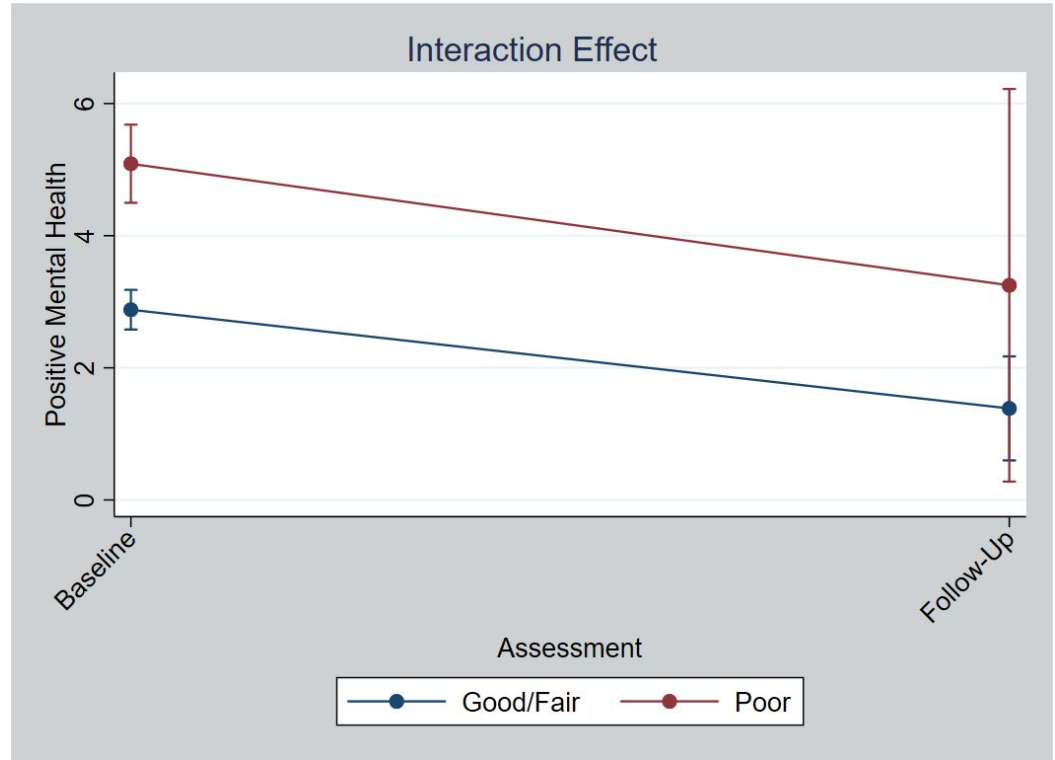
# Results

- This graph represents the relationship between health literacy and mental health scores at baseline and follow-up
- Lower average mental health scores at follow-up



# Results

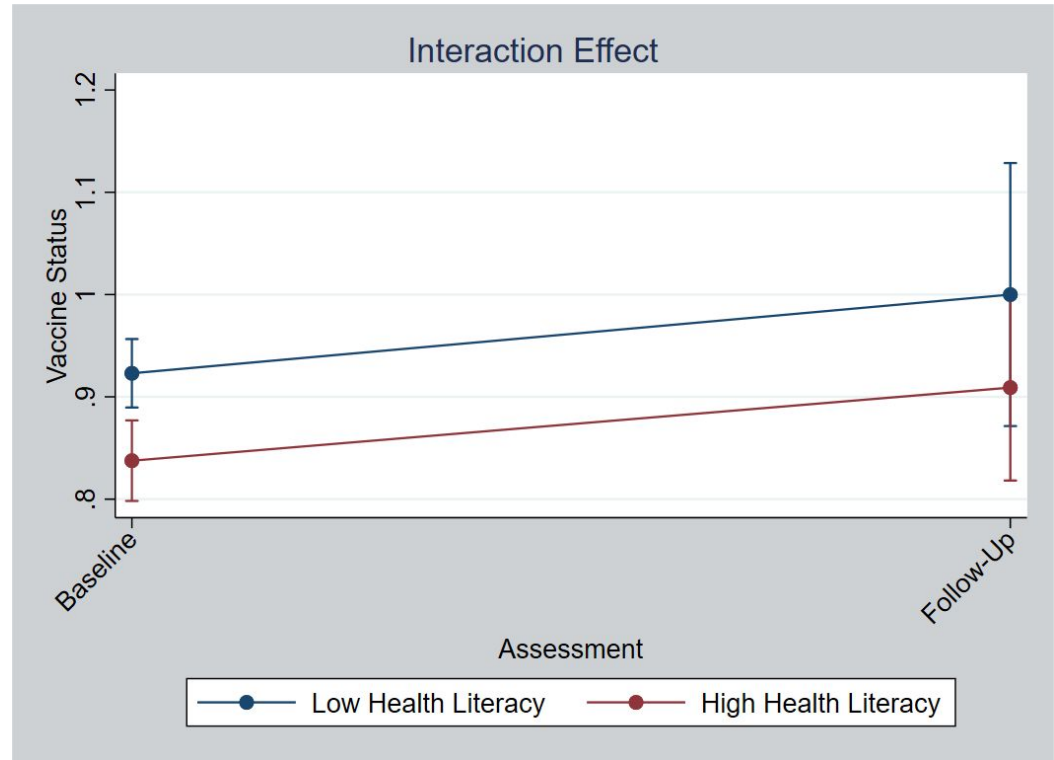
- This graph represents the relationship between positive provider relationship and mental health scores at baseline and follow-up
- Again we see lower average mental health scores at follow-up



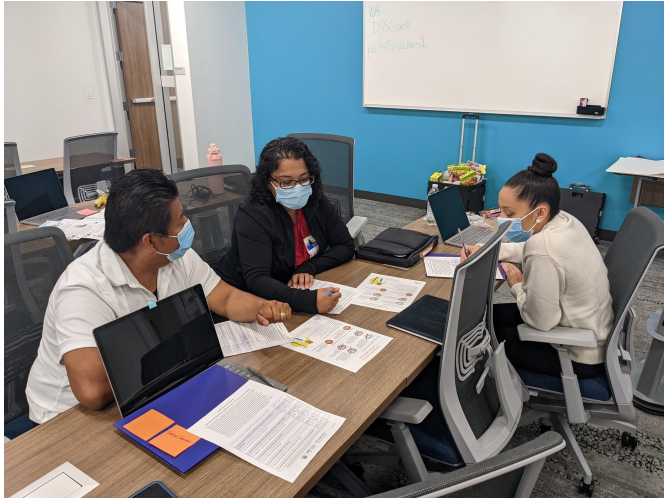


# Results

- This graph represents the health literacy and vaccination status at baseline and follow-up
- A higher concentration of those in the follow-up had received a COVID-19 vaccination



# Discussion



- Clients received health education as part of the study
  - Clients were provided with knowledge and tools
  - Clients may have been better able to identify their own needs

# Discussion

- Frustration with a lack of referral services
  - Only 256 referrals were initiated
- During CHW interviews it was uncovered that some clients were not able to follow through with referrals due to inaccessibility (i.e. transportation, scheduling conflicts, and referral location)

# Discussion

- Client trust in the CHW
  - CHWs commented on client mistrust of the healthcare system and the process of grant based programs
    - During anonymous CHW interviews, it was discussed that by the time CHWs have developed trust with the community the grant period ends.

# Recommendations

- Increased funding for CHW led interventions
- Increase the number of specialists available to rural communities

# Limitations

- Limited referral availability
- Limited number of follow-up assessments
  - Difficulties related to CHW turnover

# Financial Disclosures

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- Fresno County
- Office of Minority Health (OMH) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

There are no conflicts of interest for activities discussed in this presentation.

## Thank you

Authors: Dustin Hedrick, BA; Kate Ingram, MPH; Davenna Morales, BS; Emanuel Alcalá, PhD

Questions please contact: Dustin Hedrick at [dustinhedrick899@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:dustinhedrick899@mail.fresnostate.edu)