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Title

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Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/40q8p6js>

Journal

Medical Care, 58(3)

ISSN

0025-7079

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Publication Date

2020-03-01

DOI

10.1097/mlr.0000000000001272

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Peer reviewed

Health Fairs Remain Important for Chinese Americans After Implementation of the Affordable Care Act

The APHC Experience

To the Editor:

We read with great interest the study by Park et al,¹ which examined the effects of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) on health care access and utilization among Asian American subgroups. The authors found a 5.7% reduction in uninsurance for Chinese Americans after implementation of the ACA, but there was limited improvement on health care access measures.¹ The authors suggest that outreach programs are necessary to help them navigate the health care system.¹ To expand upon this, we believe that health fairs can be useful for improving health care access for Chinese Americans.

Since 2008, Asian Pacific Health Corps (APHC) at University of California,

Los Angeles (UCLA), has been hosting health fairs in the San Gabriel Valley, which has one of the highest concentrations of Chinese Americans in California.² APHC is an undergraduate student volunteer organization that aims to promote healthy lifestyles among disadvantaged Asian communities. We serve disadvantaged Chinese Americans who may not be able to accurately communicate their health issues or lack health insurance. At the health fairs, the uninsured rate for pre-ACA (2008–2011) and post-ACA (2015–2018) was 48.0% and 31.8%, respectively, a 16.2% reduction in uninsurance for Chinese Americans since the implementation of the ACA. Also, we have found that lack of health insurance is significantly associated with elevated blood pressure and body mass index in the Chinese American population.³ As some APHC volunteers are raised in the health fair participants' community and fluent in either Mandarin or Cantonese, our hope is that these health fairs may continue to help Chinese Americans to navigate the health care system by providing a sense of comfort and lift the language and cultural barriers. For example, we have utilized the health fairs to further assist elderly Chinese American immigrants to understand dementia knowledge

and the details of ACA in their own language.^{4–6}

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The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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