

NYC COVID-19 Rapid Response Coalition

Importance:

The Coalition proactively reaches underserved populations to reduce negative health impacts of COVID-19 while forming an important group of nongovernmental organisations able to tackle future health crises.

Innovation:

The NYC COVID-19 Rapid Response Coalition harnesses the power of private organisations to quickly and effectively reach at-risk and underserved populations during a pandemic. It shows how to use technology effectively in a health crisis.

What is it:

A coalition formed during COVID-19 that brought together organizations operating pro bono to achieve a record of impact that made a measurable difference in the life of the city and its most at-risk and underserved populations through SMS outreach, food delivery, PPE, and donation of test kits to frontline community-based organizations.

The network grew from 80 organizations at launch in April 2020 to more than 280 currently and offers 560 service programs. It is now a multi-stakeholder collaborative of partners that include health systems, managed care organizations, government agencies, community-based organizations, and private-sector innovators.

The main priority areas are:

- Emergency food, testing, and other supply distribution
- Technology outreach, integration and engagement
- Expansion of coordinated, accountable social service networks
- Capacity building to deliver clinical and social needs to vulnerable populations in the home



280

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How it creates impact:

It links vulnerable populations to services while using innovative technology to improve efficiency. For example, coalition partners were able to test and deploy text message (SMS) chatbot technologies to communicate with their populations and direct them to the resources most relevant to their needs. Through multiple deployments, the coalition reached more than 65,000 vulnerable New Yorkers through SMS outreach, primarily individuals recently discharged from hospitals or living with chronic medical conditions, with between 9-12% of the population responding.

Since its launch, the network has provided more than 22,000 referrals to more than 15,000 New Yorkers. More than half of these referrals have resulted in the individual or family receiving the service they require, with success rates much higher where eligibility criteria are broad, such as emergency food, the most frequently sought resource during the pandemic.

Admin Management:

Originally there were no costs for the government as it was run entirely through the private sector. The government is now involved in coordination aspects and some advisory roles. Overall, it's a very low burden but the UK would need an organisation such as PHS to help convene and organise various partners.

Costs:

Currently has an annual budget of \$1 million USD. This budget is entirely made up of philanthropic donations.

Patient Benefit:

Mitigates the impact of COVID-19 and allows vulnerable populations to receive essential items like food, PPE, and test kits. The approaches are proactive and reach out to patients who may not be aware of the services offered in the community.

Provider/Carer Benefit:

The Coalition has preventative services to keep patients from entering health care settings thus decreasing burden on providers.

65,000

New Yorkers
were reached

22,000

Referrals since
its launch

