

# Project: Zoosiab Program

## Hmong Cultural Center of Butte County



### LOCATION

Rural, Butte County, CA



### TARGET POPULATION

- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Hmong Elders (Age 50+)

### CONTACTS

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### OVERVIEW

The Zoosiab program is a community-based prevention and early intervention program that aims to prevent and/or reduce mental health problems (e.g. psychological distress) and social isolation and improve emotional well-being among Hmong elders by strengthening sense of community and social engagement, improving psychological and spiritual mental health, and increasing access to culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health services. Zoosiab is designed to be culturally meaningful and relevant for the Hmong elders.



#### Program Components

**Group activities** includes recreational groups, field trips, and community garden and health education sessions.



**Resource connections** include linkages to health and mental health services, referrals to shamans or community leaders for mental health issues, care coordination (or patient navigation), and transportation services to and from referral sites.

**Individual services** include office visits, counseling/discussion, home visits, interpretation/translation services, patient companions that accompany elders to offsite mental health or shaman services.

### GOALS



**GOAL 1. Increase Access to Mental Health Services for Unserved, Underserved, and Inappropriately Served Populations:** The first step in reducing disparities in mental health is making services more available to those in need. The Zoosiab recreational group meetings have increased in frequency from three times a month to six times a month.



**GOAL 2. Improve the Quality of Mental Health Services for Unserved, Underserved, and Inappropriately Served Populations:** Services must not only be accessible, but also of the highest quality and meet the needs of the communities. The Zoosiab Program (group activities, resource connections, and individual services) is facilitated in the Hmong elders' native language, culture, and literacy level to foster quality social activities and produce culturally meaningful evaluation results.



**GOAL 3. Build on Community Strengths to Increase the Capacity of and Empower Unserved, Underserved, and Inappropriately Served Communities:** Access to quality services means nothing without community engagement in local mental health programs. The Zoosiab program incorporates a community garden for the elders to utilize their gardening skills as part of their therapeutic intervention.

### STRATEGIES

Build and sustain trust within the community and the participants through linguistically competent and culturally sensitive staff.



Engage participants in non-stigmatizing, respectful ways that address health literacy, are culturally acceptable and also help build bi-cultural bridges.

Convene recreational groups that facilitate elder-to-elder support groups.

### EVALUATION – PRELIMINARY RESULTS

#### Provider Perspective: Social activities, language access, and transportation can help elder participants.

"social engagement through group activities such as recreational group, field trips, and community garden were the most successful components of the Zoosiab Program for improving mental health and social well-being of Hmong elders"

"Some of the biggest barriers elder participants faced included language and transportation challenges. Many of the Hmong elders could not drive and their adult children were often busy. Thus, the staff were often responsible for the transportation of the Hmong elder clients for services. Because many of the Hmong elder clients do not speak English, they trusted and relied on our staff for interpretation and translational services at these service visits."

"When we connected them to, you know, a resource that focused on mental health, then they were able to access it. So I would say our resource connections as well as individual services were helpful. We are helping them individually to get to where they want to be and get the mental health services that they need."

#### Elder Participant Perspectives: Can depend on the Zoosiab Program staff to support

"We are really relieved and happy to know about the Hmong organization and how much it has helped us."

"When I am stressed I can still call this organization for help. Otherwise, I don't have anyone else to ask for help."

"You will be our guiding light and show other community members your skills, so they will respect us." (talking about the program staff)

"Now I have you all. So it makes me happier because you all are helping me out." (talking about the program staff)

**Health Education Pre/Post Quiz**  
March 19 – May 22, 2019

	PRE Quiz	POST Quiz
	71%	95%

#### Health education sessions can improve self-efficacy and cultural orientation to services

Health Education is one of the topics for the health education sessions. During the pre quiz, 71% of participants scored a 60% or higher. On the post quiz, 95% of participants scored a 70% or higher.

Participant's knowledge of the health education topic increased from the pre quiz because staff delivered the lessons and activities in the elder's native language, provided visuals and hands-on activities, and engaged participants through quality conversations.

### CONCLUSIONS

Programs serving Hmong should be culturally-centered and defined, incorporating practices that arise from the values and norms of Hmong culture and not following Western approaches.