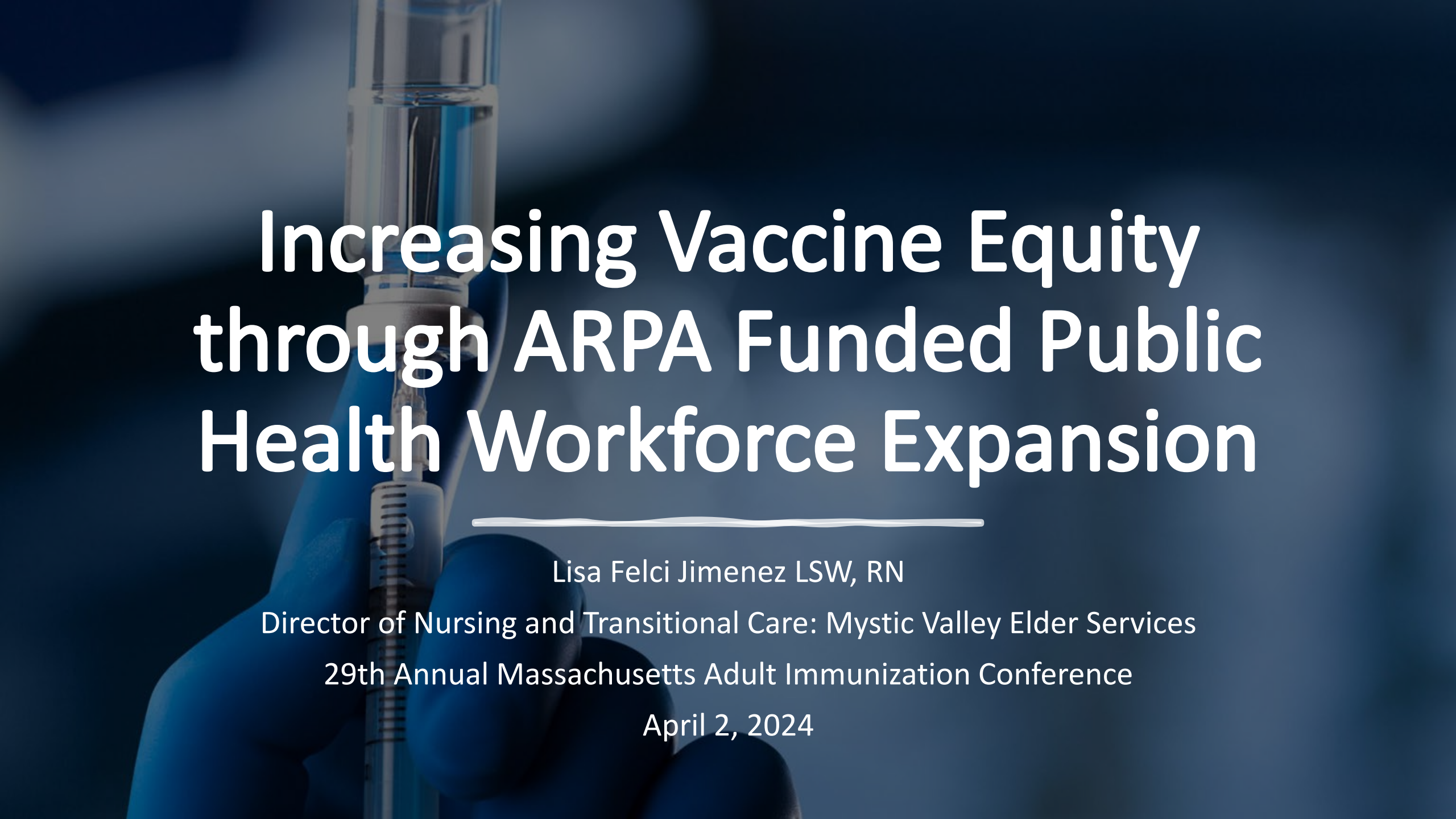




# Increasing Vaccine Equity through ARPA Funded Public Health Workforce Expansion

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29th Annual Massachusetts Adult Immunization Conference

April 2, 2024

# Disclosure

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I, Lisa Felci Jimenez, have been asked to disclose any significant relationships with commercial entities that are either providing financial support for this program or whose products or services are mentioned during this presentation.

I have no relationships to disclose.

I may discuss the use of vaccines in a manner not approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, but in accordance with ACIP recommendations.

# Aging Service Access Points in Massachusetts

There are 24 ASAPS in the Commonwealth all contracted with the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

ASAPS act as an entry point for older adults, people with disabilities, caregivers, and health care professionals to access a wide variety of home and community-based programs, services, information, care coordination and support.

ASAPS provide services including the Home Care , Senior Nutrition , Options Counseling, Family Caregiver Support, Protective Services, Community Transition Liaison and Supportive Housing Programs.

Mystic Valley Elder Services (MVES) is a private nonprofit organization founded in 1975 that assists over 20,000 individuals annually in eleven communities north of Boston.

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# Executive Office of Elder Affairs Public Health Workforce Expansion Grant

- Through ARPA, EOEA issued Public Health Workforce Expansion Project to “expand the Massachusetts public health workforce to better address the challenges associated with COVID-19, as well as future public health emergencies.”
- Mystic Valley Elder Services was awarded initial grant in July 2022 with options to extend until September 2024.
- Grant was utilized to provide a Wellness Nurse to work with residents in our existing Supportive Housing Sites in Malden, Chelsea, Revere and Everett.





# Wellness Nurse:

- Weekly office hours and one monthly Health Education Presentation
- Works with in-house Resident Service Coordinators to identify all residents who would benefit from support with:
  - Assessment of functional limitations and health needs
  - Assistance communicating with Health Care Providers
  - Checking vital signs, blood sugar level and weight
  - Education on chronic disease self management
  - Being taught how to use medical equipment as prescribed



## Immunization Awareness and Action through Education:

- Developed education session on Immunization Awareness in August 2023 with goal of introducing importance of Flu and Covid-19 vaccinations in the fall.
- Focused on vaccine safety and effectiveness.
- Discussed how infections can further exacerbate chronic diseases and cause complications.
- Rolled out plan to have Covid and Flu clinics at Malden sites administered in community rooms.

| DATE     | BUILDINGS           | ATTENDEES | TYPE OF CLINIC          |
|----------|---------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| 9/6/23   | 557 Pleasant Street | 55        | Flu Clinic              |
| 9/12/23  | 630 Salem Street    | 47        | Flu Clinic              |
| 11/15/23 | 557 Pleasant Street | 35        | COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic |

# Identifying the Diverse Needs in our Communities:

- During our work at our Malden sites, we identified that there were Cantonese and Mandarin speaking residents who were interested in the Wellness Program.
- Started to introduce internal staff member Yi Huang who speaks Mandarin and Cantonese to translate all Public Health Presentations.
- Numbers of attendees from our Asian communities continued to increase monthly and requested education on topics including healthy eating, preventative screenings and vaccinations!



# Addressing RSV with Cultural Competency :

- Wellness Nurse Team developed a plan to educate the buildings in January 2024 on the benefit of the Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccine.
- Discussed the CDC recommendation that all adults aged 60 or older should receive vaccine.
- Many residents are involved in caregiving roles for school age grandchildren before and after school.
- Reviewed the risk of severe infection for elders if exposed.
- Discussed questions and concerns in a safe space with cultural awareness and focused on history of mistrust of Western Medicine for some residents.
- Many residents inquired regarding obtaining vaccine but were concerned regarding transportation to pharmacy and scheduling time away during the week when they are responsible for childcare.



# Vaccinations Delivered to your Doorstep

- Resident Service Coordinator worked with Maplewood Wellness Pharmacy Director Thao Hunyh to schedule RSV vaccination clinic.
- Clinic focused on ensuring all written information and consents were translated into Mandarin and Cantonese.
- Translator was on site with Wellness Nurse provide support in completing all documentation prior to vaccination and to answer any questions.
- **57 Chinese speaking residents were vaccinated against RSV on February 6, 2024.**

RSV CLINIC FEBRUARY 6<sup>TH</sup> 10AM – NOON

呼吸道合胞病毒 (RSV) 預防針 clinic

時間：星期二，2/6/2024，早上10點 至 下午12點

IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM

地點：大活動室

SIGN UP BY FEBRUARY 2<sup>ND</sup> TO SECURE A SPOT

報名方法：請向Terri 經理報名，最遲在星期五，2/2/2024 報名，請記得帶同你的紅藍咭 (Medicare card)，到Terri 辦公室報名。

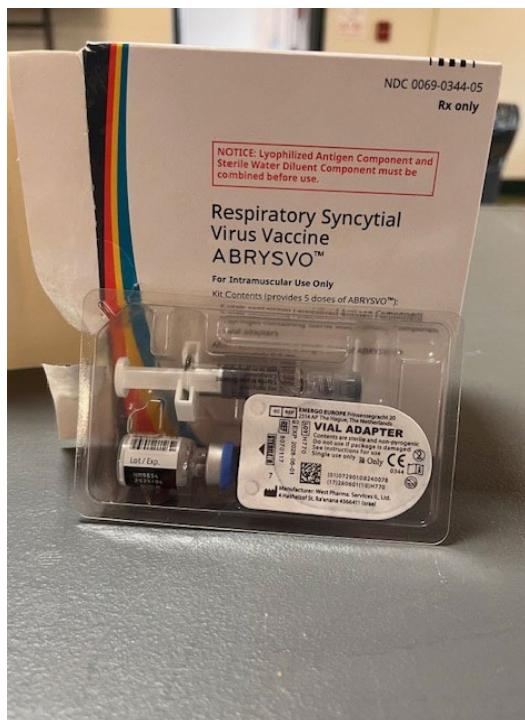
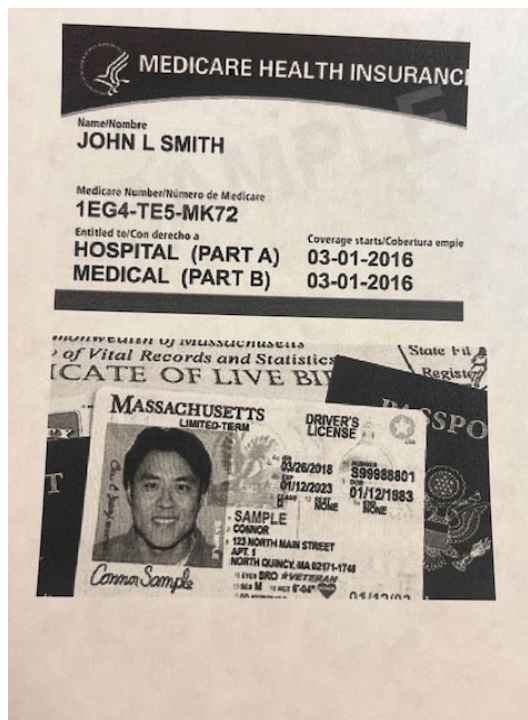


SIGN UP WITH TERRI AT THE MVES OFFICE-BRING YOUR MEDICARE CARD

RSV is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. Most people recover in a week or two, but RSV can be serious. Infants and older adults are more likely to develop severe RSV and need

hospitalization. Vaccines are available to protect older adults from severe RSV.

呼吸道合胞病毒 (RSV) 會引起肺部和呼吸道感染。這種病毒非常普遍，大多數兒童在 2 歲前就感染過這種病毒。呼吸道合胞體病毒也可感染成人。



RSV Clinic 630 Salem Street





# Addressing Vaccine Equity Locally

- Prior to receiving ARPA funding through EOEA, residents did not have access to translation services and materials in their languages or educational sessions that addressed the needs of vaccinations.
- “Lack of trust in biomedical research, government and healthcare systems especially among racial/ethnic minorities and under resourced communities is a long-standing issue rooted in social injustice (AuYoung et. al, 2023).”
- Meeting residents where they are at by building rapport and addressing their specific concerns with cultural competency has been the key to increasing vaccination rates in our communities!

# Citations & Special Thanks

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AuYoung, M., Rodriguez Espinosa, P., Chen, W., Juturu, P., Young, M.-E. D. T., Casillas, A., Adkins-Jackson, P., Hopfer, S., Kissam, E., Alo, A. K., Vargas, R. A., & Brown, A. F. (2023). Addressing racial/ethnic inequities in vaccine hesitancy and uptake: lessons learned from the California alliance against COVID-19. *Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 46(1/2), 153–166.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10865-022-00284-8>

## **THANK YOU !**

Executive Office of Elder Affairs for their support and funding this important work.

MVES CEO Lisa Gurgone, MS and Director of QI Dr. Lisa Beauregard.

The MA Adult Immunization Coalition for this incredible opportunity!