



COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics: Saving Lives Through Trust

Briva's COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics are a partnership between Briva Health and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to deliver timely and accessible COVID-19 vaccinations to hard to reach communities. Briva created this program in record speed to save lives of communities facing health disparities, especially those with vaccine hesitancy and facing barriers to accessing technology needed to acquire vaccine appointments at the start of the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out. Applying a culturally-responsive approach to public health, Briva hired medical professionals who are representative of and speak the languages of the racially and culturally diverse communities Briva works with. The COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic was successful from the start, vaccinating nearly 500 people during its first event. Subsequently, Briva hosted additional large-scale events as well as regular Vaccine Clinics every Saturday 9-5 at Briva's conveniently located clinic on Lake Street in South Minneapolis. Briva also set up an innovative and flexible mobile clinic to reach communities facing health disparities in Greater Minnesota and in area schools. This program is a unique clinic model created by a community-based organization. It illustrates Briva's commitment to creating innovative health equity programs and its capacity to adapt and be responsive during uncertain times.

"I didn't know who or what to trust but kept seeing or hearing about the Somali doctors at Briva so I thought to myself let me ask questions before getting it. The Staff were great and all my fears were addressed."

- Program Participant

"I didn't change [my perceptions about the vaccine] as I was pretty informed but definitely my family's. Seeing doctors and nurses from our community made them feel comfortable to ask all their questions."

- Program Participant



~5000

Doses administered to date to clients identifying as:

African	42%
African American or Black	21%
Hispanic or Latino	15%
White	13%
Asian	5%
Other	5%

Clients' Language



SOMALI ENGLISH

SPANISH

AMHARIC

OROMO

Clients' Age Groups



18%

5-24 years old



49%

25-44 years old



33%

45+ years old

Hard to reach communities faced several barriers to accessing the COVID-19 vaccine at the beginning of the vaccine roll-out, including:

- **Limited access to the technology required** to get an appointment. This issue significantly affected elders, clients with literacy issues, and those without internet.
- **Fear of persecution** due to migratory status.
- **Communication issues** for non-English speakers. Difficulty understanding providers, sharing concerns, and asking questions can lead to vaccine hesitation.
- **Mistrust of the medical settings** derived from past experiences of discrimination in the health care system.
- **Location and transportation barriers:** Vaccine centers are often far from clients. Some don't own a vehicle, and using public transit increases their risk of exposure.

A Model for Culturally Responsive Vaccination

Briva has an established track record with the communities it serves since 2013. This trust motivated Briva, a **community-based organization, to create a unique, culturally responsive Vaccine Clinic model for its clients.** The organization had never provided clinical services before April 2021. For a community-based organization to switch gears to offer this type of service is extremely rare. However, with the emergence of a global pandemic Briva understood that having a community-responsive approach to vaccination was a matter of life and death for its communities. The Vaccine Clinic program was thoughtfully designed and implemented in record time. To get this program up and running, Briva completed the authorization paperwork with MDH's assistance, acquired the freezers to keep vaccines viable, and hired medical professionals representative of the participant communities. The Clinic's team looks like their clients, speaks the same languages, and understands the dynamics and cultural norms influencing client vaccine decision-making. Clients feel comfortable asking questions, voicing concerns, and trusting that Briva's staff's advice is in their best interest. Briva reached large numbers of community members through traditional and social media and videos in various languages.

Additionally, Briva has **partnerships** with other community trusted entities. These partnerships are fundamental to reaching hesitant clients, including elders and school-aged children.

Briva demonstrated its remarkable flexibility in **transitioning the Vaccine Clinic to be mobile.** The mobile clinics served counties in Greater Minnesota, which presented lower vaccination rates due to vaccine hesitance and access barriers.

On the Horizon: Changing Health Outcomes for Communities of Color

The positive experience with the COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics inspires Briva to continue to expand its role in addressing health inequities affecting communities of color. COVID-19 remains a public health threat that exacerbates health inequities, and Briva's culturally responsive Vaccine Clinic program can serve as a model for other organizations interested in using culturally responsive approaches to clinical services to promote public health and save lives.

Prepared by:

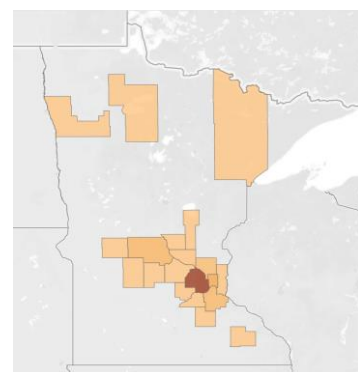
Golden Aspen Consulting



The clinic saved the lives of elders who did not have easy access to the vaccine. **95%** of them belonged to communities facing health disparities.



The transition from the office to the **Mobile Clinic** and partnerships with schools made it possible to vaccinate hundreds of **school-aged children and youth.** **97%** of them were from communities facing health disparities.



Clients by County 1 1344

The Clinic served people from **24 counties in Greater Minnesota.** Its convenience helped change the mind of vaccine-hesitant clients.