

# Executive Summary of Vulnerable Populations Program

## Presentation to the Hillsborough Township Board of Health

December 14, 2021

### Hillsborough COVID-19 Response Team

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# Background

- Grant Funding
  - December 2020
    - Strengthening Local Public Health Capacity (NJDOH pass-through from CDC)
    - Funding through June 30, 2021
  - July 2021 – June 2022
    - Strengthening Local Public Health
    - Vaccination Supplemental Funding Grant



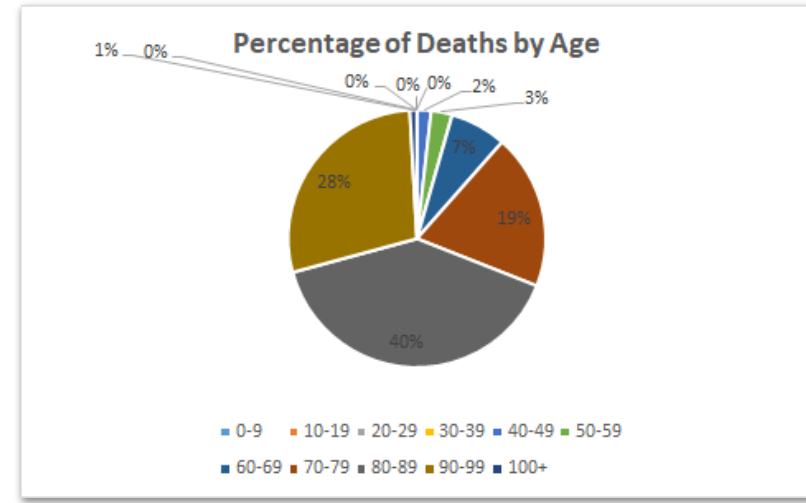
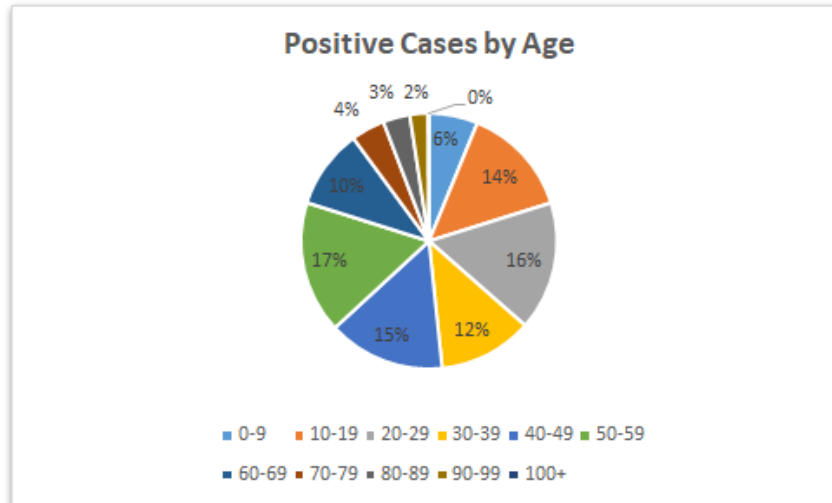
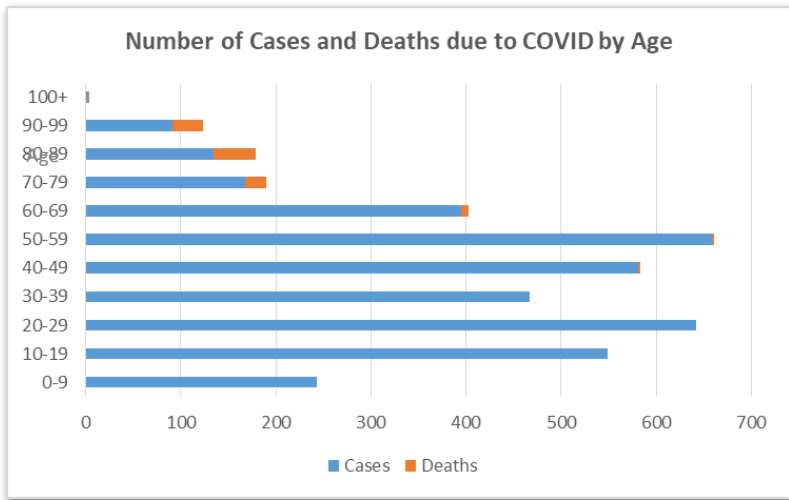
# Updated Assessment

- Conducted in September 2021
- Goal: review prior assessment and update as needed, including COVID-19 issues AND other local health disparities for future planning
- Methods:
  - Review and update all data sources
  - Solicited feedback from key leaders:
    - Hillsborough-Millstone Municipal Alliance
    - BoroSAFE
    - Hillsborough School Principals and School Nurses
    - Faith Based Leaders
    - Hillsborough Youth Services Commission
    - Hillsborough Social Services and Business Advocate
  - Update findings and recommendations



# Impact of COVID on Residents of Hillsborough

- As of Dec 9, total cases: 4,068; Deaths: 113
- Residents over 70 were at much higher risk for death and severe illness.



- Note: Cases in general are increasing in town, including highest daily case count since April 2021.
- There have also been several outbreaks at LTC facilities.

Data as of Dec 9, 2021

# Impacts

## Physical and Mental Health

- Mental and emotional toll (both children and adults)
- Increased isolation and loneliness (particularly elderly)
- Increase in domestic violence, juveniles acting out
- Delay of routine medical care, like childhood immunizations
- Lack of access to mental health practitioners

## Education

- Return to full-time, in-person learning has been beneficial for students overall; however, some youth are having difficulty adjusting to the full day and need coping skills for dealing with frustration and overload
- Long-term impact of remote learning for 1.5 years is not fully known
- Summer program identified and helped youth at risk of falling behind and becoming disengaged

## Employment

- Shortage of workers in many settings: retail, daycare, restaurants, long term care, etc.
- Unemployment spiked in Spring 2020 but has now returned to previous levels
- Harder for Latinos without documentation to secure employment as well as services
- General lack of access to employment and workforce development services for young adults after high school graduation.

# Impacts (cont'd)

## Human/Social Services

- Services are mostly back up and running, primarily in person, though some non-profits have staffing issues
- Hurricane Ida put additional pressure on agencies providing services
- Housing continues to be a struggle for some; ARPA funds are helpful but don't cover everyone

## Community Resources

- Overall, food pantry requests decreased from last year (perhaps due to free breakfast/lunch for all students, extra tax credit, and WIC's addition to EBT cards)
- Continued coordination of recovery efforts after Ida
- Lack of community infrastructure and public transportation is a major issue for families who do not have access to a car

## Ethnic/Racial Disparities

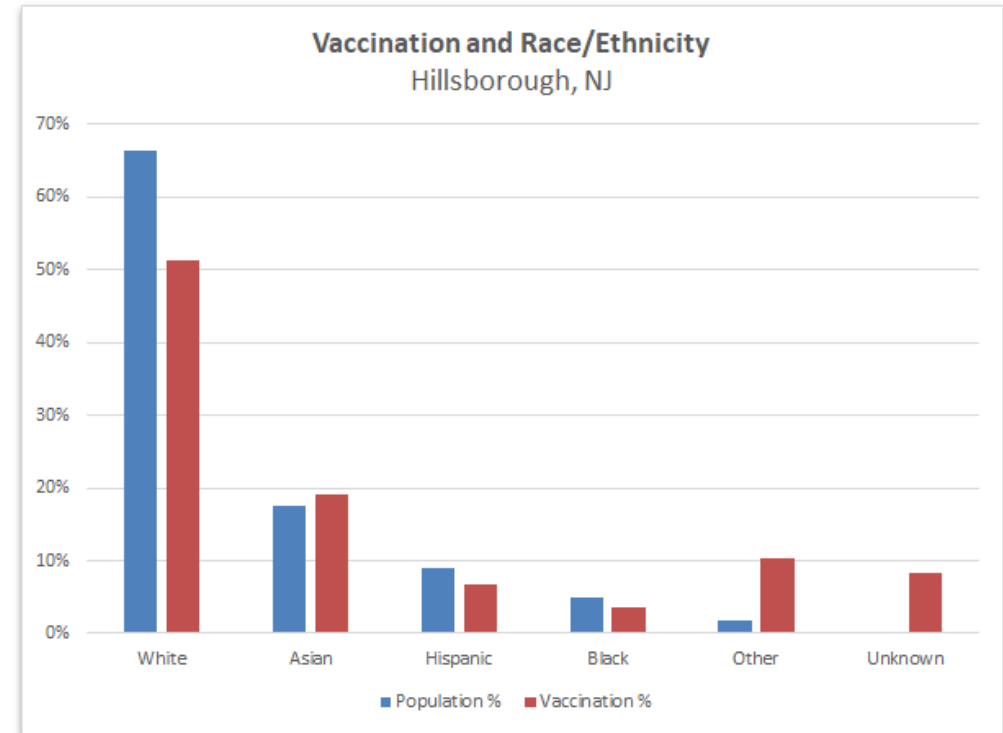
- Disproportionate impact to Latinos, particularly those with low income
- Lack of representation of Black and Latino families at leadership level

# COVID-19 Vaccination in Hillsborough

**Vaccine Courses Complete**  
**Hillsborough Township**  
 Somerset County

<b>All Ages:</b>	<b>73%</b>
12 through 17:	54%
12 and over:	84%
18 and over:	88%
30 and over:	91%
65 and over:	119%*

**> 24%** of the population  
 has received a booster dose



\*Footnote: Select municipalities may observe more than 100% vaccine coverage due to multiple reasons: transient persons (i.e., people who have moved), those who are traveling and not residing in their home where the census counted them, students who may select their student residence for vaccination data, persons in long-term care (or other facility-based housing outside of the home) which might be counted in a different location for the census, and other reasons

Data as of Dec 9, 2021

# COVID-19 Vaccination in Hillsborough

MUNICIPALITY	Coverage for each age group with at least 1 dose						
	5-11 coverage	12-17 coverage	18-29 coverage	30-49 coverage	50-64 coverage	65-79 coverage	80+ coverage
HILLSBOROUGH TOWNSHIP	12%	59%	84%	98%	89%	100%	100%



Area of concern

Data as of Nov 24, 2021



# Barriers/Hesitancy to Vaccination

- Misconceptions and lack of knowledge about access (health insurance, cost, documentation)
- Misconceptions about safety, development, testing, efficacy, and/or necessity of vaccines
- Concerns about side effects: short-term and long-term
- Difficulty taking time off work
- Seniors without access to technology
- Homebound residents
- Distrust of vaccines, government
- Historic and structural racism, ableism and other forms of oppression



# Action Plan

- COVID Collaborative
  - Assist in guiding additional programs to address needs of community
  - Connect to groups who work with vulnerable populations (churches, non-profits)
  - Education and outreach at community events
- Education/Information Sharing (school district e-mails, community events, doctors' offices, social media, website) on topics, including:
  - Vaccine Hesitancy
  - Where to Get Vaccinated in Hillsborough
  - Where to Get Tested in Hillsborough
  - Explanation of isolation / quarantine / travel restrictions guidance
  - Tips for Celebrating Holidays Safely
- Vaccination Clinics (Boosters, Ages 5+) and Homebound Visit Coordination
  - Hillsborough High School
  - Municipal Building
  - Apartment Complexes
  - Private Businesses
- Emergency Preparedness
  - AAR
  - Designing guides/documents to be used in future emergencies
- Connecting Residents to Social Supports
- Community Resource Directory Distribution
- Continued Data Collection and Assessments





# Thank You!



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Additional questions? Please contact:  
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