

National Community Action Partnership Local CAA Virtual Services Overview

ASPE Virtual Human Services Delivery: Initial Findings



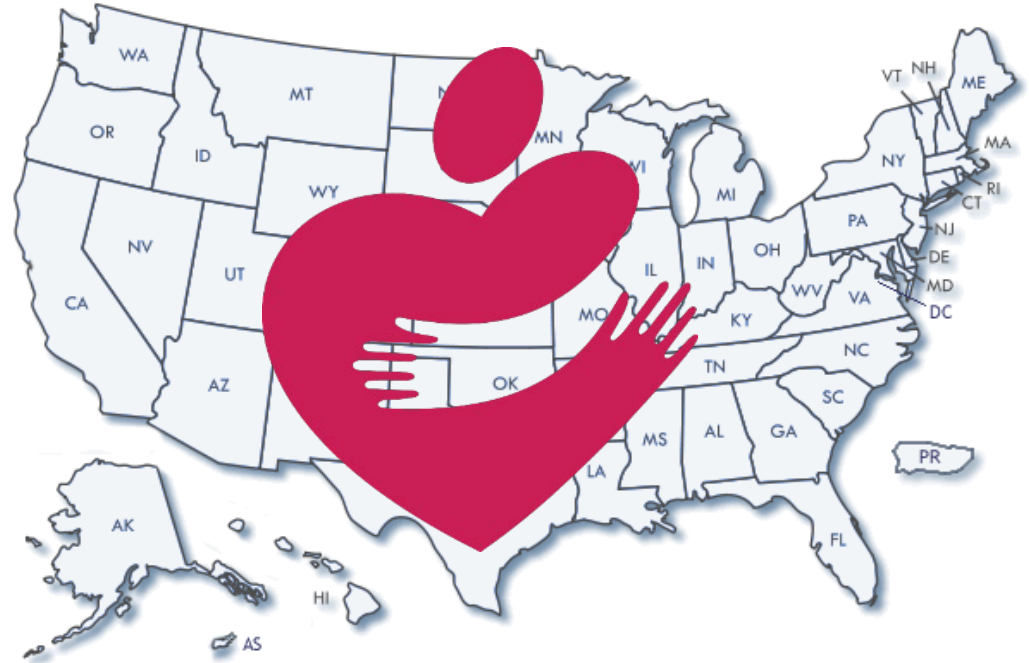
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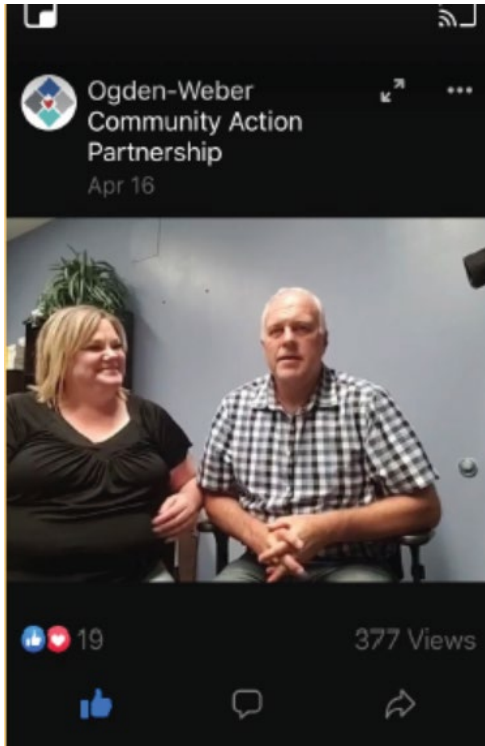
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Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Supports a National Network

- National, State, & Local Infrastructure
- 80% Private Non-profits
- 20% Public (Local Government)
- Total Funding-\$14 billion
 - CSBG
 - Head Start
 - WIOA
 - HUD
 - USDA
 - state, local and private support



Role of CAA Virtual Service Delivery



COVID-19 Shift to Virtual Service



CAA Virtual Service Examples

- Income tax preparation
- Job skills training
- Housing (rental assistance, housing counseling and inspections)
- Online education—Head start, GED college/university
- Utility and emergency assistance
- Case management/coaching
- Financial literacy
- Food & more...

The Community Action COVID-19 Resource Series

- *Technology Innovations in Response to COVID-19 Service Delivery and Recovery*
 - *Applying the Equity Lens to COVID-19 Response and Recovery*
 - *A Trauma Informed Agency Response to COVID-19*
 - *Applying Lessons Learned from Past Crisis Responses*
 - *Leveraging Partnerships in COVID-19 Response and Recovery*
- <https://communityactionpartnership.com/covid-19-resource-series/>



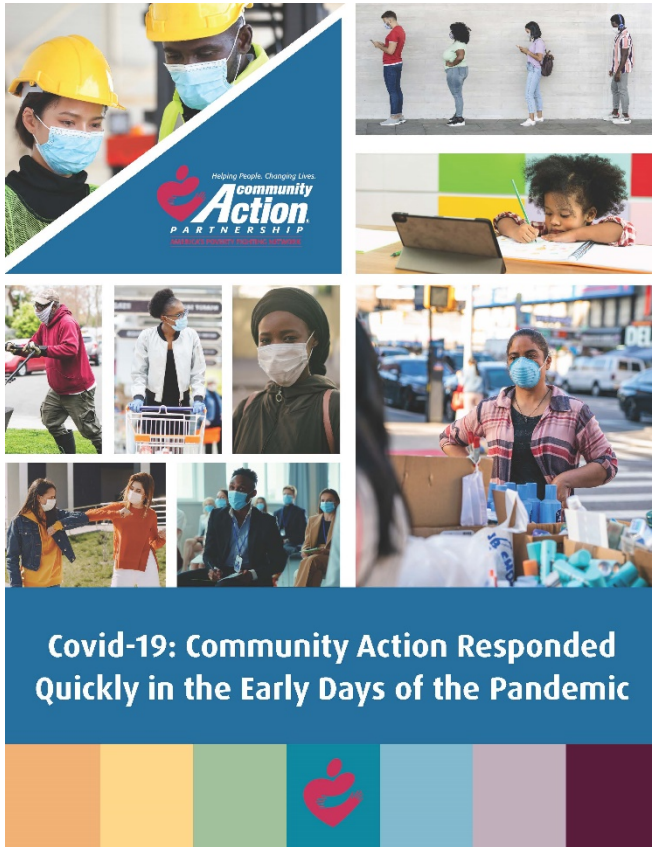
Barriers

- Access to remote equipment for staff and customers
- Broadband/tech disparities
- Technology equity divide
- Compounded, extreme poverty conditions due to pandemic and economic downturn

Opportunities

- *Gives customers a choice and a voice*
- Ensures Equity
- Sustains engagement with customers working on long-term goals due to accessibility, i.e., certifications, credential programs, and more
- Increases technological access and capacity for individuals and families improving their overall well-being
- Increases access to more services (for example through categorical eligibility)

Innovating with Technology



Innovating with Technology to Increase Capacity to Serve

One of the most challenging aspects of the pandemic for human and social service providers has been the extreme shift in service delivery models in response to physical distancing and other public safety measures. For many providers, this has required a complete transformation in the way that they do business, transferring many of their essential programs online to keep families and employees safe. CAAs have exemplified true creativity and commitment to serving people with low incomes in response to the pandemic, developing innovative uses of technology to maintain and improve programs. In the first 90 days alone, CAAs leveraged videoconferencing and other virtual communication platforms, online and smartphone applications, community collaboratives, private and public partnerships, and most importantly, the commitment and dedication of their staff to ensure that communities remain resilient and healthy during this period of increased need.

Using Technology to Improve Efficiency and Increase Impact

The primary obstacle for human service providers created by the pandemic was the sudden cessation of essentially all in-person programming. As organizations considered ways to maintain their essential programming in the face of unprecedented need in their communities, customers and employee safety became the focus for service delivery approaches. Shifting to an internet/phone-based approach for core programming was quickly utilized across the Network in an effort to keep communities informed and engaged as they adapted together in response to the pandemic. Barriers had to be overcome, but the crisis pushed new systemic changes.

“Barriers had to be overcome, but the crisis pushed new systemic changes.”

Minnesota’s UCAP shifted a range of key programs online, which allowed the agency to increase its reach and optimize essential services. When news of the pandemic reached UCAP in rural Minnesota, it sparked the creativity of staff, who immediately began to look for a way to translate programs to a new environment.



COVID-19 hit at a typical high point of the tax season. Tax credits and returns provide an important source of additional income for residents with low-income every year, but under current circumstances these larger, one-time payments offer an essential supplement for individuals struggling to make ends meet. The UCAP team recognized this at the start of the pandemic, and by coordinating with the IRS and Minnesota Department of Revenue early, before systems became overwhelmed, they were able to serve as the sole provider of VITA services for the entire state through the first 90 days of the pandemic. As noted above, by the end of June, over 1,600 filings were processed, bringing more than \$3.2 million in returns to families and individuals across the state.

Utilizing technology allowed this rural CAA, which under normal circumstances would have served a nine-county service area, to not only increase their impact, but also to serve as a best practice model for other human service providers in their state. Both the state of Minnesota and the Minnesota Asset Building Coalition looked to UCAP as a

COVID-19: Community Action Responded Quickly in the Early Days of the Pandemic

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<https://communityactionpartnership.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Covid-19-Community-Action-Responded-Quickly-in-the-Early-Days-of-the-Pandemic-NCAP-12.20.pdf>

For More Info



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