Infection Control Among the Homeless during the COVID-19 Pandemic
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**Background**

- Homeless population in Columbus has doubled in one year
- 37 homeless camps in Columbus removed last summer
- 2020 attendance at homeless shelter exceeded capacity
- Health disparities are higher among the homeless
- Top health problems among Bartholomew county’s homeless are mental health, substance abuse, dental care, skin integrity, & infection
- Lack of resources makes this population more vulnerable during a pandemic as they are unable to utilize optimal infection control methods and CDC recommendations

**Purpose**

Mitigate the spread of COVID-19 among the homeless population by providing them with protective equipment and education on infection control using limited resources

**Method**

200 bags were handed out between three hot meal sites. Each bag contained two reusable cloth masks, hand sanitizer, and education. To evaluate effectiveness, the percentage of participants who arrived wearing masks the day of the intervention was compared to the percentage who arrived wearing masks at the same site the following week.

**Results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Handout Locations &amp; Dates</th>
<th>Masked Before</th>
<th>Masked After</th>
<th>Percent Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Christian 10/23/2020</td>
<td>11.11%</td>
<td>26.67%</td>
<td>240%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Presbyterian 11/6/2020</td>
<td>24.49%</td>
<td>57.89%</td>
<td>236%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First United Methodist 11/9/2020</td>
<td>29.17%</td>
<td>64.52%</td>
<td>221%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paired t-test shows a 2-tailed significance of p=0.047, a statistically significant increase in mask wearing after the intervention. The project was effective in increasing the use of personal protective equipment among the homeless population during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Resources**


