

# Hmong Perception of Health

*Understanding our diverse communities through a cultural lens: Prevention in the Hmong Community*



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## Pair Share Ice Breaker: Name Story

1. Turn to a neighbor.
2. Tell them your name.
3. Tell them how you got your name & it's meaning if you know it.

# Objectives

- Develop an understanding of the challenges and opportunities for the Hmong community.
- Become familiar with the perception of health in the Hmong community.
- Describe methods use when working with Hmong youths.

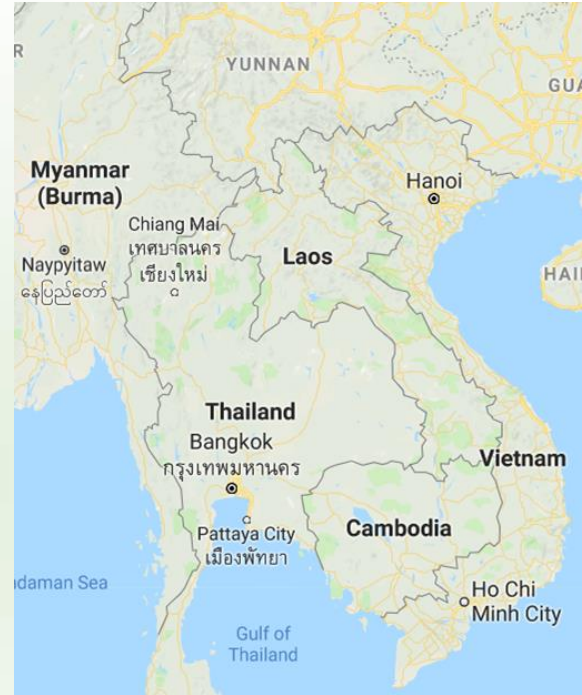
# Agenda

1. Hmong History
2. Hmong Perception of Health
3. Hmong health decisions and norms
4. Resources and services
5. Working with Hmong Youths

Disclaimer: There are some pictures in this presentation that may be triggers to individuals.

# Hmong History

- Minority group- Southeast Asia
- The Secret War
- Laos to Thailand to USA



**Check-out:**  
Anthony Bourdain, Parts Unknown- Laos

# Hmong Perception of Health

- Role of religion
  - Animism (**traditional**): Shaman
  - Christianity (**modern**): Pastor
- Holistic approach to health



# Hmong Perception of Health

- Hmong Herbal Medicine & Spiritual healing
  - Imported herbs, & other organic substances generally from Asian countries



# Hmong Health decisions & norms

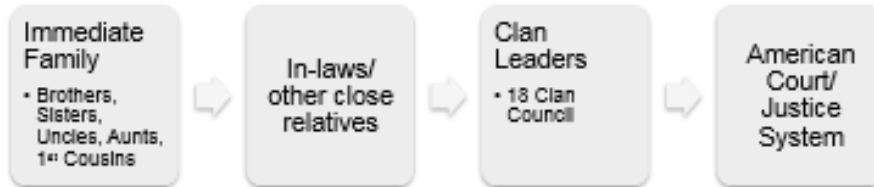


- Western medicine **vs** Alternative herbal medicine
  - Lack of trust in Western medicine & health communication & literacy
- Based on shared community experience
- Determined by key members of the family or community
  - usually a male
- Looking for a quick fix or a “miracle drug”



## Hmong Ways of Dealing with problems/issues

### “Traditional” Model



### “Modern” Hmong- American Model



- **Can be used for all issues including health**

# What is prevention?

- Prevention is not common.
- More reactive than proactive.
- Social stigma
- “If I’m not in pain or bleeding I’m not sick” idea



# Common health problems & barriers

- Language barriers & Health communication/health literacy
- Chronic health conditions & diseases (*Type 2 Diabetes, hypertension, stroke, cancer, gout, etc.*)
- Mental health (*PTSD, depression, etc.*)
- Alcohol, tobacco & other drugs
- Tuberculous (*Multi-drug resistant TB outbreak*)



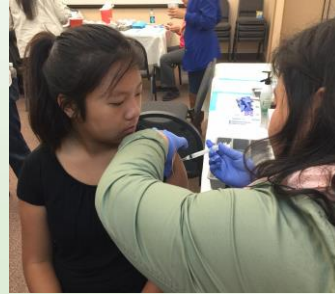
# Resources & Services

- Hmong American Partnership (HAP)
- Hmong HealthCare Professionals Coalition (HHCPC)
  - Health professionals united to address and reduce health disparities within the Hmong community
- Hmong owned health care, counseling and dental services
- Westside Community Health Services



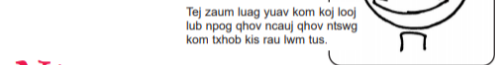
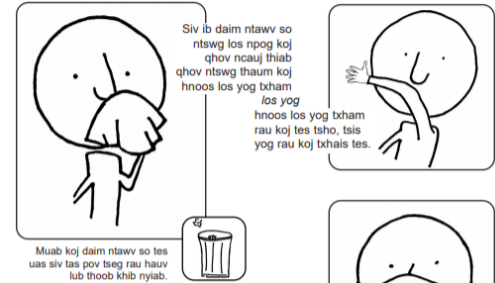
# Ideas & Strategies when working with the Hmong population

- Seek professionals within the field & community with reflective talent
- Practicing cultural responsiveness
- Create communication materials with **pictures**
- **ENGAGEMENT**
  - Hmong Village and HmongTown in St. Paul etc.



Tiv thaiv cov kab mob uas yuav kis tau rau koj thiab lwm tus mob!

## Npog qhov ncauj thaum hnoos



# Ideas & Strategies when working with the Hmong population



- Historical trauma
- Building trust & community capacity
- Be an ally
- One on one services

A shaman performing a ceremony with a patient in Merced's Mercy Medical hospital.



Wilson, Jim. *A CULTURAL APPROACH*. 2009. Photo. In "A Doctor for Disease, a Shaman for the Soul." *New York Times* 19 Sept. 2009. Web. 15 July 2013.

# Hmong Youths: Challenges & Opportunities

## Biggest challenges

- Transportation
- Parent Engagement
- Recruitment



## Opportunities

- Mentorship- being a one stop shop
- Confidence building
- Hands-On activities
- Learning & Growth
- Shared Work



## Things to keep in mind

- Generational households
- Family Dynamics
- Gender Roles
- Choices
- **Food & incentives**

Youth  
Teaches  
Parents!



# Food for thought

- The Hmong culture is very diverse.
- Historical Trauma.
- Generalization- Everyone has their own experiences.
- Easy to say, hard to do.

Data tells  
&  
stories sells!



# Acknowledgement

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**Ua Tsaug!**  
**Thank you!**

Questions?

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