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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MetroPlusHealth Survey Finds AAPI Women Face Increased Barriers to Mental Health Access and Support In NYC

May is Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month and Mental Health Awareness Month

(New York, NY – May 2, 2022) – [MetroPlusHealth](#), New York City’s quality, affordable health plan, conducted its **2022 AAPI Survey of Mental Health Among Women in NYC** in April and found that Asian women in New York City feel they have significantly less support and mental health resources than the average woman in the City. The disparity between the high demand and poor availability of linguistically and culturally appropriate mental health service providers is a significant gap in accessing treatment.

68% of AAPI women who participated in the NYC survey agree that talking to a mental health professional would positively impact their lives. Still, only 27% of Asian women strongly agree that they feel supported by family and friends, compared to 35% of the general New York women population. 69% of Asian women said they knew they could speak with a family doctor about their mental health, compared to 80% of women in the general NYC population. Moreover, only 35% of Asian women know a local community-based organization providing mental health services in their preferred language, compared to 49% of women in the general population in New York City.

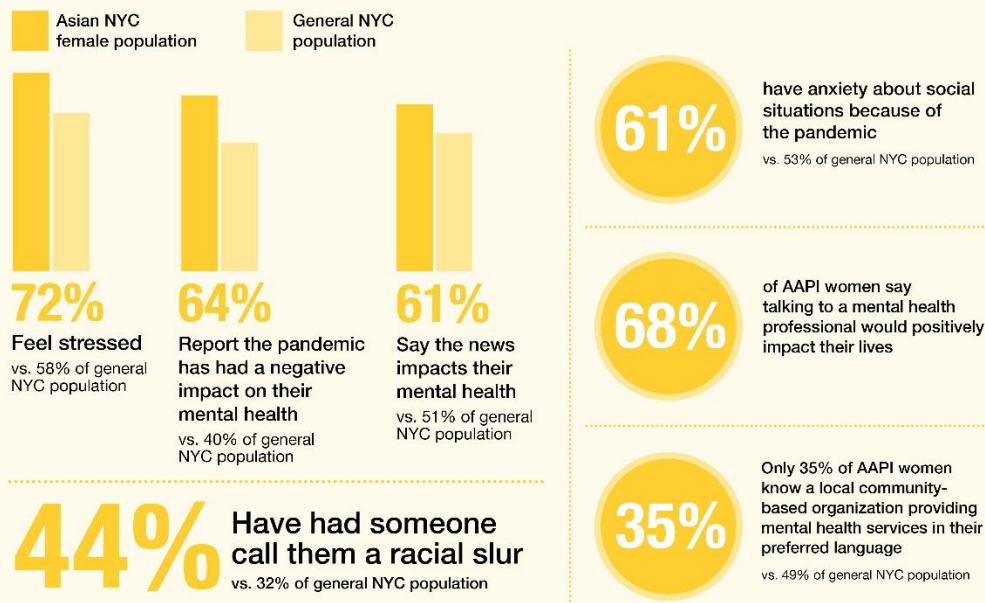
There are also generational differences at play among the AAPI women. While Gen Z women who were surveyed report feeling more stressed than Baby Boomers (40% vs. 9% strongly agree), they also are more likely to encourage their friends and family members to seek professional mental health services (32% vs. 13%), prefer speaking with a professional who speaks their language (33% vs. 3%), and feel they do not prioritize their mental health enough (22% vs. 3%).

Lack of understanding about mental illness and the taint associated with mental health issues can lead to denial or neglect of mental health challenges.

“The key barrier to seeking help is often what you absorbed yourself – you feel stigmatized, shame, and part of the problem is that you may not feel as comfortable talking about mental health issues as you are talking about physical problems,” **said Dr. Sanjiv Shah, Chief Medical Officer of MetroPlusHealth.** “We need to do a much better job to remove the stigma surrounding mental illness.”

WHAT IS IT LIKE FOR AAPI WOMEN IN NYC? MORE STRESS, FEWER RESOURCES, HIGHER RISK

There is a hidden gap in mental health care. Compared to the average New Yorker, women in Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities are up against it. They report more stress and have less access to help. Together, we can stop this trend in its tracks.



Source: MetroPlusHealth, 2022 AAPI Survey of Mental Health Among Women in NYC, April 2022

MetroPlusHealth

[According to a recent analysis](#) by the NYC Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA), AAPI immigrants are “one of the most diverse racial groups in the City, representing more than 30 different ethnic groups and speaking more than 50 languages” with a high poverty rate. The analysis also states, “there have been increased incidents of discrimination and violence against AAPI individuals, rooted in the long history of racism, stereotyping, and scapegoating of immigrant communities in the United States.”

Culturally sensitive and fluent in more than 40 languages, MetroPlusHealth staff is as diverse as the great City we serve. In August, MetroPlusHealth opened a [new flagship office](#) in Flushing, Queens, and partners with local community-based organizations. The Flushing office reflects MetroPlusHealth’s commitment to being more than a health plan for its members and communities.

“In traditional Asian culture, mental health is rarely spoken about,” said **Dr. Eric Wei, Senior Vice President and Chief Quality Officer of NYC Health + Hospitals**. “But each generation is seeing more and more benefits from seeking mental health services and are trying to convince their parents, aunts and uncles, and grandparents that it is okay.

To improve the AAPI community’s awareness of mental health support, MetroPlusHealth is hosting its first-ever campaign for Mental Health Talk on the steps of City Hall on Wednesday,

May 18th, from 11 AM – 12 PM. On May 25th, MetroPlusHealth will also host a virtual Town Hall focused on AAPI Mental Health.

Members of the public can register to attend the virtual Town Hall at <https://aapimentalhealth.eventbrite.com>.

To learn about MetroPlusHealth’s behavioral health programs, visit <https://www.metroplus.org/member/behavioral-health>.

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About MetroPlusHealth

Since 1985, MetroPlusHealth Plan has built a reputation for providing access to affordable, quality health care to residents across New York City. MetroPlusHealth is the plan of choice for over 600,000 New Yorkers and has a five-star rating based on the State’s 2020 Consumer’s Guide to Medicaid and Child Health Plus Managed Care Plans in New York City. The health plan’s robust network of primary care doctors and specialists includes many independent community providers. Culturally sensitive, and fluent in more than 40 languages, MetroPlusHealth’s staff is as diverse as the great City it serves. For more information about MetroPlusHealth plans, benefits, and services, visit www.metroplus.org and join the conversation at facebook.com/metroplushealth and twitter [@metroplushealth](https://twitter.com/metroplushealth).

MetroPlusHealth is a wholly-owned subsidiary of NYC Health + Hospitals, the nation’s largest public health system.

Research Methodology

The **2022 AAPI Survey of Mental Health Among Women in NYC** was conducted April 7 - 15, 2022, and consists of two distinct studies with the Geo-CARAVAN survey conducted by ENGINE INSIGHTS. The Asian women study was among 302 Asian women in the New York City DMA 18 years of age and older, and the NYC general pop survey was among 505 residents in the New York City DMA 18 years of age and older.

About Engine Insights

ENGINE INSIGHTS is a collaborative and consultative research partner to hundreds of organizations around the globe. We possess a wide variety of resources, tools, and technologies to collect and analyze information for our clients. As a member of the Insights Association and ESOMAR (the European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research), ENGINE INSIGHTS adheres to industry ethics and best practices, including maintaining the anonymity of our respondents.