

## **Health Needs of Vietnamese American Elders**

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It is easy to assume Asian Americans are successful in general and have few health problems or health care access and affordability issues. In reality Asian Americans are a heterogeneous population and have vast extremes of socioeconomic and health indices among subgroups. Dr. Chu's interest in health utilization and ethnogeriatrics began when she volunteered among Vietnamese Americans providing health screenings to elders. She noticed the language barriers, the lack of health information and knowledge, and many do not have transportation and social support.

The Claire M. Fagin Fellowship enabled Dr. Chu to focus her research on barriers and facilitators to health care access and utilization for Vietnamese American elders. Under the mentorship of Dr. Toni Tripp-Reimer, Dr. Chu conducted this research study with the goal of designing and implementing future health literacy interventions that are community-based with culturally competent strategies that can be applied to other diverse populations.

During the study Dr. Chu focused on establishing partnerships and networking with leaders in the community and identified many key leaders and stakeholders. One of the results of the study is identifying the local Vietnamese radio station as an effective and widely used communication channel by the elders in the community.

Dr. Chu credits the Fagin Fellowship to building her leadership skills and expanding her scholarship, grantsmanship and peer network. Her goal is to take her research to the next level which is to develop a proposal for the health literacy intervention project for National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding.