

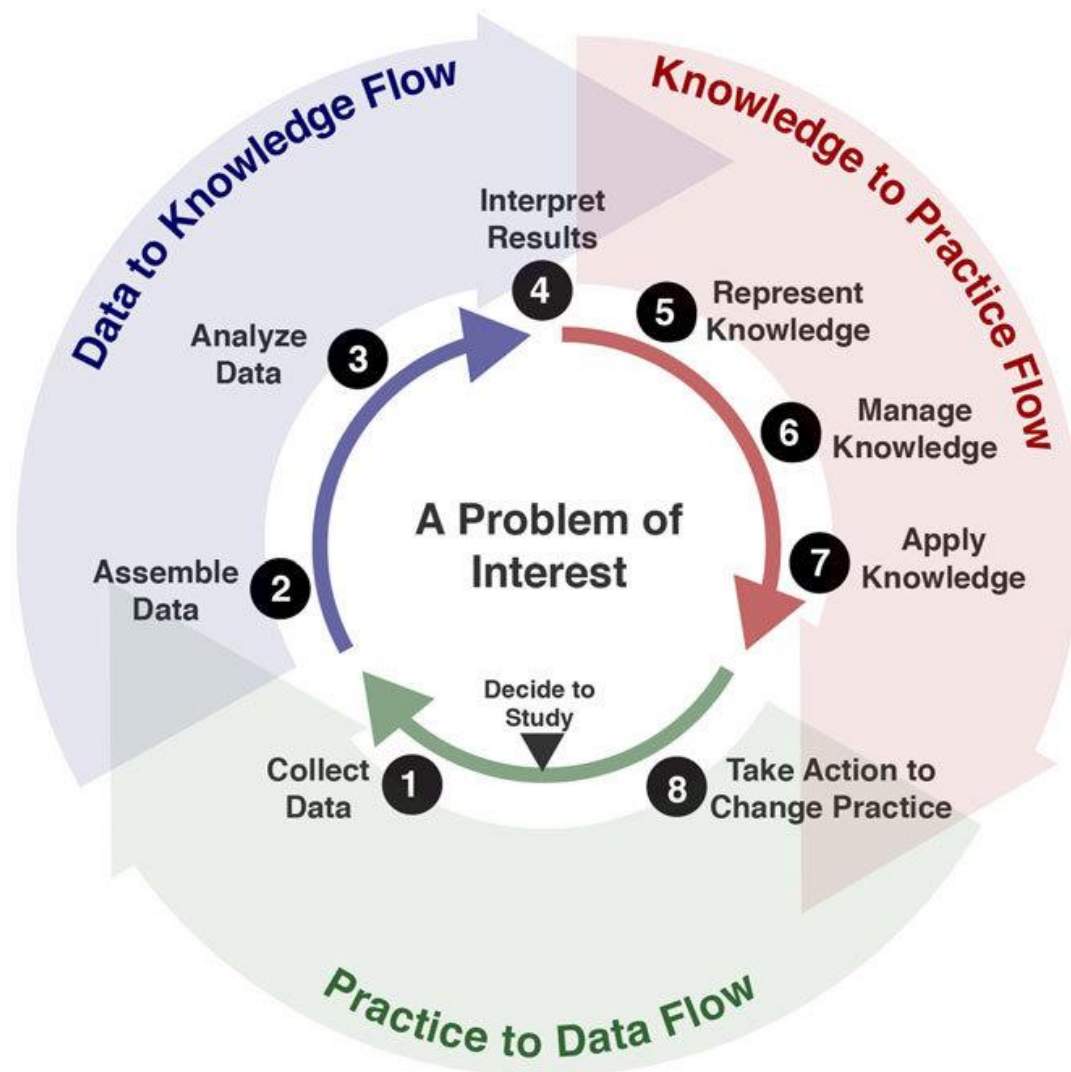


# **Developing a System and Approach for Identifying and Addressing Disparities in Access to Testing and Vaccination for COVID-19**

Neil Sarkar, PhD, MLIS, FACMI



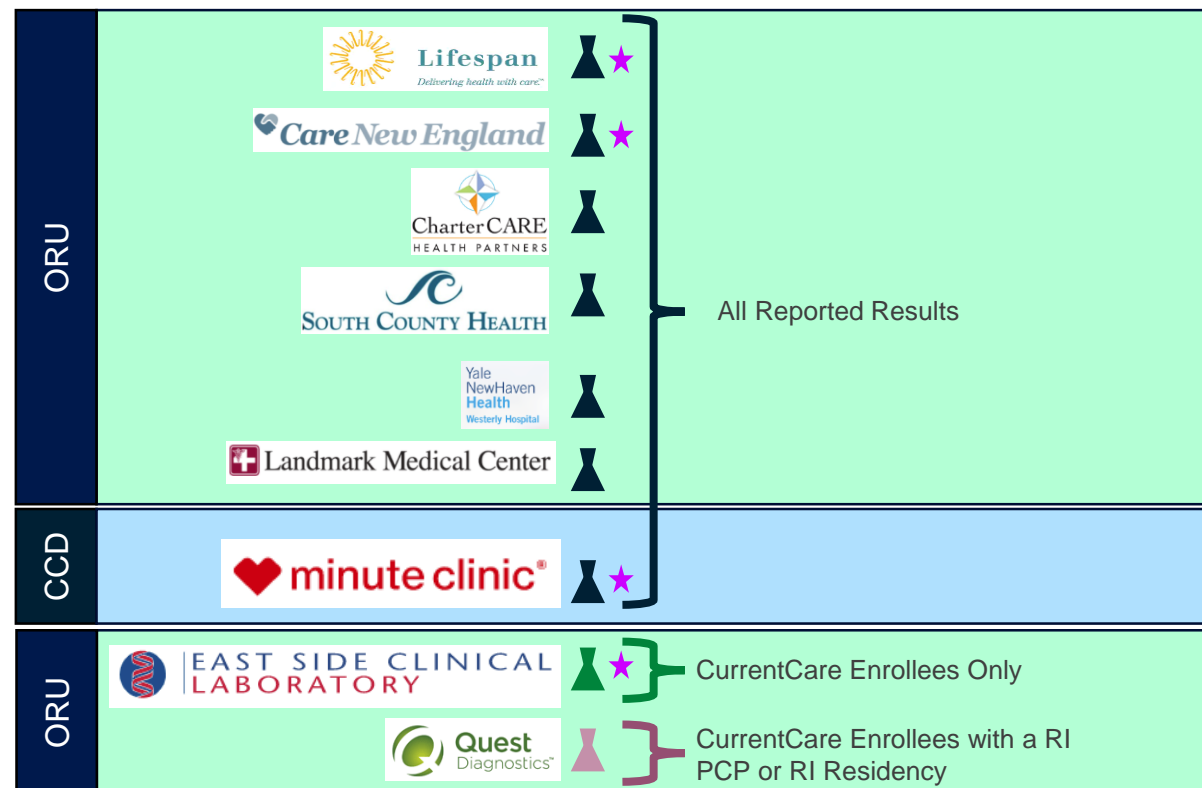
# Health Care as a Learning System



Flynn AJ, Friedman CP, Boisvert P, Landis-Lewis Z, Lagoze C. The Knowledge Object Reference Ontology (KORO): A formalism to support management and sharing of computable biomedical knowledge for learning health systems. *Learning Health Systems*. 2018 Apr;2(2):e10054.

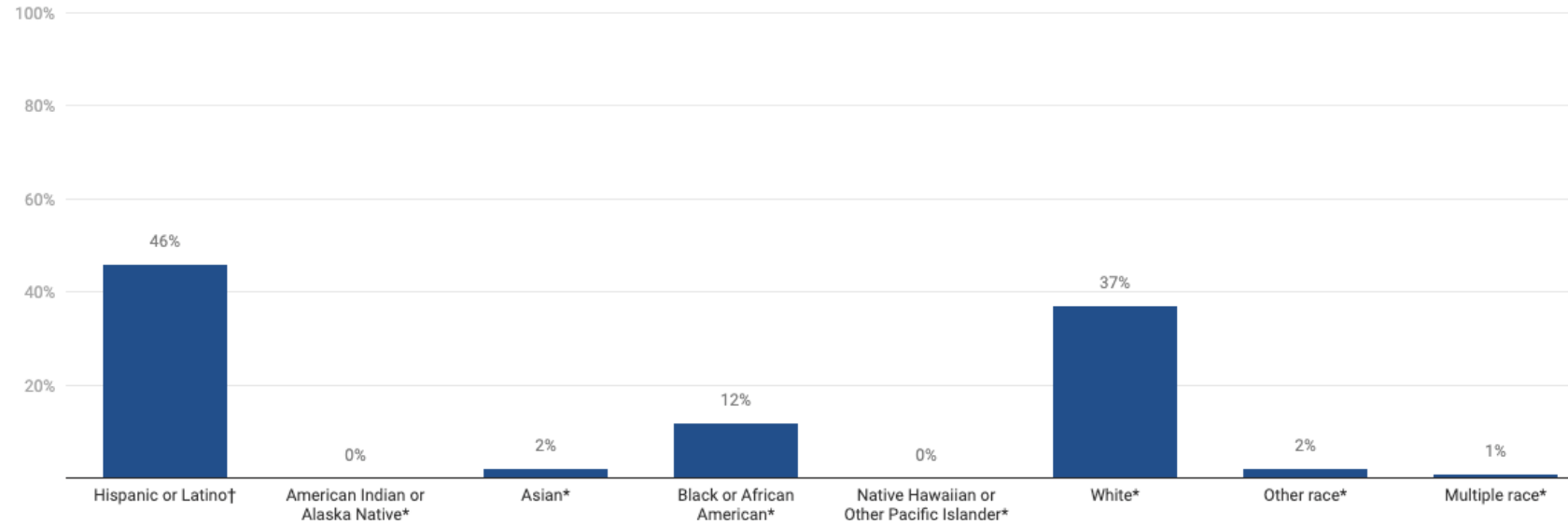


# Gathering and Disseminating SARS-CoV-2 Test Results





### Percent of COVID-19 Cases by Race/Ethnicity



† Includes people who identify as any race.

\* Includes people who identify as non-Hispanic ethnicity or have unknown or declined ethnicity.

Note: Percentages do not include cases with unknown or declined demographics or those that are pending further information. Percentages of <1% are displayed as 0%.

Chart: Rhode Island Department of Health • Source: RIDOH • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

<https://ri-department-of-health-covid-19-response-testin-c9214-rihealth.hub.arcgis.com/>



# RADx-UP is Part of a \$1.4 Billion NIH Initiative



## RADx Tech

Speed innovative point-of-care, home-based, and clinical laboratory tests for COVID-19

**BUDGET**  
\$500 Million



## RADx Advanced Technology Platforms (RADx-ATP)

Identify testing platforms that are far enough advanced for rapid scale-up or expanded geographical placement

**BUDGET**  
\$230 Million



## RADx Underserved Populations (RADx-UP)

Understand and reduce the disparities in COVID-19 morbidity and mortality for those disproportionately affected by COVID-19

**BUDGET**  
\$500 Million



## RADx Radical (RADx-rad)

Support new, non-traditional approaches to address current testing gaps, and non-traditional applications of existing approaches

**BUDGET**  
\$200 Million

**This is us**



Our project is one of  
**70+ RADx-UP  
projects**  
across the United  
States

RADx-UP helps  
**communities  
most affected  
by the pandemic**



# RADx-UP Key Categories of Research



**Learning how to increase testing** in communities across the country

**Understanding the unique needs** of communities through engagement and collaboration

**Helping communities prepare** for vaccine opportunities





# Helping those most impacted by COVID-19

RADx-UP projects focus on:



**Researching** testing patterns in different communities



**Identifying** differences in infection rates, disease progression, outcomes



**Developing** strategies to make testing easier for communities that need it most

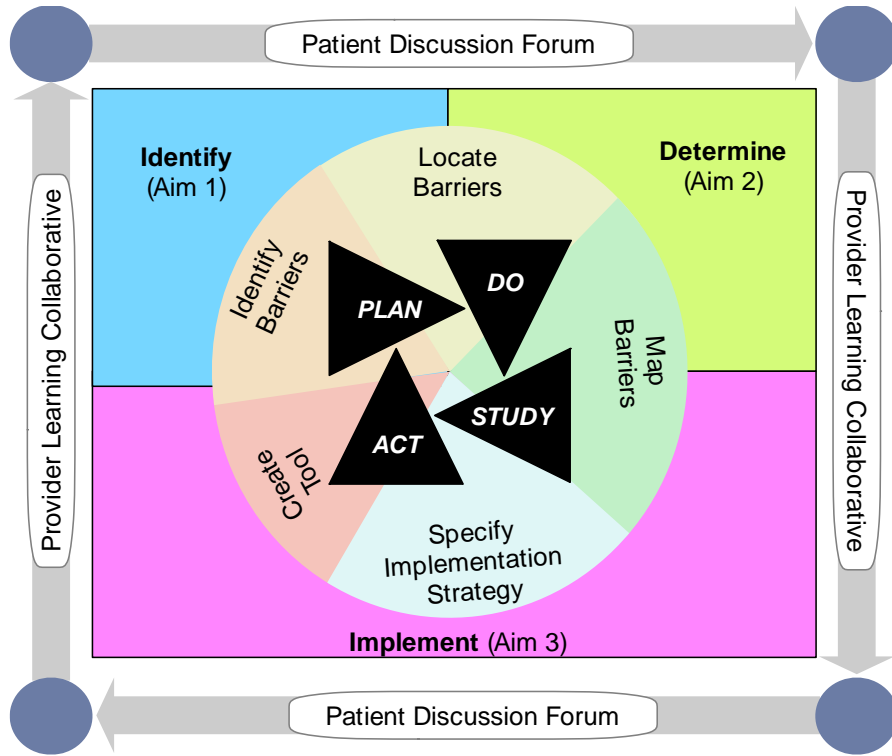
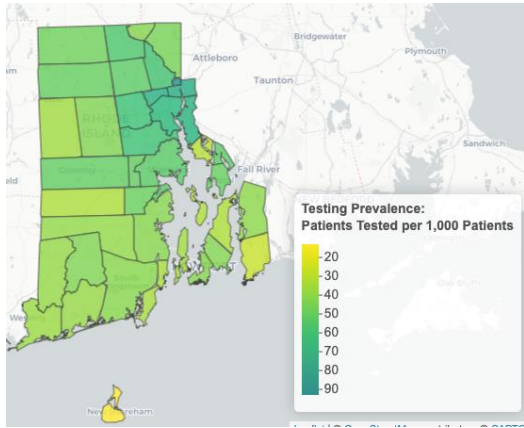


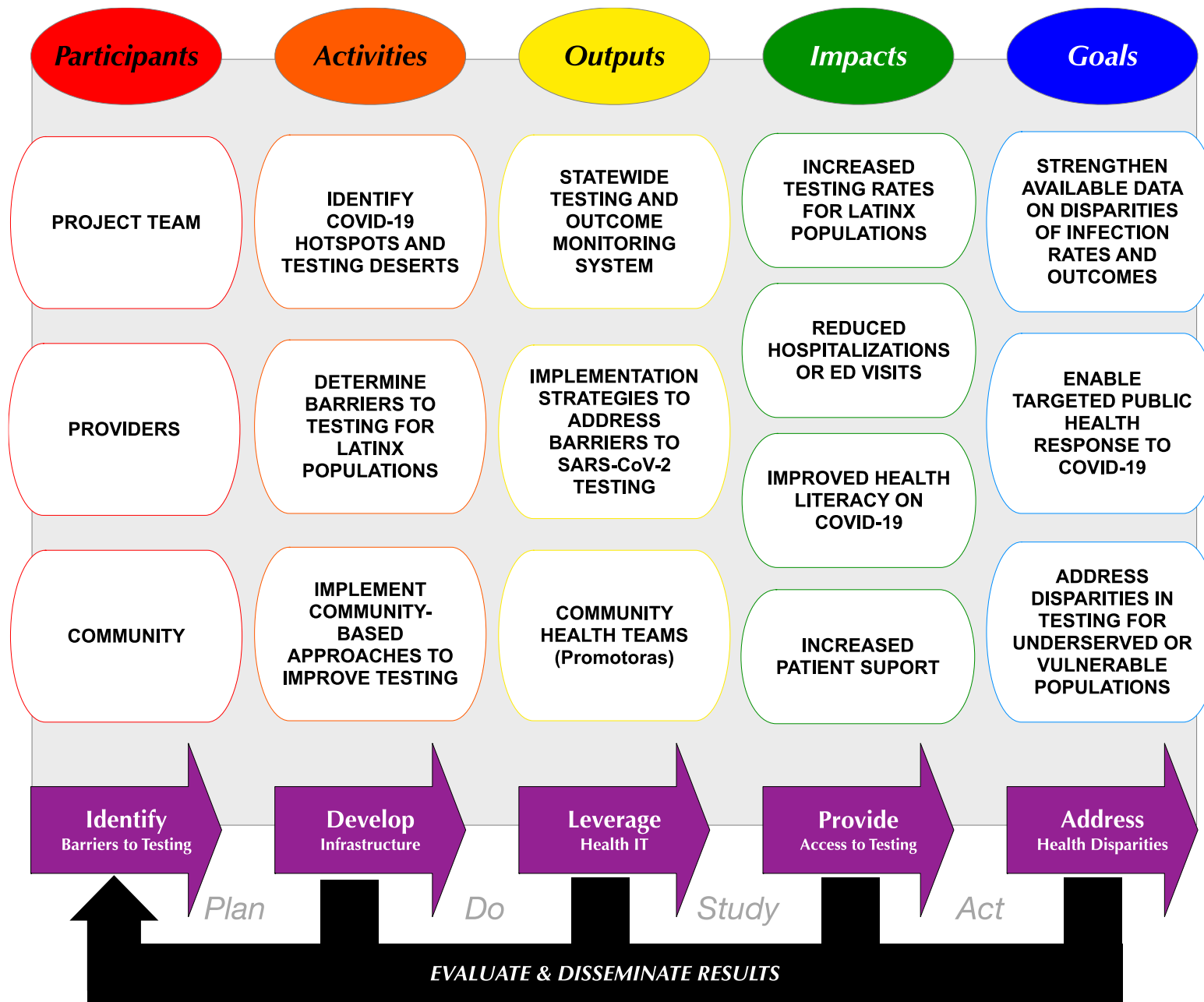
**Informing** the national strategy and response to COVID-19 to strengthen and improve the health of all our communities





# RADx-UP (Phase I): Developing a Realtime Monitoring System and Program to Improve COVID-19 Testing for Latinx Populations





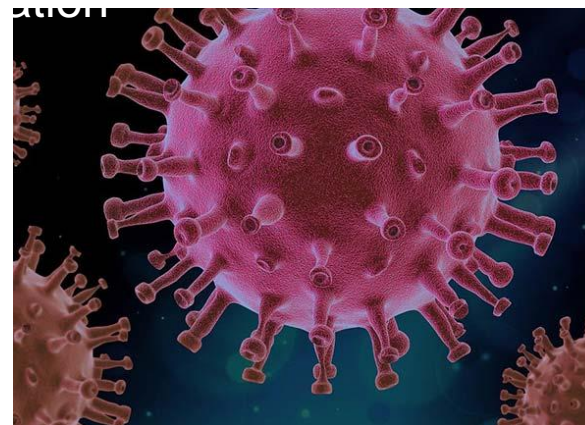
# Quantitative + Qualitative Insights

## HIE Data

- Analyzing data to find trends in testing and positivity rates based on age/gender/race/ethnicity
- Analyzing positivity rates based on zip code
- Reviewing hospitalization rates and RIDOH vaccine strategies to find trends in declining positivity rates

## Focus Groups

- *Focus interviews* – conducting 1:1 focus interviews with providers who work in communities with high rates of COVID-19
- *Community focus groups* – organized by Progreso Latino; direct feedback from the community on their experiences and opinions on testing, results, and



# Promotores de Salud (Promotoras)

- Supported by RADx-UP grant, employed at Progreso Latino
- Recruit community members to participate in Focus Groups
- Facilitate focus group sessions
- Support community needs pertaining to access to testing and vaccination
- Serve as a community peer to bridge with researchers



# Community Focus Groups & Provider Interviews

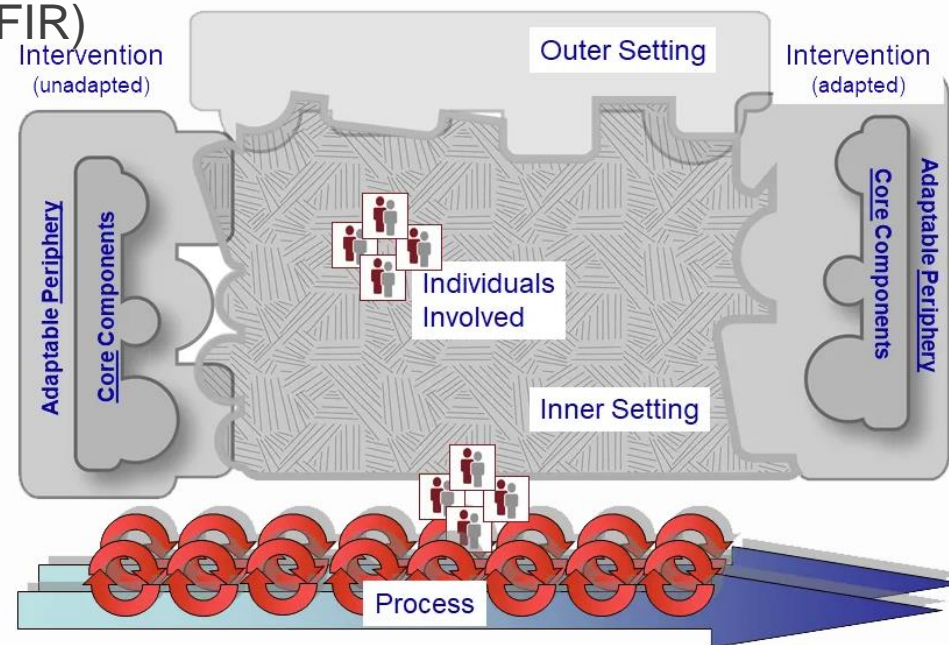
## Community Focus Groups

- 60-90 Minute Sessions over Zoom
- Facilitated in Spanish
- Recorded, transcribed, translated to English
- Coded by multiple researchers using CFI

## Provider Interviews

- 60-90 Minute Sessions over Zoom
- Facilitated in English
- Recorded & transcribed
- Coded by multiple researchers using CFIR

## Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research (CFIR)



<https://cfirguide.org>

# Focus Group Questions (Community)

- What are your feelings about you or those that you care for to get tested for COVID-19?
- How difficult do you feel it is to get tested for COVID-19?
- If you or someone you care for got tested for COVID-19, how would you like to receive your results?
- Do you know what a COVID-19 test result means?
  
- What are your thoughts or feelings about the COVID-19 vaccines?
- If you know of individuals (including yourself or those you care for) who have not received COVID-19 vaccine, even if eligible, do you know why?



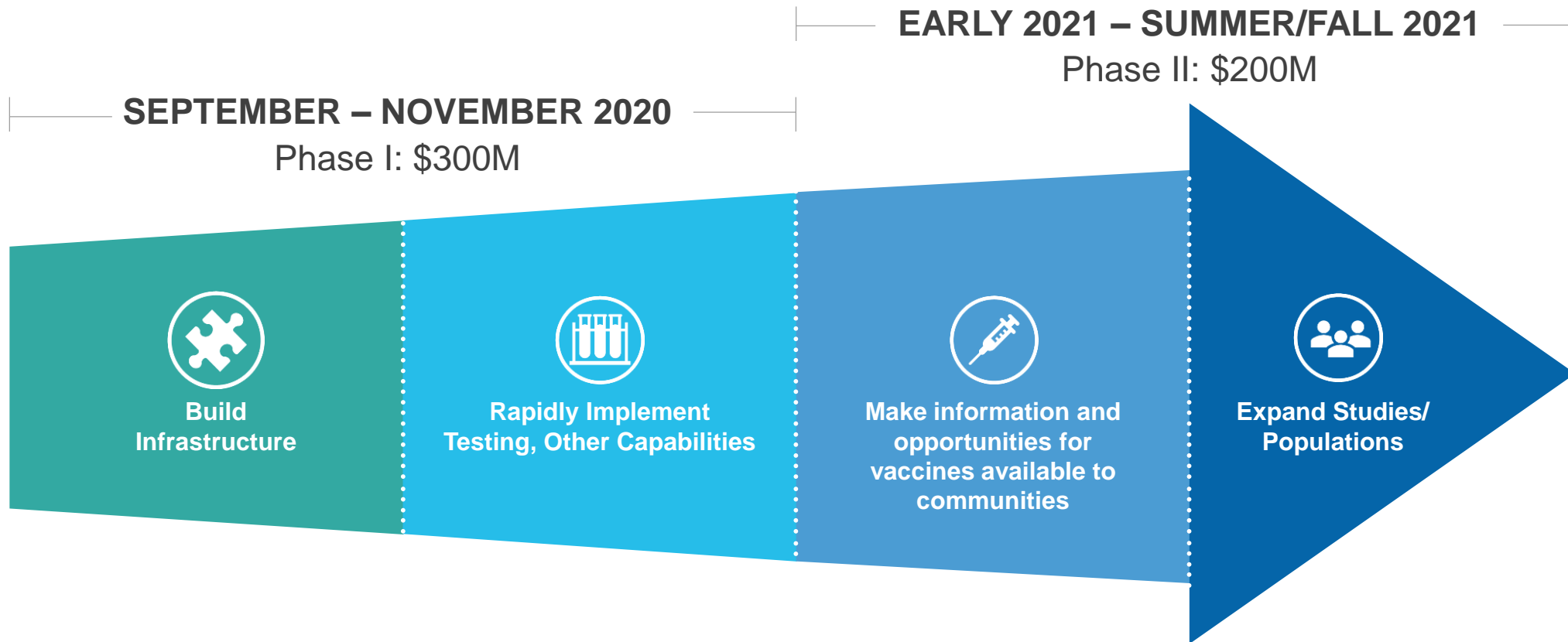
# Provider Interviews

- How important is it for your patient panel to get tested for SARS-CoV-2?
- What are major challenges in ordering SARS-CoV-2 tests for your patients?
- How do you get results for patients who have been tested for SARS-CoV-2?
- What clinical guidance do you offer your patients based on the test result?
- What is the general sentiment among your patients about the COVID-19 vaccines?
- For your patients who have not received COVID-19 vaccine, even if eligible, do you know why?





# NIH is Making RADx-UP Grants in Two Key Phases



# RADx-UP Phase II (Launching now!)

1. Expand RADx-UP Phase I (Hispanic/Latinx) to Include Vaccination Hesitancy (10/2021 – 10/2022)
2. New Phase II Project: Partnership with RIPIN to focus on barriers to testing and vaccine hesitancy for high-risk children with complex needs (10/2021-10/2023)





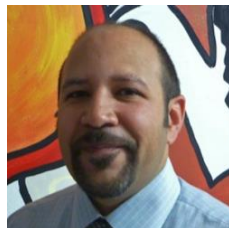
Neil Sarkar, PhD, MLIS  
**Biomedical  
Informatics**



Philip Chan, MD, MS  
**Infectious  
Disease**



Joseph Hogan, DSc  
**Biostatistics**



Mario Bueno  
**Community  
Engagement**



Elizabeth Chen, PhD  
**Biomedical  
Informatics**



Yovanska Duarte-Velez, PhD  
**Health  
Disparities**



A. Rani Elwy, PhD  
**Implementation  
Science**



Amy Nunn, DSc  
**Qualitative  
Assessment**



Jim Padbury, MD  
**Clinical and  
Translational Science**



Sharon Rounds  
**Clinical and  
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# THANK YOU

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