



To read the full article in Chinese, simply click:

<https://www.singtaousa.com/la/453-南加新聞/3271231-病毒大流行期間%E2%80%82對華裔醫護人員的偏見加劇/>

Prejudice against Chinese American Medical Care Workers Exacerbated during the Pandemic

11:09 February 11, 2021 Southern California News

By Shang Ying, Los Angeles

Chinese Americans play a pivotal role in the healthcare industry in the United States. One in ten Chinese Americans in the workforce are employed by healthcare and health support occupations. As is pointed by a Committee of 100 (C100)'s research report on Asian Americans, during the COVID-19 pandemic, not only do racial bias and discrimination against Chinese American healthcare workers persist, they are also worsening.

According to the C100 report, data shows that as of 2018, one in ten Chinese Americans in the workforce are employed in healthcare and health support occupations. The majority are healthcare practitioners, with outsized representation as physicians, surgeons, optometrists, pharmacists, and dentists. As of 2018, there are more than 18,000 Chinese American biological scientists, medical scientists and other life scientists—accounting for 7% of the workforce in these occupations in the US. More than 80% are active within the pharmaceutical industry, research and development (R&D), hospitals and healthcare services, and universities.

Since March 2020, as the US works to slow the spread of the virus, Chinese American medical practitioners have been working on the frontlines to save the lives of their fellow citizens. However, as is revealed by the C100 report, racial prejudice, or even discrimination against Chinese American healthcare professionals persists and is worsening during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although discriminatory legal barriers to Chinese Americans' entry into medical practice was removed with the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943, racial discrimination against Chinese American and other minority practitioners has endured. According to a survey conducted in 2017, 59% of US physicians surveyed had been victims of offensive comments regarding their race, ethnicity or gender. Asian American and Black American physicians were the most likely to experience discriminatory comments regarding their race. Such bigotry has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic since last year. According to the report, Chinese and other Asian healthcare workers have reported repeated incidents of racial harassment, often stemming from the obviously untrue perception that Asians are more likely to carry the virus.

The report points out that the tensions between the US and China has spilled out on Chinese American medical researchers. Public health funding has come under scrutiny as part of wider US-China tensions. The National Institutes of Health (NIH), the primary funder of cutting-edge public health research, disbursing roughly US\$30bn per year, is closely scrutinizing researchers' links to foreign entities in an effort to address concerns about intellectual property theft. Researchers with Chinese backgrounds have become the target. This has led to the uncovering of malpractices, such as undisclosed funding, but it has also been criticized as auguring an overreaching suspicion of any researcher with links to China. While not all serious offenses being investigated involve ethnically Chinese researchers, some critics believe that Asian-born researchers are being targeted simply for their participation in Chinese foreign researcher recruitment programs.

C100 urges the NIH to establish a balancing act in which it must conduct comprehensive investigations into governance breaches without creating a culture of fear or undue surveillance of well-intentioned China-linked scientists who have abided by NIH rules. They believe that distrusting Chinese American scientists and stereotyping them as "permanent foreigners" will prevent them from realizing their full potential in the American society.