

Fourth Quarter Health Equity Report

1. Please provide a brief update (no more than three paragraphs) on your grant award, including progress made on the goals and objectives you outline in your proposal.

MDHHS and the four Health Equity Advisory Committees are now meeting quarterly. Meetings this quarter have focused on identifying community stakeholders and developing community research focus group questions. MDHHS is currently working to establish contact lists for the six stakeholder groups that include case managers, providers doing home and community-based services, family/individual caregivers, beneficiaries, guardians, and community partners. Additional focus group meetings in Wayne, Kalamazoo, Grand Traverse, and Chippewa Counties will be ongoing for the next 6-7 months.

MDHHS has developed a statewide survey to send to medical providers in January 2023 to assess the knowledge of home and community-based services and their willingness to educate patients on available resources as part of an outreach plan.

Our research partners from the University of Michigan (U-M) and Michigan State University (MSU) continue to work on the quantitative data analysis. U-M has compared census data to estimate the potential Medicaid eligible population based on race, age, and gender for each targeted county and statewide. MSU has also pulled data from the MDHHS Data Warehouse and conducted preliminary analyses to support Inpatient and Emergency Department utilization comparisons for target programs for years 2019-2021.

2. Is the project proceeding on-schedule, as anticipated in your work plan? If not, comment on the circumstances affecting your grant.

The university partners continue to analyze quantitative program data and will be ongoing through Phase 2. Community researchers are now onboard for all 4 counties and work has started as noted above. Despite previous challenges, Phase 2 is currently proceeding on schedule to be completed by summer 2023.

3. Have you run into any unexpected challenges? Would you like technical assistance?

MDHHS does not need technical assistance at this time. MDHHS anticipated challenges with finding stakeholders to participate in focus group interviews specifically in Grand Traverse County and Chippewa County due to the small population. The Project Coordinator, with the assistance of the Michigan State University intern, and Grand Traverse/Chippewa County Advisory Committee has identified community partners to help identify participants for the focus group interviews. MDHHS also shared an online sign-up for interested stakeholders to participate in focus group interviews.

County advisory committees are currently deficient in beneficiaries. MDHHS plans to complete interviews with case managers and providers of home and community-based services first with the hope that they can help recruit beneficiaries once they understand the goal of the project.

4. Please share any additional comments, insights, and lessons learned.

We continue to learn the unique needs of each county to establish contacts for focus groups. MDHHS has partnered with program staff and contacted program agencies to expand the outreach to gain focus group participants. Our goal is to review initial research and survey findings to begin the establishment and implementation of the outreach plan.