



March 2024



COMMUNITY INFLUENCER PROGRAM



SIGN UP TO BE AN INFLUENCER:

Fill out the INTEREST FORM at

<https://bit.ly/SDOHICIP>

or scan the QR code below:



www.michigan.gov/SDOH

We need your voice!



COMMUNITY INFLUENCER PROGRAM



Join the Community Influencer Program to Improve Health and Wellbeing in Your Community

The MDHHS Policy and Planning Office is excited to announce the opening of the SDOH Community Influencer Interest Forms for the 2024 cohort. This year, we are introducing a special focus on Community Health Workers (CHWs). We recognize the pivotal role CHWs play in understanding and addressing the diverse factors that impact health outcomes within our communities.

The MDHHS SDOH Policy Team invites CHWs and community members to be part of this initiative that aims to make a real difference in improving health and wellbeing across our Michigan communities. The Community Influencer Program is seeking 35 individuals across all regions of Michigan who are passionate about creating positive change. Together, we can enhance programs, services, and resources to ensure better health outcomes for everyone.

Health is influenced by many factors within our communities, and these factors can create barriers to accessing the support and resources needed for optimal health and wellbeing. By joining the Community Influencer Program, you can play a vital role in helping us understand the unique conditions, challenges, and needs of your community.

Community Influencers' input and feedback will help us identify areas for improvement and shape strategies to enhance opportunities for everyone to live their healthiest lives. By participating in the Community Influencer Program, you'll have the opportunity to contribute directly to the development of programs and services that are accessible to all. You will also be asked to share information about resources and programs available to your network including your community, family, and friends. Together, we can work towards creating healthier, more resilient communities across Michigan.

To get involved, we encourage all that are interested to fill out the SDOH Community Influencer Interest Form. As a Community Influencer, you will have the opportunity to stay informed about how your feedback is being used to positively impact the health and well-being of Michigan families.

What does it mean to be a Community Influencer?

It's about sharing your experiences, providing feedback on programs, and voicing the challenges faced by your community. Your unique perspective and insights will help inform decision-making processes, shape policies, and improve the programs and services available to support the wellbeing of all residents.

The Community Influencer Program is open to all Michigan residents aged 18 and older who are interested in improving health and wellbeing in their communities. Influencers selected for participation will be compensated for their time and efforts. Applications will be open until April 15, 2024.

[Click here to fill out the SDOH Community Influencer Interest Form.](#)

[Click here to learn more about the Community Influencer Program.](#)

Understanding Food Insecurity: Insights from Community

In our ongoing efforts to address food insecurity across Michigan, we've been actively engaging with community influencers to gain valuable insights into the challenges faced by individuals and families. Here, we highlight some key interviews conducted by MDHHS SDOH community influencers, shedding light on the nuances of food insecurity in different regions.

Joshua Gillespie - LMTS Community Outreach Services, Ingham County



Joshua Gillespie
LMTS Community Outreach
Services, Ingham County



Mark and Dara Mayhoe
The Bread House,
Ingham County

Joshua Gillespie, representing [LMTS Community Outreach Services](#), highlighted affordability as a critical factor affecting food security. He emphasized how financial constraints hinder individuals' ability to purchase healthy foods, especially considering various socio-economic factors. His insights show the urgency of addressing income disparities and ensuring equitable access to nutritious food options.

Mark and Dara Mayhoe - The Bread House, Ingham County

Mark and Dara Mayhoe, integral members of [The Bread House](#), shared their experiences regarding food access in the Lansing community. Dara, overseeing the community outreach ministry and food pantry, emphasized the transportation barrier. Mark echoed this sentiment, stating that lack of transportation not only affects access to their pantry but also to major grocery stores. This underscores the need for comprehensive solutions to address mobility challenges in accessing food resources.

Chara Bouma-Prediger - Ottawa Food Advisory Board, Ottawa County

Chara Bouma-Prediger, an [Ottawa Food Advisory](#) Board Member and Director of Food Access at Community Action House in Holland, MI, emphasized the importance of community engagement and feedback. She advocated for involving users of food resources in decision-making processes through regular community listening sessions. This approach ensures that programs are tailored to meet the diverse needs of the community, fostering collaboration and empowerment.



Mimi Trent
Building Blocks Community
Development, Wayne County



Kyle Lake
Central Detroit Christian
Community
Development
Corporation, Wayne
County

Mimi Trent - Building Blocks Community Development, Wayne County

Mimi Trent from [Building Blocks Community Development](#), emphasized the critical role of nutrition in addressing food insecurity. She aptly described food as either the safest form of medicine or the slowest form of poison, highlighting the importance of quality food choices. Mimi emphasized the need for increased access to nutritious options within communities, underscoring the link between food quality and overall health outcomes.

Kyle Lake – Central Detroit Christian Community Development Corporation, Wayne County

Kyle Lake, Program Director from Central Detroit [Christian Community Development Corporation](#), noted that this lack of access forces people to purchase low-quality food, exacerbating health disparities. He emphasized the systemic role of local food banks in providing communities with access to high-quality food options, thus contributing to community health and well-being.

Supporting Food Access Initiatives: How You Can Help

All interviewees stressed the importance of community support in addressing food insecurity. Joshua emphasized financial contributions and ongoing engagement, while Mark and Dara highlighted the need for additional support from partners, grants, and volunteers. Chara emphasized the significance of supporting local food access providers and advocating for sustained efforts at the governmental level. Mimi Trent and Kyle Lake brought attention to the lack of access to quality fresh food in their community and how important it is to support the local food banks.

[Click here to view Phase III of the SDOH Strategy](#) to learn more about how MDHHS is continuing to address food security in Michigan.

To view the full interviews, click the links provided below.

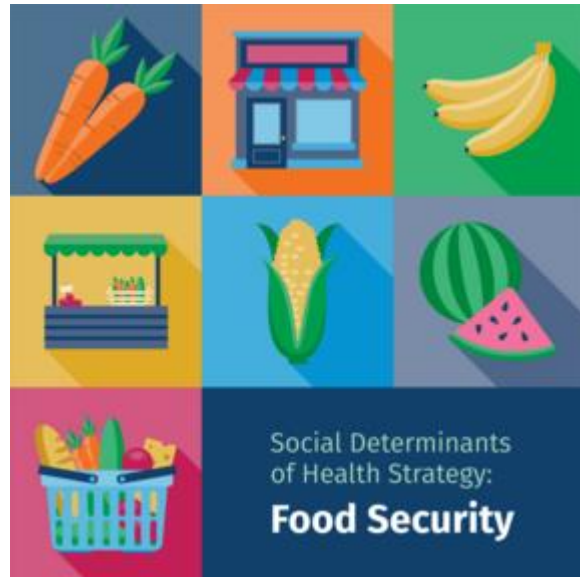
- [Joshua Gillespie - LMTS Community Outreach Services, Ingham County](#)
- [Mark and Dara Mayhoe - The Bread House, Ingham County](#)
- [Chara Bouma-Prediger - Ottawa Food Advisory Board, Ottawa County](#)
- [Mimi Trent- Building Blocks Community Development, Wayne County](#)
- [Kyle Lake – Central Detroit Christian Community Development Corporation, Wayne County](#)

These interviews provide invaluable insights into Michigan communities, aiding in our ongoing efforts to address food insecurity. By amplifying community voices and fostering collaboration, we can strive towards creating a more resilient and equitable food system for all.

Prescription Produce Pilot (P4) initiative

In honor of March being [National Nutrition Month](#), we'd like to highlight the Prescription Produce Pilot (P4) initiative. The SDOH Strategy's ongoing efforts to combat food insecurity and reduce disparities emphasize the importance of cultural competency and the promotion of culturally appropriate foods.

The P4 Bridge funding grantees from the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP) shared their initiatives aimed at enhancing access to traditional foods, shedding light on how these efforts contribute to the health and well-being of the NHBP tribal community. The presentation, titled 'Supporting Access to Traditional Food Through Nutrition Initiatives' was delivered on day three of the MDHHS SDOH Summit. Presenters included, Shelby Brueck, Nickole Keith, and Erin Stark.



This presentation strongly aligns with the Phase III goals outlined in the SDOH Strategy, particularly focusing on food security. Recognizing that food security encompasses not only quantity but also nutritional adequacy and diversity, our strategy emphasizes comprehensive and sustainable approaches to food access.

[Click here to watch the presentation.](#)

P4 Project Update

March 1, 2024 marked the official start date of the P4 Project. In preparation for this two-year, state-funded initiative, Tribal partners attended the formal P4 Project FY24-25 Kick-Off Meeting with the MDHHS Policy and Planning Team in late February.

The P4 Project FY24-25 will meet quarterly throughout the entirety of the grant period. These quarterly status meetings will provide an opportunity for grantees to share best practices and lessons learned. The meetings are intended to be discussion based: a place to share successes, barriers, or potential opportunities. Status meetings will provide an opportunity for grantees to come together and show up for one another, a space to share and spark innovation, to problem-solve and offer support. The Policy and Planning Team will also use these meetings to share resources and relevant updates on our joint pursuit of sustainability for produce prescriptions programs. It's also an opportunity to provide updates about the SDOH Strategy and other initiatives taking place across the department.

Community Information Exchange Advisory Committee launches workgroup “sprint approach”

In February, the Health Information Technology Commission (HITC) Community Information Exchange Advisory Committee held its second convening to begin its work effectuating the

recommendations of the 2023 CIE Task Force. In 2023, the CIE Task Force [produced thirty-three recommendations](#) for the development of statewide CIE capacities and infrastructure. The HITC established the advisory committee in September 2023.

At its February meeting, advisory committee members proposed workgroups to develop a social care data governance policy and assess a business case for community-based organizations for CIE. The workgroups will begin a “sprint approach” convening from February through July 2024 to make progress towards the advisory committee deliverables.

The advisory committee includes representatives from the HITC, community-based organizations, educational institutions, social care information technology vendors, consumers, health systems, hospitals, and health care providers, local and state government, policy makers, funders, behavioral health providers, local public health, Skilled Nursing Facilities, payors, housing, and the Michigan Health Information Network (MiHIN). [You can find more information about the advisory committee here.](#)

Community Health Workers Advisory Council

To support implementation of recommendations from the CHW Subcommittee, the MDHHS Office of Policy and Planning recently seated the Community Health Workers Advisory Council (CHW-AC).

The first CHW-AC meeting was held on February 26, 2024, during which council members provided introductions and insight on their personal experience and connections with CHW work. During this first convening of the council, members discussed both the purpose and proposed goals of the CHW-AC. The group also provided feedback on the proposed CHW-AC action plan. The 20-member Council reviewed the CHW-AC Charter and approved the document with minimal edits. The CHW-AC Charter will be used to guide the efforts of the council as the group moves to pursue a statewide CHW Certification policy.

The next Community Health Worker Advisory Council meeting will take place on Monday, March 25, 2024 from 3:00pm-4:00pm.

U.P. COMMUNITY HEALTH TOWN HALL SERIES



Last Thursday of Every Month
7-8 pm EST

UP Townhall: SDOH Accelerator Plan to Prevent Chronic Disease

The U.P. Community Town Hall meeting that took place on February 29, 2024, served as a platform for insightful discussions on statewide developments in Social Determinants of Health (SDOH). Led by [Northern Michigan University's Center for Rural Health](#), the meeting delved into various crucial topics including the comprehensive MDHHS SDOH Strategy, outcomes from the listening sessions for the Accelerator Plan to Prevent Chronic Disease, and the pivotal role of Community Health Workers (CHWs) in fostering healthier communities. [Click here to watch the recording.](#)

Rural Health Equity Plan Update

On March 7, 2024 the Michigan Center for Rural Health (MCRH) convened with MDHHS staff to present the latest developments on the Rural Health Equity Plan. MCRH, in collaboration with a diverse advisory group, is actively formulating both short and long-term recommendations to facilitate the implementation of the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Strategy. The primary objective is to enhance and support health outcomes for rural residents. The interim report will be submitted to the MDHHS team by March 31, 2024.

Ongoing efforts by MCRH team and the Rural Health Equity Advisory Group will include drafting a final report of actionable recommendations and steps to close these disparity gap in Fall 2024.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2024.

SDOH Partner Updates

MDARD Announces Request for Proposals to Build Readiness for a New Minority-Owned Food and Agriculture Business Grant Program

The Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) is issuing a request for proposals (RFP) from minority-owned food and agriculture businesses and supportive organizations looking to increase capacity initiatives. In this phase one RFP, businesses should be looking to increase capacity initiatives in business plan development, grant management training, partnership development, and financial investment planning.

This initial phase of grants will help build capacity and readiness for the next round of grants that will be offered directly to minority-owned food and agriculture businesses in Michigan. This reimbursement grant program aims to provide eligible organizations up to \$50,000 in funding. Phase two will be launched later in 2024.

The requirements for project funding include:

- Capacity Building – New, enhanced, or scaled fellowship programs or community-based internship programs, development of training curriculum, and leadership development programs.
- Development Readiness – Activities that prepare minority-owned business owners to establish key properties for development or investment, including the development of business plans, project development studies, grant writing, grant management, financial management, and more.
- Partnerships and Planning – Activities including development of plans and implementation activities that build readiness for future projects, collaborative initiatives, development, and investment for applying for grant funding.

Eligible applicants for this grant funding include tax-exempt organizations/non-profits, including community foundations and statewide associations, private/for-profit businesses, economic development or foundations, federally recognized tribes, and educational institutions.

To apply for this grant, visit www.michigan.gov/mdardgrants and click on the Minority-owned Food and Agriculture Business Grant tab for the program guidelines and a fillable Word document form.

The fillable Word document form must be submitted to mda-grants@michigan.gov. Proposals for this grant will be accepted until 3 p.m. EST on April 18, 2024. Applicants will be notified of award status in May 2024.

For more information about eligibility requirements and criteria for this grant, visit www.Michigan.gov/MDARDGrants.



WIC's Inaugural Client Advisory Council

Michigan Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is excited to announce that our inaugural WIC Client Advisory Council (CAC) has completed its first year. It has been wonderful for our State agency to witness our WIC clients' commitment and dedication to seek a deeper understanding of the WIC program and drive the work as valued subject matter experts of their lived experience to help inform changes in our WIC policies, programming, and practices.

The CAC is comprised of eight WIC clients (both current and former) from diverse cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives across the state. The majority identify as BIPOC and/or non-White and live in rural areas. We also have representation from fathers, individuals who identify as non-binary and/or LGBTQ+, and foster parents.

The CAC has prioritized the following key goals in 2024 to measure impact and address social determinant health needs in our WIC population through a health equity lens to increase WIC participation and retention:

- Improve the WIC client shopping experience
- Expand program outreach into the community
- Support the development and training of WIC staff and WIC store employees

As Michigan WIC continues to reflect on equitable approaches to implement best practices to center client voices in our work, including evidence-based decision making, we are proud to share the following testimonies from our CAC members to highlight their current experience serving on the Council. Michigan WIC is thankful to move this work forward based on lessons learned in partnership with the WIC Client Advisory Council to advance health equity and better serve our WIC families in Michigan.

"What I have enjoyed about being a part of the CAC is connecting with other CAC members and relating to everyone and their stories. Also, understanding the good and the struggles with shopping on WIC. The opportunities that have been created for us. Speaking at the WIC Conference was such an amazing opportunity and privilege. The best part of all is having Myra and Whitney as amazing leaders of CAC.

What I learned about WIC since I joined the CAC is not being so overwhelmed while shopping. Listening to helpful tips while shopping. Telling more people about the WIC program and explaining how beneficial WIC is for families."

~ Barbara, CAC Member 2023-2024

"Being a CAC member has allowed my voice and ideas to be heard as a WIC client and provided me the opportunity to work with some amazing individuals to improve the overall WIC experience. Even though I've been a WIC client for over 10 years, I didn't know WIC benefits were available during pregnancy."

~ Courtney, CAC Member 2023-2024

MDHHS Seeks Input on Health-Related Nutrition Services Initiative

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is seeking public input on new health-related nutrition services aimed at addressing food insecurity and enhancing access to healthy foods.

Under the initiative, MDHHS is encouraging Medicaid and Healthy Michigan Plan health plans to offer In Lieu of Services (ILOS) options to beneficiaries. These services, delivered by community-based providers like food banks and meal providers, are intended to improve health outcomes by providing nutritious foods.

MDHHS is seeking feedback on four potential ILOS:

1. Medically Tailored Home Delivered Meal.
2. Healthy Home Delivered Meal.
3. Healthy Food Pack.
4. Produce Prescription.

Feedback can be submitted via email to MDHHS-EngageMedicaid@michigan.gov through 5 p.m., April 5. Visit Michigan.gov/MDHHSILOS for more details on ILOS. [Click here for the full press release.](#)

Your input will help refine these services before they're implemented, making a difference in the health of Michigan residents.

[Become a foster parent through Michigan Department of Health & Human Services foster care program.](#)



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