



May 2025

Welcome to the latest edition of our SDOH newsletter. Our newsletter aims to provide you with updates on the initiatives and progress within [this current phase](#), along with relevant partner updates, with the goal of fostering transparency and creating space for meaningful collaboration.

SDOH Hub Partners Driving Statewide Progress

Michigan's [Social Determinants of Health \(SDOH\) Hubs](#) initiative brings together community members, local organizations, and cross-sector partners to advance health equity by addressing the root causes of health disparities. Launched in January 2024, these community-led pilots are shaped by local priorities and supported by MDHHS and contracted partners.

SDOH Hubs Learning Community

The second quarterly SDOH Hubs Learning Community meeting was held on April 8, bringing together grantees and partners to share updates from the financial management team, discuss project spending templates, and explore opportunities for collaboration.

Quarterly status reports are now being completed to provide a clear overview of Hub progress and highlight the impact of these efforts. These reports will offer valuable insights into the key initiatives being led by SDOH Hub partners, track milestones, and showcase the tangible results of this work. By sharing this information regularly, we aim to keep everyone informed, foster transparency, and ensure we're aligned in achieving our goals. Updates from these reports will be shared in upcoming newsletters and synthesized to develop updated [SDOH Hub profiles](#).

Spotlight on Region 1: Advancing Health Equity in Michigan's Upper Peninsula



The Region 1 SDOH Hub, led by [Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency \(CLM CAA\)](#) and the [Chippewa County Health Department \(CCHD\)](#), continues to drive innovative, community-centered efforts to address social determinants of health in Chippewa County.

During a recent partner meeting, both agencies highlighted ongoing momentum across key priority areas:

- **Community Information Exchange (CIE):** CLM CAA launched park-based QR signage, connecting 7 new households to services, while CCHD is restructuring a long-standing regional community information exchange (CIE) in partnership with the Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District (EUP ISD), with new platforms expected by June.
- **Health in All Policies (HiAP):** CCHD secured a [Healthy Community Zones](#) grant, which supports nutrition education through the Maternal Infant Health Program (MIHP) and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program and empowers families to grow their own produce. This work presents strong opportunities for alignment with existing SDOH Hub priorities, particularly in food access, maternal and child health, and cross-sector collaboration. Integrating Hub activities with Healthy Communities Zones strategies may further strengthen outcomes and sustainability
- **Community Health Workers (CHWs):** CCHD CHWs facilitated:



18

**MEDICAID
APPLICATIONS**



32

REFERRALS



18

**CAR SEAT
INSTALLATIONS**



6

**COMMUNITY
EVENTS**

No immediate technical assistance needs were identified, though CHW recruitment remains a shared challenge. MDHHS will continue to collaborate with Region 1 partners to support and scale these promising initiatives.

SDOH Hubs Advisory Council

The SDOH Hubs Advisory Council met on April 24th and engaged in a productive meeting focused on strategic priorities. A particularly robust discussion emerged around the importance of alignment, both among similar initiatives, such as the Regional Health Collaboratives and Healthy Community Zones, and with partners across the state. Council members emphasized that clear alignment and coordination of resources are critical for driving meaningful progress. As a core tenet of the MDHHS [SDOH Strategy](#), aligning similar initiatives is critical to maximize impact and foster innovation, especially within a resource-constrained environment.

"This alignment conversation around complexity, cost and constraints is really urgent. It's a great problem to have that we have so much investment and activities, but in this moment, we really need work at MDHHS and [at the] local level to really be efficient, as resources diminish, and need will only grow. We need to continue to do this work to figure out how to optimize the limited people and money available to do really critical work... Great work happening all over the state – we've got to work smarter not harder right now!"

- ANNE SCOTT, ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER

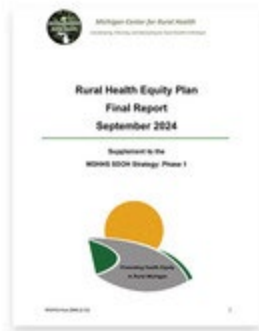
This critical conversation will continue as planning efforts for next fiscal year progress.

To learn more about the SDOH Hubs Advisory Council, we invite you to read their most recent [report with recommendations to support sustainability](#) and visit [the SDOH Hubs Advisory Council web page](#).

MDHHS and MCRH Present Rural Health Equity Plan at Michigan Rural Health Conference

On April 24, 2025, the [Michigan Center for Rural Health \(MCRH\)](#) and the MDHHS Policy and Planning Bureau presented at the Michigan Rural Health Conference on the Rural Health Equity Plan. The session included information about the MDHHS SDOH Strategy, and MCRH's work to connect with rural partners across the state to develop the Rural Health Equity Plan. The plan outlines the needs of Michigan's rural communities in the context of MDHHS' SDOH Strategy priorities. The conference session included a breakout

activity where attendees reviewed the plan's recommendations in groups and provided key partners and strategies that MDHHS should consider while advancing this work.



The [Rural Health Equity Final Report](#) is available on our website! In this final report, MCRH provides a summary of the work that was done and some actionable community-driven recommendations to better serve rural Michiganders.

MiRHETT Holds Final Convening to Present Actionable Strategies for Advancing Racial Health Equity in Michigan

The **Michigan Racial Health Equity Think Tank (MiRHETT)**, a Policy and Planning Bureau Initiative and part of the SDOH Strategy dedicated to eliminating racial health disparities, will be holding its final convening on Friday, May 16th. Throughout this fiscal year, MiRHETT has brought together cross-disciplinary experts to develop actionable strategies to support Michigan's racially marginalized and diverse communities. Through the review of existing recommendations, and grounded in the Systems Change Framework, MiRHETT participants have worked collaboratively to prioritize recommendations that can have an immediate impact on racial minorities and begin thinking about how best to implement actions that will have meaningful change.

During this final meeting, MiRHETT participants will present the work they've done throughout this cohort highlighting their final implementation strategies and recommended metrics to measure success. Their presentations will guide MDHHS' efforts to "close the disparity gaps" seen throughout Michigan. MiRHETT, together with the Rural Health Equity Plan, have built a foundation to guide MDHHS in approaches to addressing SDOH for communities disproportionately burdened by health inequities across the state.

A final report will be developed including the process that was undertaken for this project and highlighting the final implementation strategies. This report will be shared in future newsletters, so stay tuned!



MDHHS and Local Partners Team Up to Implement Food Delivery Service Program in Wayne and Kent Counties

Thanks to state-appropriated funds, MDHHS is supporting a Food Delivery Service Program (FDSP) that breaks down transportation barriers, boosts grocery access, and helps meet the food security needs of SNAP recipients in Wayne and Kent counties. The partners participating in this work include the Heart of West Michigan United Way for Kent County, and the United Way for Southeastern Michigan, and Wayne County Health Department for Wayne County.

Wayne and Kent County were chosen as the focal points for the Food Delivery Service Project due to the counties containing a large population of individuals who do not have access to adequate transportation and live more than a mile away from a grocery store that contains healthy and fresh foods. Both counties represent two of the largest cities in Michigan, Detroit with a population of 633,218 and Grand Rapids with a population of 196,608. In a study conducted by the Henry Ford Health System, it was stated that 31% of households in Detroit reported that they are food insecure, with 41% of households being enrolled in SNAP. Additionally, 34% of Detroit residents stated that they do not own a car, making them reliant on public transportation ([Source](#)). Grand Rapids experiences similar trends where a study done by the Lyson Center for Civic Agriculture and Food Systems

found that about 41% of its population is experiencing food insecurity and about 25% of its population has no access to a grocery store due to transportation barriers ([Source](#)).

Both Kent and Wayne County have made tremendous progress in their work to combat the issue of food insecurity for their communities. In the past couple of months, the United Way of Southeast Michigan and Heart of West Michigan United Way have started working together to develop a strategic plan to collaborate with private retailers, such as Instacart and Meijer, to help streamline efforts in delivering food. The two United Ways hope that in utilizing the resources and expertise of the private sector, the FDSP project can be the most efficient and effective project it can be. Similarly, the Wayne County Health Department is partnering with the Eastern Market due to the Market's experience in tackling food insecurity in the heart of Detroit.

Partnerships with private organizations are important when it comes to tackling dynamic issues like food insecurity. In the following months, all three partners are hoping to continue to grow and strengthen their relationships with the private sector and with the continued support of the MDHHS, Wayne and Kent County can continue to create the partnerships their community needs to for a healthier and happier life.

MDHHS, MSMS, and the Thumb Public Health Alliance Launch HEEL Project to Boost Health Literacy and Strengthen CHW Workforce

The MDHHS Bureau of Policy and Planning, in collaboration with the Michigan State Medical Society (MSMS) and the Michigan Thumb Public Health Alliance, aims to address the significant gap in health literacy, particularly among Medicaid members and racial/ethnic minority populations. The Health Equity through Enhancing Literacy (HEEL) project, a Closing the Disparity Gap initiative, focuses on advancing health literacy, community information exchange capacities, and increasing digital equity by strengthening the Community Health Worker (CHW) workforce. This project will also advance outcomes identified in the SDOH [Accelerator Plan for Preventing Chronic Disease](#).

Since our partner kickoff in January 2025, our HEEL partners have completed their first advisory group and CHW Workgroup meetings. During the CHW workgroup, there was consensus around the desire to continue meeting and learning from other CHW programs. With CHWs being new at many participating organizations, members continue to need support around integration into the workforce and effective use of SDOH Screening and referrals. In addition, our Thumb Public Health Alliance partners have made key developments with organizations/ stakeholders to translate materials and to discuss the needs of the Hispanic Population and non-English speaking individuals throughout the state.



SDOH Partner Updates

Economic Mobility Partners Foster Connection and Advocacy

Grassroots Giving and The Mobility Collective

Over the past quarter, we've been proud to work alongside MDHHS to help connect Black businesses and community organizations, both in and outside of the Lansing area, with a similar mission. Together, we've helped create meaningful spaces for collaboration, networking, and dialogue.

April's Black Business Mixer featured a dynamic panel discussion and continued a growing series of convenings designed to strengthen the local Black business ecosystem.

This month's Black Business Mixer will explore how policy and advocacy directly impact funding and support for Black business owners. It's an opportunity to connect with other professionals, gain insight into the systems influencing economic mobility, and explore ways to use advocacy as a tool for business and community growth. The event will be located at Rock the Block Studio. You can RSVP using this [link](#).

Scroll down to check out some photos from recent Economic Mobility events. They capture the joy, connection, and real impact that bring this work to life.



2025-2026 Building Healthy Communities Program

Michigan schools are encouraged to apply for the 2025-2026 Building Healthy Communities program before May 30, 2025. Building Healthy Communities is a schoolwide initiative designed to reduce obesity, prevent chronic disease, and improve the mental health and well-being of students and staff by creating healthy school environments. Interested schools may review the program descriptions and eligibility information at bcbsm.com/buildhealth.



Food Pantry Grant Applications Open to Address Food Insecurity in Communities

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, United Dairy Industry of Michigan, Blue Cross Complete of Michigan and the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation are proud to partner to address food and nutrition insecurity. The [Food Pantry Grant](#) increases the capacity of local food pantries to provide nutrient-rich fresh-food options that require refrigeration, such as dairy products, fruit and vegetables to individuals and families in their communities. The [application](#) deadline is June 22, 2025.



EGLE has announced the launch of the MI Healthy Climate Challenge, a bold new initiative investing up to millions to accelerate Michigan's clean energy transition!

The Challenge aims to fund projects that cut emissions, lower energy bills, build resilient communities, and create good-paying jobs — all while moving Michigan closer to its climate goals.

EGLE is kicking things off with offering \$8.75 million in pilot grants for residential and community solar projects, as well as enabling home repairs and energy storage. These projects will supercharge the MI Solar for All program and help households across the state access the benefits of clean energy.

Eligible applicants include nonprofits, local governments, schools, faith-based institutions, tribes, and community solar providers, and we encourage collaboration between partners to make transformative local change.

Learn more and apply at: Michigan.gov/MHCChallenge

2025 Michigan Healthcare Workforce Plan



The Michigan Health Council (MHC) developed the 2025 *Michigan Healthcare Workforce Plan* to address long-standing and evolving challenges. Supported by the [Michigan Health Endowment Fund](#), this effort aims to guide the implementation of data-driven solutions to our state's healthcare workforce challenges.

To download and read the report, visit the [MHC website](#).

MICHIGAN HEALTH ENDOWMENT FUND STRENGTHENING MICHIGAN'S HEALTH-FOCUSED NONPROFITS

Funding Opportunity: Michigan Health Endowment Fund Capacity Building Grant

The Capacity Building grant program assists health-focused, community-based organizations in becoming stronger, more effective institutions within their community, allowing them to spend more time and energy focused on their mission. It also supports collaborative efforts among providers, service agencies, and community-based organizations to cooperatively address health issues in a sustainable way.

Concept papers are due June 10. To learn more, visit the [MHEF website](#).

SDOH Strategy Website



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