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## January 2025

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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.

Phase III of the SDOH Strategy, which launched in January 2024, represents a significant progression in our commitment to holistic well-being. Building on the foundational achievements of Phase I, which prioritized critical areas such as food security, housing stability, and health equity, we now advance our efforts. Our latest phase synthesizes insights gained from our earlier efforts, incorporates feedback from Michigan's diverse partners, and employs a collaborative, community-driven approach to address emerging challenges.

[Click here to learn more about Phase III of the SDOH strategy.](#)

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## SDOH Strategy Phase III Updates

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# FREE WEBINARS FOR SDOH MONTH JANUARY 2025

Celebrate SDOH Month this January!



*Let's work together  
to improve the  
factors that affect  
our health.*



## Free Webinars for SDOH Month 2025

This January, join the MDHHS Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) team for a series of engaging and informative webinars designed to spark collaboration, innovation, and action in addressing social needs and advancing health equity. These sessions are free and open to all, offering valuable insights for healthcare providers, community organizations, policymakers, and anyone passionate about creating healthier communities

- **Webinar 1: Scaling and Sustaining SDOH Hubs: Key Recommendations from the Advisory Council**
  - **Date & Time:** Tuesday, January 28, 2025, 2:00–3:00 PM ET.
  - [Click here to register.](#)
- **Webinar 2: Community Health Worker Integration: Advancing Equity in Michigan**
  - **Date & Time:** Wednesday, January 29, 2025, 1:00–2:00 PM ET.
  - [Click here to register.](#)
- **Webinar 3: SDOH Hubs: Cultivating Strong and Resilient Communities**
  - **Date & Time:** Thursday, January 30, 2025, 2:00–3:00 PM ET.
  - [Click here to register.](#)

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## Produce Prescription Pilot Program Update

January marks the start of Reporting Period #4 for the Produce Prescription Pilot Program (P4). P4 Project FY24-25 tribal partners include: P4 Project FY24-25 tribal partners include: [Bay](#)

[Mills Indian Community](#), [Hannahville Indian Community](#), Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP), and [Pokagon Band of Potawatomi](#).

Partners meet regularly throughout the P4 Project grant period to bolster relationships and inspire cross-cohort collaboration. Interactive status meetings provide an opportunity to share accomplishments, opportunities, and other P4-related happenings in a supportive and dynamic environment. P4 Project status meetings take place quarterly; the third of these six quarterly meetings will be held in February 2025.

Bay Mills hosts a monthly gathering, Wiisinidaa Mnomijim (or “Let’s Eat Good Food”), to provide hands-on learning experiences related to Food Sovereignty and Traditional Lifeways. The most recent gathering focused on a Smoked Fish Workshop at the Waishkey Bay Farm, during which participants learned how to smoke fish and sampled different types of smoked fish: Whitefish, trout, sucker, and salmon.

Hannahville continues to support its Food Farmacy program, which offers Farmers Market vouchers to residents who participate in Hannahville’s nutritional education programming. Their partnership with Massie’s Meat Counter will allow Hannahville to provide another round of Food Farmacy provisions this winter while the Farmers Market is not in session.

NHBP Food Sovereignty social media has been quite active, with many posts that included Wabozo (or “recipes”), lunch and learn activities, highlights of the International Conference of Indigenous Archives, Libraries, and Museums conference—in which the food sovereignty journey was presented—and their site visit to the Kalamazoo Valley Community College Food Innovation Center. Individual NHBP Tribal Members also produced posts about fishing and harvesting, along with multiple videos that have been produced and published: [Wild Rice](#) and [Food Supporting Culturally Honoring Community Responses](#).

**Community Feedback:** A Pokagon Band resident sent a note back with her consent form thanking the health center staff for taking the time to talk with her and enroll her into the Food Farmacy program. The patient was very excited to meet her goal of losing weight and learning to have fresh produce on hand for daily snacks.



### Health in All Policies Interagency Workgroup

In December, the Health in All Policies Interagency Workgroup relaunched with partners from thirteen departments, including representatives from the Michigan Poverty Task Force and the Racial Disparities Task Force. Health in All Policies is a collaborative approach to improving health outcomes, by integrating health and healthy equity into decision-making and policymaking across sectors. The objective of the workgroup is to foster a shared understanding of health and health equity across departments.



The workgroup convenes departmental leadership who will serve as key advisors on the strategic direction of initiatives and guide the state's adoption of a Health in All Policies approach to policymaking statewide. The workgroup will meet quarterly through 2025 and will focus on aligning departments, engaging interagency partners, and supporting effective collaboration. You can learn more about Health in All Policies [here](#).



### **CIE Professional Learning Community hosts MiTAHIE Informational Session**

The Community Information Exchange Professional Learning Community (PLC) aims to create a collaborative space for professionals in the CIE space, by fostering knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning. The group meets monthly and focuses on learning opportunities, including the CIE Task Force findings and recommendations, project presentations from across the state and best practices for CIE. You can register for future sessions [here](#).

On January 16, the CIE PLC will host an informational session, led by MDHHS, Altarum and the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) on the Michigan Technical Assistance for Health Information Exchange (MiTAHIE). The goal of MiTAHIE is to develop statewide structured technical assistance and training for health and social care providers. To increase person-centered care coordination across a variety of clinical and non-clinical partners, MiTAHIE will work to provide support to prioritized providers, including community-based organizations and skilled nursing facilities. In December and January, MiTAHIE sent needs assessment surveys to community-based organizations (CBOs). If you are affiliated with a CBO, please [complete the survey](#) - your insights are essential to this process!

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### **Community Health Worker Advisory Council Update**

To support implementation of recommendations from the Community Health Worker Subcommittee, the Policy and Planning Bureau convened the Community Health Workers Advisory Council (CHW-AC) from February through December 2024. The CHW Advisory Council is in the process of reviewing the final report and recommendations for MDHHS related to adopting a CHW definition, core competencies, qualification criteria, and finally a proposed pathway to statewide CHW certification building upon the existing Medicaid reimbursement policy, MMP 23-74. The report is expected to be published in the Spring of 2025.

The 20-member Council will meet again on February 10, 2025, to review and adopt the final report and recommendations.

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### **SDOH Hub Updates**

The [SDOH Hubs](#) continue to advance key initiatives to address social determinants of health and reduce disparities across communities. Many Hub site partners remain actively engaged in collaborating to develop and implement a Community Information Exchange (CIE). CIE aims to enhance information sharing among providers and partners, fostering more coordinated and personalized services for the communities they serve. The Hubs are also



prioritizing programs that address critical disparities, such as the Community Health Worker (CHW) Integration to Improve Equity (CITIE) Initiative, which will train and integrate CHWs into communities disproportionately burdened by health inequities.

In recognition of SDOH Month 2025, MDHHS will host webinars this month that will highlight key recommendations and strategies for cultivating strong, resilient communities:

- **"Scaling and Sustaining SDOH Hubs: Key Recommendations from the Advisory Council"** on January 28, 2025, 2–3 PM. [Learn more and register here.](#)
- **"Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) Hubs: Cultivating Strong and Resilient Communities"** on January 30, 2025, 2–3 PM. [Learn more and register here.](#)

To learn more about the SDOH Hubs, please visit [Michigan.gov/SDOH](https://Michigan.gov/SDOH). For an overview of each Hub site's activities, key partnerships, and priorities, please see the [SDOH Hub site profiles](#).



### SDOH Hubs Advisory Council

Following the sixth and final SDOH Hubs Advisory Council meeting of the year on December 19, 2024, the MDHHS SDOH Hubs team is finalizing emerging recommendations and plan next steps for the SDOH Hubs. During the pilot year, this council guided the implementation of SDOH Hub projects and shaped recommendations in five key areas: Alignment, Engagement, Measurement, Support, and Advancing Equity. These recommendations, informed by council discussions and surveys, will be refined and published in winter 2025.

Additionally, on January 8, 2025, MDHHS released a [press announcement](#) for applications to join the 2025 Advisory Council, encouraging broad participation to ensure representation from Michigan's diverse communities. [Applications](#) to participate on the Advisory Council must be submitted by Friday, January 17. Participants will meet virtually beginning in February 2025 with an estimated total commitment of 36 hours through December 2025.

To learn more about the SDOH Hubs Advisory Council, please visit the [Advisory Council webpage](#).

### SDOH Hubs Learning Community

The SDOH Hubs Learning Community, composed of Hub site grantees, will convene on Tuesday, January 14, 2025, from 3:00-4:30pm. The community will continue sharing best practices, addressing barriers, and exploring opportunities for collaboration. Based on member feedback, these status meetings will shift to quarterly sessions, held on the second

Tuesday of every three months. 2025 Quarterly meeting dates are: January 14, April 8, July 8, and October 14.

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### **Michigan Racial Health Equity Think Tank (MiRHETT)**

The **Michigan Racial Health Equity Think Tank (MiRHETT)** is dedicated to eliminating racial health disparities in Michigan by bringing together cross-disciplinary experts to develop actionable strategies. The initiative focuses on evaluating existing recommendations, creating new approaches to support racially marginalized and diverse communities, and establishing 3-5 key metrics to address gaps in racial health equity.

The fifth and sixth MiRHETT sessions were held on December 13, 2024, and January 10, 2025, respectively. These sessions focused on reviewing the below foundational documents that will inform the development of the final implementation strategy:

- Black Leadership Advisory Council final report
- Michigan Coronavirus Racial Disparities Task Force Final Report
- Michigan Poverty Task Force Final Report
- The MDHHS Health Equity Report
- The Rural Health Equity Plan Interim Report

Over the course of the project, participants have reviewed and discussed how the systems change framework will guide the development of MiRHETT's strategy for addressing racial health disparities.

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### **Corktown Health Program**

Corktown's **LGBTQ+ Health and Social Services Disparities Request for Proposals**, has provided another funding opportunity for six additional community-based organizations focused on addressing health disparities for LGBTQ+ individuals in Michigan. The new awardees are partnership projects between:

1. **MiGen and Stonewall Sports Detroit**; a local chapter of a national non-profit organization promoting community and philanthropy through LGBTQ+ sports leagues.

1. **Stand with Trans and Michigan Organization on Adolescent Sexual Health (MOASH);** a non- profit organization that provides sexual health education, advocacy, and services for youth in Michigan.
1. **Grand Rapids Pride Center and Nuii Waav Brotherhood;** a community-based organization serving transgender men in Detroit, Michigan.
1. **Corktown Health and Team Abad;** which services transgender women in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties as well as,
1. **Corktown Health and The Corner Health Center;** which provides primary care, specialty care, and other support services for youth and young adults who identify as LGBTQ+, and transgender.

In addition to awarding the five community- based organizations above, Corktown Health has made significant progress addressing health inequities for, members of the LGBTQ+ community, across all three of MDHHS' priority areas, including the following:

1. Health in All Policies: Activated 197 gender and sexual orientation affirming policies and practices created, ensuring LGBTQ+ individuals experience safer, more supportive environments.
1. Closing Disparity Gaps: 1,668 preventative health sessions were provided, promoting early intervention and disease prevention. 11,955 patients received critical health services, improving access to comprehensive care
1. SDOH Hubs: Though not a formalized hub, Corktown Health has embodied the core framework of the SDOH Hubs; convening partners, working collaboratively, sharing resources, implementing a governance structure, policy development and addressing SDOH at the local level.

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## SDOH Partner Updates



## Submit Your Proposal for the 28th Annual Rural Health Conference

Are you working to advance equity for Michigan's rural communities? The Michigan Center for Rural Health is hosting the 28th annual Michigan Rural Health Conference on April 24-25, 2025, in Mount Pleasant Michigan. The goal of this interactive and engaging conference is to provide engaging education on relevant topics for rural health providers. There are three tracks including Rural Health Clinics, Social Drivers of Health, and Workforce. If you are interested in



submitting a proposal to demonstrate the work you are doing in these areas, please check out the [Call for Presentations for more information](#). Proposals are due January 17, 2025.

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### **The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System: Insights into Michigan's Health**

Understanding the health and well-being of Michiganders is a cornerstone of creating effective policies and programs to address social determinants of health (SDOH). One of the most valuable tools we use for this purpose is the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), an annual survey conducted by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS).

The BRFSS is the largest, continuously conducted health survey in the world and has been operating in Michigan since 1989. This telephone survey gathers critical data about the health behaviors, chronic conditions, and preventive health practices of adults across the state. The findings help inform decisions that shape public health interventions, programs, and funding allocations, directly impacting Michigan residents.

### **Why the BRFSS Matters for SDOH**

Data from the BRFSS allows MDHHS and its partners to identify and address the barriers that prevent Michiganders from achieving optimal health. For example, BRFSS data can help inform programs aimed at improving food security, addressing transportation barriers, and increasing access to preventive health services. These efforts align with Michigan's broader strategy to reduce health disparities and promote health equity.

### **How You Can Use BRFSS Data**

The results of the BRFSS are available to researchers, policymakers, and community organizations through the MDHHS Chronic Disease Epidemiology Unit. These insights can guide the development of targeted initiatives to address community-specific needs.

To learn more about the BRFSS, explore the latest reports, or use the data for your own SDOH initiatives, visit the [Michigan BRFSS website](#).

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### **Capacity Connect Initiative**

As a part of Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' (MDHHS) continuous commitment to deliver Michigan residents equitable, coordinated, and person-centered care, MDHHS introduced a set of [In Lieu of Services \(ILOS\)](#), which will allow Medicaid Health Plans (MHP) to pay for services provided in the community that address eligible Enrollees' health-related nutrition needs.

In order to prepare for the implementation of ILOS, MDHHS is launching a funding opportunity to support food and nutrition providers in building their capacity for the delivery of Medicaid services. The Capacity Connect Initiative (CCI) is designed to empower local, community-based food and nutrition providers who have not traditionally delivered services within the Medicaid system, by offering tailored technical assistance, direct funding, and strategic support.

The CCI funding structure is divided into four allowable use of funds categories:

- Technology
- Development of Business or Operational Practices
- Workforce Development
- Outreach, Education, and Convening

A resource outlining the Capacity Connect Initiative and its offerings can be accessed in this [One-Page Brief](#).

**An application to apply for funding will be made available in January 2025.**

Please visit the [CCI Webpage](#) for additional information, including who is eligible to apply, and further details on funding.

Please e-mail [MDHHS-EngageMedicaid@michigan.gov](mailto:MDHHS-EngageMedicaid@michigan.gov) with the subject line "Capacity Connect Initiative" with any questions.

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