

SDOH Talking Points for Partners to Advocate on behalf of MDHHS

What are social determinants of health?

Social determinants of health, often shortened to SDOH, are the conditions in which people live, work, and play that impact our health and wellbeing.

These social factors, include, but are not limited to, income, education, job security, food security, housing, basic amenities, the environment, social inclusion and nondiscrimination, and access to quality, affordable health care.

How does the social factors influence health outcomes?

SDOH have a significant impact on health. For example, people who do not have access to grocery stores with healthy foods are less likely to have good nutrition. That raises their risk of health conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and obesity — and even lowers life expectancy relative to people who do have access to healthy foods.¹

Just promoting healthy choices will not work if people do not have access to the resources and support that they need to make them. Instead, public health organizations and their partners in sectors like education, food security, and housing need to take action to improve the conditions in people's environments to ensure everyone has the opportunity to be as healthy as possible.

As you can imagine, these social factors can greatly increase health disparities resulting in poor health outcomes.

Differences in health outcomes emerge and persist due to policies, practices, and systems that have disadvantaged people and communities for decades. Longstanding discrimination and the unjust distribution of health promoting factors, including income, healthy housing, and food security perpetuate economic and social inequities.

What is the overall goal of the MDHHS SDOH Strategy, Michigan's Roadmap to Healthy Communities?

The goal of the SDOH Strategy is to improve the health and social outcomes of all Michigan residents while working to achieve health equity by eliminating disparities and barriers to social and economic opportunity.

How can I share information about SDOH with community members?

- Share the link to [subscribe to our newsletter](#).
- Join our partner meetings and continue to explore ways to connect your work at the state and local level.

¹ <https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health>

- Share best practices so that we can explore scalability and sustainability for statewide implementation.

How can I share information with partners that are not traditionally involved in health and social services? (Health in all Policies)

Though it's inherent that addressing the social determinants of health are integral to social and health services, their impact spans across sectors. Promoting collaboration among all sectors is essential to improving health and equity.

A recommended way to share information with partners that are not traditionally involved in social and health services is through a Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach. HiAP aims to account for the health implications in any public decision-making process, to seek synergies and to avoid harmful health impacts, in order to improve population health and health equity. This collaborative approach has a collective benefit; health improvement strategies not only improve population health, but also have the potential to reduce healthcare costs and support thriving communities for all. When communicating with non-traditional partners, frame the conversation around the ideals of multisectoral collaboration and the resulting collective benefit.