

Integrating Community Engagement and Partnerships to Address Racial Equity: Lessons Learned from Two Health Equity Councils

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Michigan Premier Public Health Conference
October 16, 2024

KENT COUNTY
Health Equity Council



Oakland County
**Health Equity
Council**



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**Health Equity
Council**



Grant funding is provided by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Office of Equity and Minority Health in partnership with the Michigan Public Health Institute.

The Regional Health Equity Councils are funded under the CDC 21-2103 National Initiative to Address COVID-19 Health Disparities Among Populations at High-Risk and Underserved, Including Racial and Ethnic Minority Populations and Rural Communities. The Program Strategies of the funding task the councils to:

Increase/improve

- Increase/improve data collection and reporting for populations experiencing a disproportionate burden of COVID-19 infection, severe illness, and death to guide the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Build, leverage, and expand

- Build, leverage, and expand infrastructure support for COVID-19 prevention and control among populations that are at higher risk and underserved.

Mobilize

- Mobilize partners and collaborators to advance health equity and address social determinants of health as they relate to COVID-19 health disparities among populations at higher risk and that are underserved.

Expand

- Expand existing and/or develop new mitigation and prevention resources and services to reduce COVID-19 related disparities among populations at higher risk and that are underserved.

Regional Health Equity Councils

This initiative will engage a BBO to support each of the following eleven (11) regions where the majority of Michigan's racial and ethnic minority populations reside and are highly impacted by COVID-19:

City of
Detroit

Genesee
County

Ingham
County

Oakland
County

Kent
County

Macomb
County

Muskegon
County

Ottawa
County

Saginaw
County

Washtenaw
County

Wayne
County

- Honor Community Health
- Pontiac Community Foundation
- La Casa Amiga
- Arab American Chaldean Council
- Trinity Health
- Oakland Community Health Network
- Centro Cultural La Familia
- Chasity Ellis
- Cynita Smith-Watson
- Deborah Jeffries

The Oakland County Equity Council supports equitable physical and mental health care access for communities most impacted by discrimination and systemic racism and those most at risk for adverse health outcomes to achieve improved health status and quality of life.

Council Activities



Focus Groups

- Collected data from 3 priority populations: BIPOC, Spanish speaking, and Arabic speaking
- Recruited participants through social media and partner organizations.
- Participants were screened through an online form.
- Translators were present during the Spanish and Arabic focus groups.

- Questions:
 - What does your family and/or community need to be healthy?
 - What challenges have you experienced since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic?
 - Was there an increase or decrease in difference services, programs, and resources that help us be healthy, physically and mentally?

Top Themes (Across All Groups)

1. Food Access
2. Social Isolation
3. Poor Mental Health
4. Physical Activity
5. Access to Care
6. Transportation
7. Financial Burden
8. Increased Benefits/Government Assistance
9. Understanding/Knowledge of Resources
10. Lack of Resources
11. Language Barriers

Council Activities



SDOH Data

- SDOH data collected from partner sites screening and needs assessment processes
- Examined overall trends and how trends differ across Black, white, Arabic and Hispanic communities
- All data collected after March 2020
- There are data considerations and limitations

- **Unstable income or employment** emerged as an explicit concern for participants at most sites and also contributes to ability to access basic needs and care.
- At sites where healthcare needs were assessed, **access to healthcare** was a frequently cited need.
- Inability to access consistent **safe and affordable housing** was a common need across sites.
- **Transportation and food access** also commonly indicated as needs but to a lesser extent than healthcare and housing

- When comparing white clients with people of color (Black, Hispanic, or another race) white clients were less likely to screen for SDOH needs.
- The highest indicated needs of Black and Hispanic clients were generally in alignment with the overall highest needs at each site.
- Arab American clients indicated a high need for utility assistance, household supplies, and transportation when compared to Black clients

Council Activities



Strategic
Planning

Increase access to culturally relevant behavioral health services, including services in languages other than English, to address the impacts of health inequities on people of color.

Identify ways to mitigate the increasing costs of food and food insecurity that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic, with a focus on culturally appropriate, healthy foods, and food access in communities of color.

Council Activities



Health Equity
Mini Grants

- Partnered with Pontiac Community Foundation to administer grants
- \$160,000 in funding available – grants up to \$25,000
- RFP was released in January 2024
- Twenty-one total applications
- Review team of foundation staff, Oakland County staff, and council members
- 10 organizations were awarded grants between \$5,000 and \$25,000

- Centro Multicultural La Familia
- Chance for Life Organization
- Community Housing Network
- D House of Angels
- E-community Outreach Services
- Freedom Road Transportation Authority
- Friends of Royal Oak Township
- Hospitality House
- Metro Food Rescue
- Trinity Health Oakland

- 10 women experiencing interpersonal violence were placed in a safe environments at a hotel.
- iPads were purchased to help an emergency food provider with interpretation into Spanish.
- 52 residents were given assistance with transportation (mileage reimbursement)
- 200,000 lbs of food was rescued, which was a 33% increase with the mini grant
- Culturally relevant mental health programming and training for the Hispanic community

- The OC Council scored high around having a clear vision, strong capacity to support the council, and good understanding of the need in the community.
- The OC Council could make improvements in communication and collaboration.

- Sustainability planning
- Integration with Community Health Improvement Plan
- Continued focus on cultural intelligence, language justice, and community engagement

KENT COUNTY

Health Equity Council



Outline

Establishing and Leading the Health Equity Council

Connecting to Other Initiatives

Supporting Strategies to Address Priority Needs

Communicating Work of Council to Community

Evaluating the Council Operations



Goals

Listen	Listen well to communities facing the greatest inequities and understand their priorities and proposed solutions
Align	Bring systems together to decrease duplication, improve communication, align efforts, and provide resources and support
Trust	Improve trust with community and between organizations





Convening Support



Community Voice



Action Team



Advisory Board

Organizes and coordinates HEC activities (sustainability, budgets, meeting plans, data, evaluation, etc.)

Identifies community priorities to focus on and co-create solutions

Creates action plans and implements CV strategies around priorities

Serve as ambassadors for the HEC & mobilize resources and support the work of the HEC/CHNA/CHIP

Kent County Health Department & Hispanic Center Staff

- 11 Community Based Organizations
- 8 Community Members
- Network of Connectors

- 3 Action Teams-Mental Health and Community Safety, Youth Mental Health
- Community stakeholders

Leaders from health care, government, and community organizations

- bi-monthly team Meeting
- weekly topic focused meetings

- monthly
- *optional attendance at AT, CS, meetings*

monthly

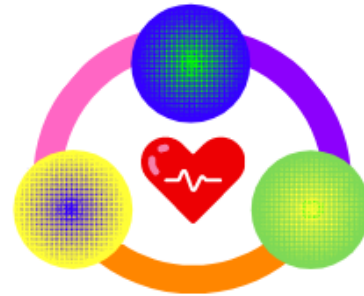
quarterly



BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER



The Source for Seniors



GR LGBTQ HCC

eliminating racism
empowering women

ywca

west central michigan

BLACK @ IMPACT
COLLABORATIVE

 **DisabilityAdvocates**

Bethany[®]
CHRISTIAN SERVICES



WMAAA



NHBP



treetops
collective



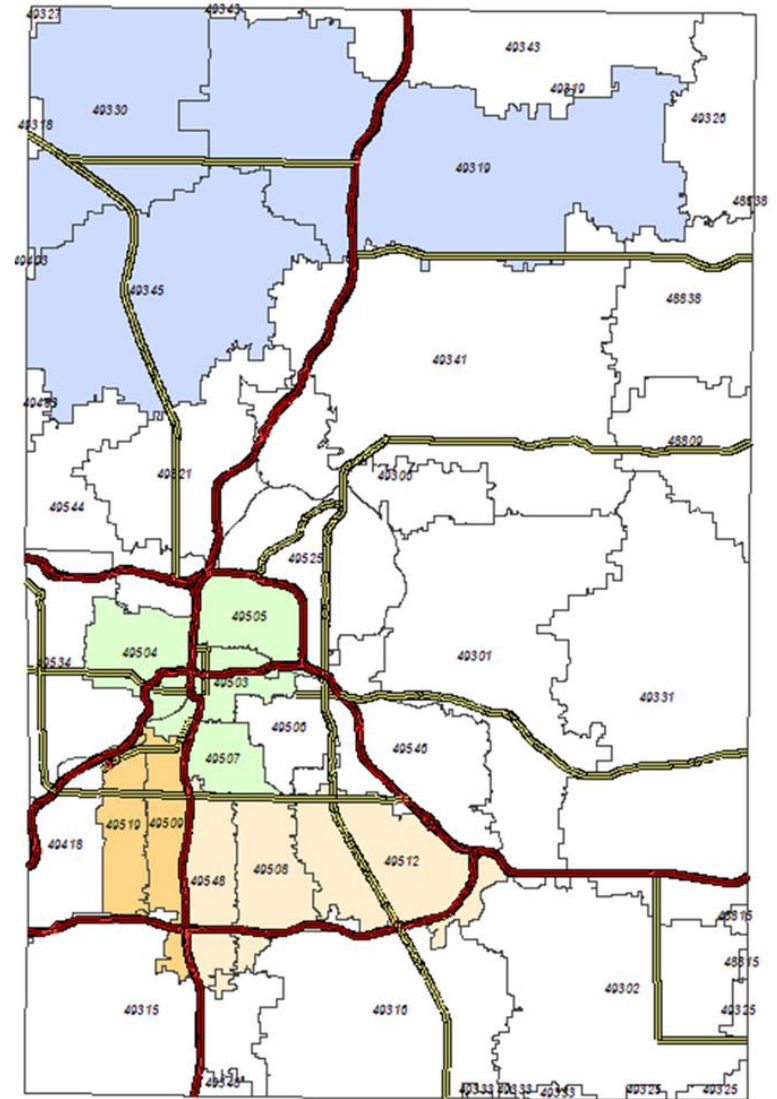
GRAND RAPIDS
**African American
Health Institute**



Hispanic Center
of Western Michigan

Community Members

- Represent the diverse populations who call Kent County home or those living in zip codes identified as having a high social vulnerability index (SVI).
- Baxter Neighborhood
- Roosevelt Park Neighborhood
- Heartside Neighborhood
- Madison/Hall Neighborhood
- West Grand Neighborhood
- Wyoming
- Kentwood



Compensation Model

Payment Structure	Community Members (8)	Community Based Organizations (11)
Compensation Rate	\$26/HR. (meeting attendance, travel time, & homework)	\$97.50/Meeting
Meeting Frequency	1-3 Meetings/Month (1.5-2 hours)	1-3 Meetings/Month (1.5-2 hours)
Additional Benefits	Childcare and Mileage Reimbursement	N/A
Required Documents	Agreement & W9	Contract
Payment Method	Monthly Check	Monthly Invoice
Payment Recipient	Individual	Organization

<https://k-connect.org/compensation-framework/>

Funding the Council



**MICHIGAN HEALTH
ENDOWMENT FUND**



W.K.
KELLOGG
FOUNDATION™

Engagement Guidelines



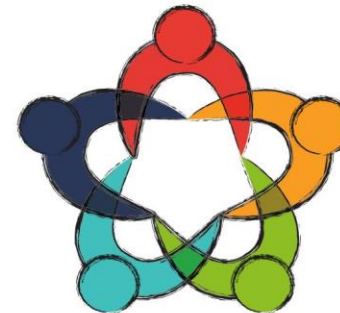
ENGAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Health Equity Council

Brave
Honest
Open Mind
Open Heart
Commit to Growth

STEPS TO SUPPORT A BRAVE SPACE

1. Move beyond our comfort zones by being courageous and brave.
2. Embrace the diversity of this group! Connect and empower by exploring ideas as equals and be willing to address our biases.
3. Build emotional and psychological safety by connecting on a personal level, enforcing ground rules, and practicing empathy.



ENGAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Be open minded, have an open heart.
"If you don't have an open heart, everything I try to talk to you about, I am breaking and entering. I am forcing myself into your space. The floor has to be open for you to receive the work and the challenges."

What is learned here, leaves here; take action by holding ourselves and others accountable.

Respect differences, we don't have to agree; but we can be respectful.

Keep confidentiality

Empathy, not sympathy, "I need you to appreciate my experience, not feel sorry for me."

Graphic Guide

Action Teams

Community Voice Members said the social and economic determinants of mental health they want to address (1) Access to Mental Health Support and (2) Community Safety. These are our Action Teams (blue circles).

Objectives

Objectives were created based on the factors that impact Access to Mental Health Support and Community Safety. Action Teams will create strategies to address the listed objectives (green boxes).

Discussion Notes

Below each objective are some discussion notes about possible strategies (light green boxes)

Ongoing Strategy Bank

- Could be applied to any objective.
- Education
 - Resource Connection & Navigation
 - Funding Community Organizations to sustain the work.
 - Address language barriers
 - Cultural competency

Mental Health

Access to Mental Health Support

Objective 1:

Increase acceptance of mental health as a contributor to a person's overall wellbeing.

Discussion Notes

- Address cultural barriers in different communities.
- Support parent-child conversations around mental health.
- Increase understanding of what mental health is and how to support mental wellbeing.

Objective 2:

Improve connection to resources for mental health and other social services.

Discussion Notes

- Navigation support
- Challenges to get mental health support due to insurance.
- Focus on people who do not read or write and people who speak a language other than English.
- Cultural competency

Community Safety

Objective 1:

Increase positive interactions between police and community.

Discussion Notes

- Focus on new American and BIPOC youth populations.
- Opportunities for positive interactions at an earlier age for youth
- Education via outreach forums, trainings, attending community events etc...
- Collaboration btw law enforcement and community to develop culturally appropriate trainings.

Objective 2:

Increase feelings of safety among K-12 students.

Discussion Notes

- Education on social media as a source of bullying.
- Availability of out of school opportunities for youth.
- Education on system/norms (among new Americans or those that speak other languages) to reduce bullying.
- Involve students in plans to increase feelings of safety within school system, specifically after violent threats.



Kent County
**Community Health
Needs Assessment**



Kent County
**Community Health
Improvement Plan**



Aligned
Inclusive
Responsive



CHNA Community Survey

- Partners engaged in survey development
- Available online in English and Spanish
- Available in hard copy in Swahili, Kinyarwanda, Arabic and Vietnamese
- Contracted with partners to distribute surveys
- Provided organization-specific survey URLs to foster creation of summary data reports.

A Glimpse of Africa
Hispanic Center of Western Michigan
West Michigan Asian American Association
Grand Rapids PROACTIVE
Treetops Collective
Puertas Abiertas
West Grand Neighborhood Association
Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi
Disability Advocates of Kent County
LGBTQ+ Healthcare Coalition

Grand Rapids NAACP
Sparta Chamber of Commerce
Kent District Library
Literacy Center of West Michigan

2023 CHNA Community Survey

- Respondents Increased by 1,812 (total 3,507)
- More equitable distribution by education (51% college degree vs. 63%)
- Greater representation among demographic groups (N=2559)
 - Asian – 0.8% to 5.4%
 - Black/African American – 6.1% to 16.1%
 - Latinx – 6.5% to 11.3%
 - 10% LGBT, 24% Immigrant/Refugee, 17.4% reported a disability, 4.8% veteran, 3.9% formerly incarcerated
- CHNA Prioritization at Community Voice Meeting

Priorities

Community Safety

Improve relationships between police and community
Increase feelings of safety among K-12 students

Access to Health Care

Reduce linguistic and cultural barriers to improve access to medical care. Reduce barriers to navigating the health insurance system.

Mental Health

Increase access to mental health support and reduce stigma

Access to Healthy Food

Reduce inequities in access to affordable healthy food options

Housing

Increase access to safe housing options

Action Teams

Mental Health

Youth Mental Health

Community Safety

Participants in the Action Teams work to create actionable solutions that address each priority

Mini Grant funding is used to address each of the priority areas

SDOH Hub Pilot Framework

Community Engagement

Foster meaningful, sustained community engagement across all phases of intervention planning and implementation.

Governance

Establish criteria, actionable steps, and strategies for partnerships, collaborations, and relationships that result in improved health outcomes over the long term.

Policy & Advocacy

Identify evidence, tools, and resources to enhance communication about policies that affect SDOH with policy makers and other stakeholders.



Data Collection & Storytelling

Embed a consistent SDOH approach to the collection, analysis, and dissemination of quantitative and qualitative data.

Evaluation & Evidence Building

Advance evaluation and build evidence for strategies that address SDOH to reduce disparities and promote health equity.

Infrastructure

Strengthen and sustain infrastructure such as workforce, training, and access to financial resources required to address SDOH and reduce health disparities.

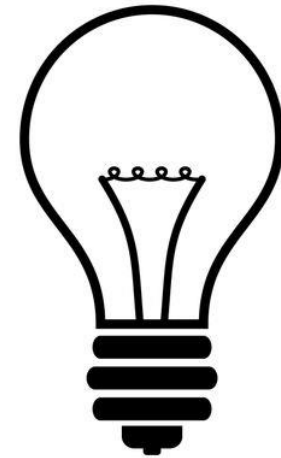
Health Equity Council Mini-Grants



The HEC has funded three rounds of mini-grants since 2023, distributing \$416,000.



Funding has supported 41 projects that address mental health, community safety, and top priorities of the 2023 Kent County Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)



Organizations state that the unrestricted funds allow them to implement innovative approaches to addressing health concerns

Initial Mini Grant Application Process



30-MINUTE INTERVIEW WITH
STEERING COMMITTEE



PRE-RECORDED VIDEO RESPONSE



1-PAGE DOCUMENT ANSWERING
APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Request for Proposals

- Organizational Capacity and Experience (5)
- Project Description including chosen objectives (20)
- Potential impact on population served (20)
- Collaboration (10)
- Approach to measuring success (5)
- Sustainability beyond the project period (5)



Proposal Review

Review Team

- Community Voice Members with no connection to applicants
- Convening Support Members
- KCHD Finance

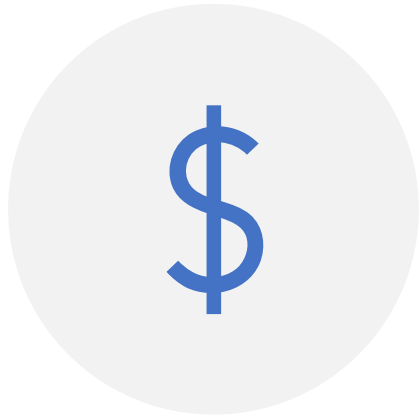
Rubric Scores are averaged

- Proposals not meeting minimum score are eliminated
- Proposals exceeding 80% of possible points are approved
- Discussion around proposals scoring in the mid-range

Mini Grant Recipients

- Puertas Abiertas
- A Glimpse of Africa
- Hispanic Center of Western Michigan
- West Michigan Asian American Association
- Treetops Collective
- West Grand Neighborhood Association
- Disability Advocates of Kent County
- AYA Youth Collective
- North Kent Connect
- Community Food Club
- Migrant Legal Aid, Inc.
- 70x7 Life Recovery
- Area Community Service Employment and Training
- Grand Rapids African American Health Institute
- Grand Rapids LGBTQ+ Healthcare Consortium
- The PROACTIVE Project
- ICCF Community Homes
- The Diatribe
- Cherry Street Services
- Bhutanese Community of West Michigan
- Bridge Street Ministries
- Community Food Club
- Mel Trotter Ministries
- Reentry Reimagined
- Save a Life a Day Outreach
- Baxter Neighborhood Association
- Bethany Christian Services
- Cultivating Futures
- Family Promise of Grand Rapids
- Black Impact Collaborative

Mini Grant Monitoring



FUNDING (50% UP FRONT, 50%
AT END OF PROJECT PERIOD)



MEASUREMENT OUTCOME
FRAMEWORK



MONTHLY MEETINGS WITH
FUNDED ORGANIZATIONS

To support your Services Provided, on what expenses did your organization choose to spend the \$10,000 grant?

Example: \$10,000 went to supplement our service coordinator's wage, taking her from a part-time employee to full-time

Example: \$500 to purchase food for support group; \$1,000 to provide bus transportation for participants; \$1,500 for staff mileage

Services Provided	Start Date	End date	Activity Type	Outcomes
1. Provide locally grown fresh produce, culturally diverse foods and dry goods and personal care items to migrant families in northern Kent County.			Direct Outreach	a) Total # of food distribution events/Head Start meetings attended: _____ b) Total # of households reached: _____ c) Total # of referrals made to community resources/services: _____
2. Increase knowledge and change attitudes toward food and nutrition in migrant families in northern Kent County.			Program Evaluation	a) Total # of baseline surveys completed: _____ b) Total # of follow-up surveys completed: _____ c) Report summarizing questions contained in the survey: Did the program increase access to fresh food and produce? Did the program increase access to culturally appropriate food and food items? Did the program increase access to basic needs? Were you able to receive the resources and referrals you were looking for? Did the services you receive enhance your family and create a healthier living style? Is your family more food secure? d) <u>Brief summary of any challenges/lessons learned from the project.</u>

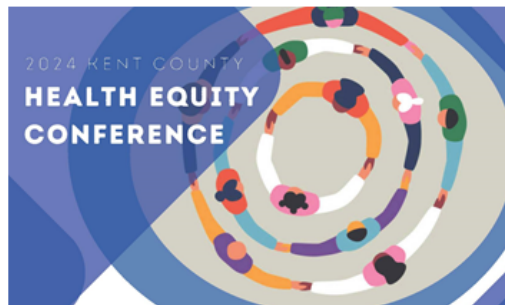
Communication

KENT COUNTY Health Equity Council

September 2024 Newsletter

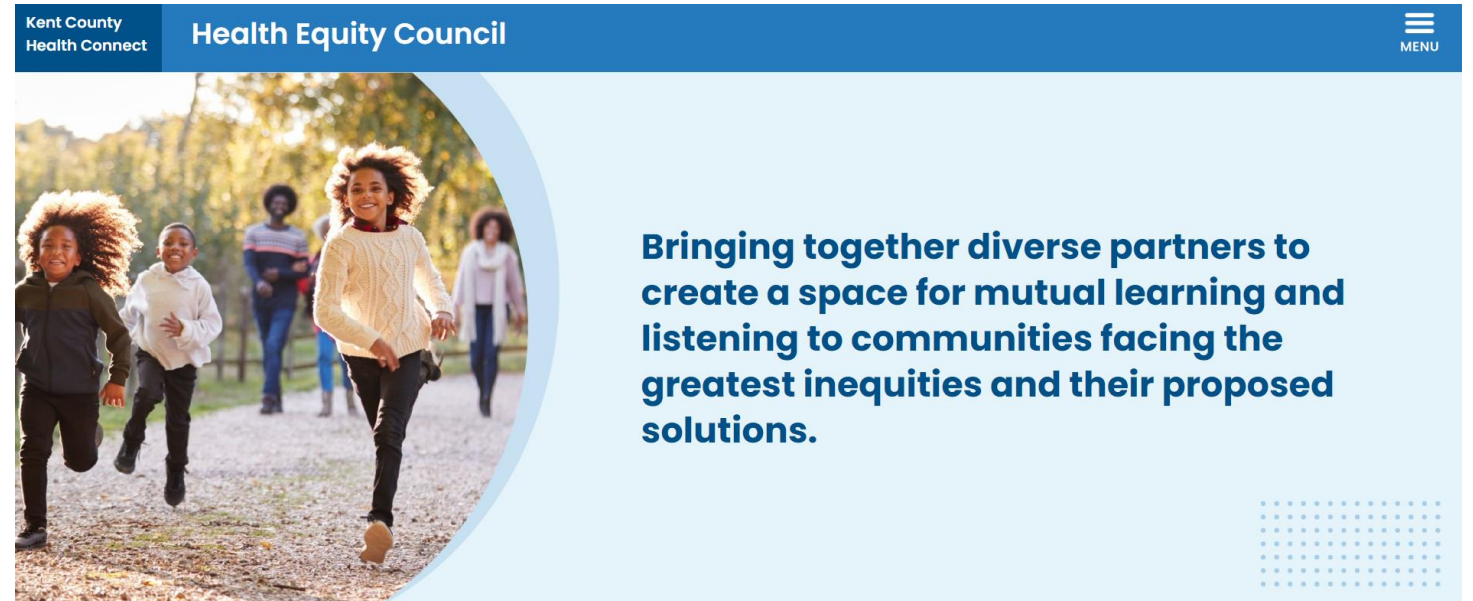
Conference Registration Update: Full Capacity & Waiting List

We are thrilled by the overwhelming interest in the upcoming [Health Equity Conference!](#) Currently, registration has reached full capacity. However, we have established a waiting list to accommodate as many attendees as possible. **If you have registered but are no longer able to attend, please inform us as soon as possible.** This will allow us to offer registration to those on the waiting list and ensure that others who wish to participate have the opportunity to do so. If you would like to be added to the waiting list or have registered and are unable to attend, please reach out to Olivia Pina (Olivia.Pina@kentcountymi.gov).



Bimonthly Newsletter

Web Site



<https://kentcountyhealthconnect.org/health-equity-council/>

Annual Conference

- Keynote speaker
- Breakout sessions
 - Mastering Grant Writing: Insider Tips and Tricks
 - Community Engagement Compensation Model: Designing Community-Centered Models for Fair Participation and Collaboration
 - Data Equity: Focusing on Priority Populations in Local Data
 - Building Stronger Communities: Community Engagement Model Program
 - Community Health Improvement Plans: Understanding, Engaging, and Taking Action Together
- Poster session
- Community Member Panel

<https://kentcountyhealthconnect.org/health-equity-council/conference/>





Process Evaluation Approach



Measurement
Resources

Measurement moves missions

- Better understand the effectiveness and impact of how the HEC is structured and has operated
- Data collected through online surveys managed by MRC and administrative reports provided to MRC by convening partners

What was done?	How well was it done?	How are people better off?
1. Meeting Coordination	4. Representativeness of HEC membership	7. HEC members' increased capacity to affect change
2. HEC/System participant recruitment and engagement	5. Quality of HEC member engagement	
3. Development activities	6. Quality of Action Team experience	

2024 Evaluation Categories

Participation and Engagement

- Barriers to participation
- Knowledge, compensation, encouragement

Collaboration and Community Engagement

- Trust, respect
- Representation

Community Impact

- Relationships
- Organizational benefit

Overall Operations & Long-Term Involvement



Questions

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