



WASHTENAW
HEALTH
INITIATIVE

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



FRIENDS,

Less than ten months after the Affordable Care Act was signed into law, Washtenaw County leaders came together to start planning for implementation. It would be three years until the new Act would be fully implemented, but the group wanted to understand how many Washtenaw County residents were uninsured, how many would be newly eligible for insurance under the act, and whether or not the county's health care providers were ready to meet their needs.

Six months later, Washtenaw County leaders knew what needed to be done to accommodate the needs of newly insured residents and they had developed shared action plans to meet those needs well before the act went into effect. But leaders knew, as well, that more could be done to improve the health of the county's low-income, uninsured, and under-insured residents, and that much of that work could be done immediately.

Their study had revealed, for example, that 2,700 county residents were already eligible for Medicaid coverage, but were currently not enrolled. So they banded together to develop proactive plans to reach them and help them apply for coverage. Beyond that, they developed a dental program for low-income residents, a business case to expand staff in the county's frontline safety net clinics, a protocol to streamline the referral process for substance use treatment across the county, and more.

That kind of proactive planning—evidence-informed, collaboratively developed, and service-oriented—has characterized the Washtenaw Health Initiative and its member organizations since its launch. And in 2019, the Washtenaw Health Initiative continued this legacy, then expanded on it.

Active work groups, comprised of representatives from dozens of Washtenaw County organizations, have much to be proud of in 2019. Together, they:

Completed a three-year, federally funded State Innovation Model intervention that provided wraparound care for residents with complex medical, behavioral, and social needs then redesigned the initiative to continue to improve care coordination and client outcomes into the future.

Engaged in a year-long exploration of the county's substance use treatment and support landscape, then launched seven action teams to tackle critical improvements.

Organized a series of health insurance outreach and enrollment activities to lower the number of uninsured across Washtenaw County and to counter the effect of state and national policies that are creating new barriers to enrollment.

In addition, WHI members participated in a year-long strategic planning process to realign their own operations around some of the county's most pressing, ongoing needs. Close to 100 individual and organizational members took part in these conversations, influencing the direction the WHI will take in the years ahead. Of note, the WHI added:

- Health equity, including racial equity, to its mission,
- The inclusion of more individuals with lived experience in the WHI's leadership and decision-making process,
- The social determinants of health—particularly housing, food, and transportation—as a new focus area, and
- Education and information dissemination about pressing policy concerns to its portfolio of activities.

We are excited to share these changes, and the important work of our members, with the community. And we thank you—all of you—for everything you're doing to improve the lives of Washtenaw County's low-income, uninsured, and underinsured residents.



NORMAN HERBERT
Founding Co-Chair
Washtenaw Health Initiative



MARIANNE UDOW-PHILLIPS
Founding Executive Director
Center for Health and Research Transformation



BRENT WILLIAMS
Secretary
Washtenaw Health Initiative

Highlights from WHI work groups



Medicaid and Marketplace Outreach and Enrollment Work Group

The member organizations in the WHI's Medicaid and Marketplace Outreach and Enrollment work group completed more than 10,000 applications in 2019 to help county residents apply for and maintain Medicaid and Healthy Michigan Plan coverage or purchase insurance through the federal health insurance marketplace.

Collectively, these same member organizations planned and participated in a series of enrollment events in Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor during the six-week open enrollment period and trained U-M students to develop and distribute more than 10,000 flyers in low-coverage neighborhoods, giving residents and businesses contact information for local agencies that can assist them with applications.

Work group members also tracked the shifting policy environment affecting coverage. The goal: To be ready to help residents who are navigating these new policies and to share with the public their own first-hand experience helping clients understand the implications of public charge, work requirements, and other state and federal policies.

Co-Chairs

Kimberly Hulbert, Manager of Benefit Advocacy, St. Joseph Mercy Health System, Ann Arbor

Doug Weaver, Patient Access and Financial Clearance Director, Michigan Medicine

Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders Work Group

Member organizations in the WHI's Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder (MHSUD) work group provide services to support the mental health and substance use recovery needs of Washtenaw County's low-income, uninsured, and underinsured populations.

Collectively, the MHSUD group strengthened connections between behavioral health care providers and social service agencies across the county; helped to identify the community's most pressing unmet needs, particularly around substance use treatment; and collaborated on community action plans designed to address them.

Going forward, the MHSUD work group will adopt several of the systems transformation action plans that were collaboratively developed by community organizations and stakeholders. The goal: To improve the mental health and substance use treatment and recovery system in Washtenaw County, bringing together everyone who touches the system to improve interactions and results for residents.

2019 Co-Chairs

Tim Florence, Clinical Services Director, Washtenaw County Community Mental Health

Nancy Siegrist, Director of Behavioral Health Services, St. Joseph Mercy Chelsea

2020 Co-Chairs

Curtis Thornton, Clinical Director, Home of New Vision

Katrina Bozada, Assistant Director of Psychiatric Emergency Services, Michigan Medicine





Opioid Project

In 2018, the Washtenaw Health Initiative Opioid Project catalogued and analyzed local substance use disorder treatment, support, and response systems to identify five root causes of Washtenaw County's opioid crisis:

- Limited pain management options
- Stigma experienced by patients with substance use disorders
- Lack of community education and primary prevention strategies
- Limited substance use treatment options, and
- Inadequate care management for patients with chronic pain or substance use disorder

In 2019, Opioid Project members recommended 19 strategies to address those gaps and organized three subcommittees to carry out the work. Members, including individuals with lived experience and representatives from more than 20 local organizations, began work to achieve those objectives—both individually and collectively—in 2019 and they will continue the work in the year ahead.

In 2019

Opioid Project member organizations came together to host the 2nd annual Opioid Summit, which focused on the negative effects of stigma surrounding substance use disorders. The event drew close to 250 participants and highlighted the progress we have made as a community and the necessity of building on our momentum.

2019 Co-Chairs

Jimena Loveluck, Deputy Health Officer,
Washtenaw County Health Department

Nicole Adelman, Clinical and SUD Services Director,
Community Mental Health Partnership of Southeast Michigan

2020 Co-Chairs

Sara Szczotka, Program Manager, The Washtenaw
Recovery Advocacy Project

Juan Marquez, Medical Director, Washtenaw
County Health Department



Senior Services

The Senior Services Group works to address the challenges Washtenaw County seniors and their caregivers face as they attempt to access transportation, food, medical care, and other necessary resources. In 2019, the group conducted key informant interviews with physician offices and senior centers to learn about how they communicate with seniors about local services, and which additional resources would be most useful to them.

In 2019

The Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation tapped the Washtenaw Health Initiative and its backbone organization, the Center for Health and Research Transformation, to support its Vital Seniors Initiative: An effort to launch innovative and actionable solutions to the serious problems faced by Washtenaw County's vulnerable seniors and their caregivers.

CHRT and the WHI began to help Vital Seniors grantees strengthen their knowledge, programs, and relationships while working to ensure that the services and systems Washtenaw County's most vulnerable seniors need will be sustained far into the future.

WHI is serving as a convener of the Vital Seniors Initiative grantees to develop a network of community based organizations that will develop partnerships with health plans and health systems. In 2019, WHI was successfully chosen as part of a national cohort to participate in a learning collaborative through the National Council on Aging with a focus on sustainability and implementation strategies for network development.

Co-Chairs

Rachel Dewees, Assistant Director of Community Programs,
University of Michigan Geriatrics Center

Joanne Grosh, Director of Senior Services Southeast
Michigan, St. Joseph Mercy Health System



Highlights from the Livingston–Washtenaw State Innovation Model



Care Coordination

For two years, the Washtenaw Health Initiative and staff from 11 health and human service organizations have been providing patient-centered, coordinated care to individuals with complex medical, behavioral, and social concerns as the Livingston-Washtenaw Community Health Innovation Region, one of five regional innovation groups supported by a federal State Innovation Model grant.

The 306 clients currently being served by the program are more likely than not to be low-income, to have multiple chronic diseases, and to suffer from mental illness or substance use disorders. Before the work of the SIM, individuals enrolled in the initiative made an average of 12 trips to the emergency department and were admitted to the hospital two to three times annually.

The processes used in the intervention built on existing strengths, and solidified best practices for communication and coordination across agencies, including shared consent forms, a health information exchange platform, and regular care coordination meetings. More than three-dozen care coordinators at the participating health and human service organizations, together with the invaluable support of community health workers, have used these systems to improve the health and welfare of some of Washtenaw County's most vulnerable residents.

While results from the randomized controlled trial that looked at the first six months of experience didn't show cost savings in that period of time, reports from care managers and clients showed significant improvements in communication between agencies and in the wellbeing of clients.

In 2019, with federal funding for the program about to sunset, the participating organizations came together to sustain these efforts. In 2020, the program will continue with funding from state and community partners.

The Michigan Medicine and St. Joseph Mercy Complex Care programs are contributing funds to support the continued participation of Avalon Housing, Home of New Vision, Packard Health, Livingston County Catholic Charities, and Livingston County Community Mental Health.

As the federal funding for the project ended, these care coordination efforts were redesigned under a new name: MI Community Care. The Washtenaw Health Initiative and participating organizations are currently accepting referrals into the redesigned program.



Social Determinants of Health

Last year, regional primary care providers screened tens of thousands of patients for the kind of social needs that can have an outsized impact on health, including housing instability, food insecurity, financial strain, transportation needs, social isolation, and more.

Patients who screened positive were referred to community resources that could help meet their needs, and the aggregated data from these screenings were used to inform program and service improvements across the region, including a commitment by the region's non-profit hospitals to address social isolation—a prevalent need across the community and a need that has significant health implications.

While Black and African American respondents made up only 8 percent of the population screened for social needs, they represented 21 percent of all positive screens, highlighting the region's continuing need to address health and racial equity concerns.

In 2019, the Washtenaw Health Initiative added equity—including health and racial equity—to its mission: To improve health, health equity, and health care in Washtenaw County with a special emphasis on the county's low-income, uninsured, and underinsured residents.

Systems Change

Since November 2018, dozens of representatives from Washtenaw-area organizations that are deeply involved in the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders (SUD) have been participating in an SUD system transformation process hosted by the Washtenaw Health Initiative as part of its State Innovation Model systems transformation work.

In 2019, seven action teams—comprised of substance use disorder treatment providers, community mental health organizations, hospitals, law enforcement agencies, public health entities, and more—developed action plans and completed key tasks to move them forward.

One action team focused on the importance of integrating people on the recovery spectrum into the SUD transformation planning and decision-making process. Another team identified and defined shared values for all organizations in the SUD prevention and treatment space. Responding to a documented need for information about local treatment options, a third team identified more than 100 local organizations that provide SUD services for Washtenaw County residents and described the services they provide. In the year ahead, much of this work will continue under the leadership of the Washtenaw Health Initiative's Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Work Group.

Other systems change initiatives include ongoing efforts to improve care coordination for residents with complex health, behavioral health, and social needs; to improve the county's homelessness prevention and response system; and to improve access to food and transportation for low-income, uninsured, and under-insured populations.



Co-Chairs

Doug Strong
Paul Valenstein

Founding Partners

Avalon Housing
Corner Health Center
Delonis Center
Home of New Vision
Integrated Health Associates (IHA)
Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County
Livingston County Catholic Charities
Livingston County Community Mental Health
Livingston County Department of Public Health
Michigan Data Collaborative
Michigan Health Information Network
Michigan Medicine Complex Care Management Program
Packard Health
St. Joseph Mercy Complex Care Management Program
University of Michigan Learning Health Science
Department
Washtenaw County Community Mental Health
Washtenaw County Public Health
Washtenaw Health Plan

Member organizations

More than 100 Livingston and Washtenaw County organizations have signed the Washtenaw Health Initiative Statement of Commitment, recognizing our shared responsibility to assist those in our community who lack access to high-quality health care and the WHI's mission to improve health, health equity, and health care in Washtenaw County with a special emphasis on the county's low-income, uninsured, and underinsured residents

THESE ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERS INCLUDE:

360 Advisors, LLC
Acción Buenos Vecinos Action
Aetna Better Health Plan
Aid in Milan
American Cancer Society – Lakeshore Division
Ann Arbor / Ypsilanti Regional Chamber
Ann Arbor District Library
Ann Arbor Housing Commission
Ann Arbor Police Department
Ann Arbor Treatment Services
Arbor Hospice
Area Agency on Aging
Avalon Housing
Bethesda Bible Church
Blue Care Network
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan
Blue Cross Complete
Catholic Social Services of Washtenaw County
Center for Health and Research Transformation
Center for Independent Living
Citizens for Better Care
City of Saline Police Department
Community Action Network
Community Alliance
Community Dental Center
Community Mental Health Partnership of Southeast Michigan
Community Mental Health Services of Livingston County
Manchester Community Resource Center
Corner Health Center
CRC Health Group, Ann Arbor Treatment Center
Dawn Farm
Dove House
EMU Snow Health Center
Evangelical Homes



Faith in Action, Grace Clinic
Gift of Life Michigan
Glacier Hills
Hamilton Crossing
Home of New Vision
Hope Medical Clinic
Hospice of Michigan
Huron Valley Ambulance
Huron Valley PACE
Huron Valley Physicians Association
Integrated Health Associates
Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County
Karen Bergbower & Associates
Legal Services of Southeastern Michigan
Livingston and Washtenaw Narcotics Enforcement Team (LAWNET)
Livingston County Public Health Department
Livingston Physician Organization
McLaren Health Plan
Meridian Health Plan
Michigan Community Health Worker Alliance
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services
Michigan Health & Hospital Association
Michigan Primary Care Transformation Project
Michigan Public Health Institute
Michigan WORKS
Molina Health Plan
NarAnon
National Alliance on Mental Illness – Washtenaw
Neighborhood Family Health Center
Ozone House
Packard Health
Pharmacy Solutions
Planned Parenthood of Mid and South Michigan
POWER, Inc.
Re:group INC

Regional Alliance for Healthy Schools
Saint Joseph Mercy Health System
Samaritan Counseling Services
Shelter Association of Washtenaw County
SOS Community Services
St. John Treatment Center
St. Joseph Mercy – Ann Arbor
St. Joseph Mercy – Chelsea
St. Joseph Mercy – Livingston
Thorrez Medical Practice PLC
Trinity Health
University of Michigan Health System
U-M Law School
U-M School of Dentistry
U-M School of Public Health
U-M School of Social Work
U-M University Health Service
Unified – HIV and Health
United Healthcare
United Methodist Retirement Communities
United Way of Washtenaw County, Washtenaw Success by 6
VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System
Washtenaw Association for Community Advocacy
Washtenaw Community College
Washtenaw County Department of Health & Human Services
Washtenaw County Medical Society
Washtenaw County (Public Health Department, Sheriff's Department, Solid Waste Program, Community Mental Health)
Washtenaw Health Plan
Washtenaw Intermediate School District Head Start
Washtenaw ISD
Washtenaw Voice
Women's Center of Southeastern Michigan
Ypsilanti Community High School
Ypsilanti Housing Commission



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