

# Cross-sector Innovation Initiative Profile: Hennepin County Public Health Department (MN)

## Project Title

Community Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP) of Hennepin County: Advancing Community Mental Well-Being and Housing Stability through Community Partnership

## Project Summary

Community mental well-being and housing stability are priorities in communities of color and indigenous populations in Hennepin County. These communities know that great disparities exist for their communities and have ideas and solutions. What is missing is funding and political will by the systems that created these disparities.

CHIP of Hennepin County, a coalition of partners including public, private and nonprofit sectors with key representation from public health, healthcare/health plans, subject matter experts in mental health and housing, education, and others, focuses on partnership with and support for these communities to address historical trauma created and exacerbated by our policies and practices; create social connectedness in rental communities; and equitable screening criteria to help vulnerable populations get housed. Alignment will be driven by community expertise and developmental evaluation. CHIP partners will use collaborative financing and financial accountability to ensure communities are supported. Population goals focus on funding communities for their expertise, while CHIP partner organizations develop and adopt trauma-responsive policies and practices. Housing stability will increase through social connectedness and equitable tenant screening. Health and racial equity were prioritized by the community and are at the core of our work. CHIP built community feedback conversations into its plan to ensure the voice of the community is heard as CHIP adjusts or alters its strategies to include this feedback.

## Community Description

Hennepin County, the most populous county in Minnesota, has a population of 1,248,246 (2019). The racial composition of the county is 74.4% white, 11.8% African American, 6.7% Hispanic, 6.2% Asian, 0.9% Native American, 3.4% from other races, and 3.2% from two or more races. Nearly 12% of the population lived below the poverty level in the past 12 months. Racial diversity is concentrated in portions of Minneapolis and several suburbs. Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park are the most racially diverse communities in Hennepin County, with half or more of the population identifying as populations of color or American Indian.

Hennepin County's Survey of the Health of All the People and the Environment (SHAPE), conducted every four years since 1998, shows large mental health disparities. Of adults surveyed in 2018, 40.7% of American Indians, 25.0% of US-born blacks, and 18.3% of Hispanics and SE Asians experienced frequent mental distress compared to 11.9% of whites and 9.0% of foreign-born blacks. Similar disparities exist in housing: 53.1% of US-born blacks, 43.5% of American Indians, 32.0% of Hispanics, 27.0% of foreign-born blacks and 23.7% of SE Asians compared to 8.3% of whites experience housing insecurity. These disparities are why CHIP targets community health issues together for greater impact.

## Expected Impact on Systems Alignment, Population Health and Health Equity

Efforts include funding four community organizations to join CHIP to lift up community work and focus on a related project of their choosing; conducting an iterative evaluation to shift objectives and activities; rotating and sharing ownership, responsibility and costs for CHIP events; and providing quarterly oversight of grant funds. Funding community-based organizations will elevate community-led priorities with CHIP partners and goals. Providing smaller mini-grants to community groups/members will encourage them to test innovative ideas. CHIP partner organizations will become trauma-responsive (beginning with a pilot cohort); partner with spiritual, faith and cultural leaders and healers; develop social connectedness practices in rental housing; and reduce barriers to rental housing.

## Key Partners

- Aeon
- Allina Health
- Catholic Charities
- M Health Fairview
- Additional key partners include the other 15 members of the CHIP Executive Committee and 5 Community Health Boards operating in Hennepin County which are: Bloomington, Edina, Richfield, Minneapolis and Hennepin County.

Grantees are working toward population health and health equity priorities, as well as addressing one or more pillars of alignment (as indicated by a checkmark below).

## Population Health or Health Equity Focus

- Housing
- Social connectedness
- Structural racism

## Systems Alignment Areas

- ✓ Share a vision and a set of priority outcomes
- Create a shared data and measurement system
- ✓ Establish appropriate financing with incentives and accountability
- ✓ Strong governance with leadership and defined relationships driven by the voice and participation of community members

## Cross-sector Innovation Initiative Overview

With funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Center for Sharing Public Health Services and the Public Health National Center for Innovations are co-leading the Cross-sector Innovation Initiative, a joint effort that aims to understand and support innovative multi-sector partnerships between public health, healthcare, and social services that ultimately transform practice towards working in alignment to improve population health, wellbeing, and equity for all.