

The health equity briefs

National Association of State Offices of Minority Health Newsletter



NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH 2024: CELEBRATE OUR CULTURES, COMMUNITIES, AND CONNECTIONS

April marks the annual observance of National Minority Health Month, a time to raise awareness about the health disparities affecting racial and ethnic minority populations and American Indian/Alaska Native communities. This year's theme, **"Be the Source for Better Health: Improving Health Outcomes Through Our Cultures, Communities, and Connections,"** emphasizes the importance of embracing our diverse backgrounds and fostering connections to achieve health equity.

At the heart of this theme lies the recognition that our cultures, communities, and connections play a vital role in shaping our well-being. By understanding and addressing the social determinants of health, providing culturally competent and humble care, and strengthening our bonds within and across communities, we can pave the way for better health outcomes for all.

The NASOMH Office is dedicated to collaborating with partners to promote quality, equitable care responsive to diverse cultural beliefs, languages, living circumstances, and health literacy levels. Together, we can create a healthcare environment that celebrates our unique identities while ensuring access to the resources and support necessary for optimal health.

Join us and HHS Office of Minority Health in raising awareness and taking action to achieve health equity for all communities. Submit your events to info@nasomh.org and [Norris Agnew](#), Communications Team Lead, HHS OMH Division of Information and Education to be highlighted and shared with others throughout April.

MARCH 2024



Our Mission:

Promote and protect the health of racial and ethnic minority communities, tribal organizations and nations, by preventing disease and injury and assuring optimal health and well-being.

HIGHLIGHTS:

National Minority Health Month 2024: Celebrate Our Cultures, Communities, and Connections

Understanding Social Determinants of Health

Celebrate Minority Health Month 2024

Unlocking Ohio's Economic Potential by Eliminating Racial Disparities

Cheryl Boyce Leadership Award Nomination

Resources/ In case you missed it

March is . . .

- [National Nutrition Month](#)
- [National Kidney Month](#)
- [National Endometriosis Awareness Month](#)
- [National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month](#)
- [National HIV Awareness Days](#)
- [Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month](#)
- [Bleeding Disorders Awareness Month](#)
- [Multiple Myeloma Month](#)

NASOMH Quarterly Meeting Reminder

Plan to join us this Thursday, **March 21 at 4:00 PM EST via Zoom** for a quarterly meeting. During this time we will discuss terms that are critical to advancing health equity, and how State Offices of Minority Health and Health Equity (SOMH) are using them for the greatest impact.

Come prepared for a thought-provoking discussion on using the term "Social Determinants of Health." Is this term still relevant and practical to our efforts? Other terms like "colonizers determinants of health," "systemic racism," "health-related social needs," and "vital conditions," for example, are also in play to advance minority health and health equity work. Is your State Offices of Minority Health/Health Equity utilizing the term "SDOH" for effective planning and policy work? Is this term still adequate for your work, or should we rethink this in furtherance of effective planning, policy, and structural change?

The Ohio Commission on Minority Health

SAVE the DATE

APRIL IS MINORITY HEALTH MONTH!

The 2024 Virtual Statewide Minority Health Month Kickoff Ceremony

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

9:00 am Awards Ceremony
10:30 am Panel Discussion

Gold Level Sponsor: Molina Healthcare, Inc.
Bronze Level Sponsor: CareSource
Pewter Level Sponsor: Buckeye Health Plan, Humana

[Register Below!](#)

The Statewide Minority Health Month Calendar containing a listing of events can be accessed at www.mih.ohio.gov on 3/10/24

This event is Free and Open to the Public

Mike DeWine, Governor | Good Health Begins with You!® | Angela Dawson, Director

Unlocking Ohio's Economic Potential by Eliminating Racial Disparities

A groundbreaking analysis from the Health Policy Institute of Ohio quantifies the significant economic gains Ohio could achieve by eliminating racial disparities:

- \$79 billion in additional annual economic output by 2050
- \$40 billion more in total income
- \$30 billion more in consumer spending
- \$4 billion more in state and local tax revenues
- \$3 billion in reduced healthcare spending
- \$2 billion in increased employee productivity
- \$821 million in reduced corrections spending



Disparities in income, health, and incarceration for Black and Hispanic/Latino Ohioans represent missed opportunities. Factors like education, employment, housing, and criminal justice policies rooted in systemic racism contribute to these gaps.

The analysis recommends actions to create a more equitable Ohio:

- Implement policies promoting justice and fairness
- Tailor approaches to support communities of color
- Allocate funding to strengthen all Ohio communities
- Increase accountability for eliminating disparities
- Reform criminal justice policies
- Support entrepreneurship in disadvantaged communities



Collaboration among public, private, and community partners is vital to dismantling systemic racism and unlocking Ohio's full economic potential. Read the full analysis at www.hprio.net.

Understanding Systemic Factors Contributing to Health Inequalities

As we work towards promoting health equity, it's essential to understand and address the various determinants that impact individual and community health and well-being. By recognizing and addressing these underlying factors, we can create a more equitable and inclusive healthcare system that serves everyone in our society.

Social determinants of health (SDOH) significantly affect the well-being of individuals and communities. This newsletter delves into diverse aspects of SDOH and their impact on promoting health equity. SDOH refers to non-medical factors influencing health outcomes, such as socioeconomic status, education, neighborhood, physical environment, employment, social support networks, and healthcare services. You can learn more about SDOH from the [CDC](#).

The following terms also describe barriers causing health disparities.

Colonizer Determinants of Health: This concept highlights the long-term effects of colonialism, such as systemic racism, cultural erasure, and the displacement of indigenous ways of life, on the health of indigenous and colonized communities. For instance, the forced relocation of Native American tribes led to loss of access to traditional foods, disruption of social support systems, and higher rates of chronic diseases and mental health issues. To read more about this concept, visit the [National Indigenous Women's Resource Center](#).

Social Conditions of Health: Social conditions include broader societal and community factors that affect health, such as housing, access to healthcare, and transportation. In low-income neighborhoods with limited resources, residents often face higher risks of chronic diseases, poor mental health, and shorter life expectancy due to factors such as lack of affordable housing and insufficient transportation options. To learn more, visit the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#).

Systemic Racism: Systemic racism refers to institutionalized discrimination and oppression based on race that is deeply embedded within societal systems and policies. The disproportionately high rates of chronic diseases and poorer health outcomes among Black communities in the U.S. can be traced back to systemic racism's manifestations, including residential segregation, implicit biases in healthcare settings, and exposure to and experiencing racial trauma. For more on this issue, visit the [American Public Health Association](#).

Structural Determinants of Health: These determinants operate at a macro level, referring to the broader societal systems, policies, and institutional practices that shape the distribution of resources, opportunities, and power within a population. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted how structural factors such as systemic underinvestment in public health infrastructure and economic inequalities worsened health disparities. To read an analysis of this issue, visit the [Review of Policy Research](#).

Health-Related Social Needs (HRSN): HRSN encompasses the non-medical factors and socioeconomic circumstances that influence an individual's ability to maintain good health, such as housing instability, food insecurity, and transportation barriers. Addressing HRSN requires integrating social services and community resources with healthcare delivery. Learn more from the [National Academy of Sciences](#).

Vital conditions like air quality, water quality, food safety, and sanitation are essential for maintaining public health and preventing disease spread. Access to safe drinking water is a prime example – contaminated water can transmit waterborne illnesses, causing significant health burdens worldwide. Learn more about vital conditions and their public health impact by checking out the [CDC's guide on Environmental Public Health](#), and [HHS Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#).



RESOURCES

We seek nominations for an exemplary NASOMH member to recognize during Minority Health Month. Candidates must meet the criteria for nomination below:

- Impact on Minority Health Research, e.g., through publications, presentations, or funding initiatives
- Impact on Minority Health Education, e.g., teaching and knowledge-sharing opportunities
- Impact on Minority Health Policy, e.g., through initiating or participating in policy initiatives

To nominate a fellow SOMH member, please fill out this [form](#) and provide the requested supporting materials, including a photo, bio/resume, and signed nomination statement. We welcome multiple nominations.

The Rural Health Research Gateway serves as an accessible hub, providing folks working on rural health issues with research findings, funding opportunities, and engagement activities aimed at helping translate evidence into practice in rural communities.

The HRSA Office of Rural Health acts as an advocate and resource for those of us working to support better health in rural areas by funding programs, conducting research, building partnerships, and providing guidance across a range of topics important to rural communities.

The Kaiser Family Foundation timeline documents key historical policies and events in the U.S. that have contributed to current racial and ethnic health disparities tied to slavery, segregation, exclusion from programs, and ongoing discrimination.

SEE YOU IN CHICAGO FOR THE CDC REVERSE SITE VISIT

Many State Offices of Minority Health and Health Equity (SOMH) received COVID-19 Health Equity Funding from the CDC and, as such, will participate in the CDC Reverse Site Visit in Chicago from March 25th through March 29th. This is an opportunity to learn and share the innovative work and groundbreaking partnerships that were forged during COVID-19.

If you are attending this event, members of the NASOMH board, who are also representing their organizations at this event, would like to seize the opportunity to meet you in person. If you are interested in meeting up with other SOMHS and fellow NASOMH members, please email veronica@nasomh.org to arrange an informal meet and greet.

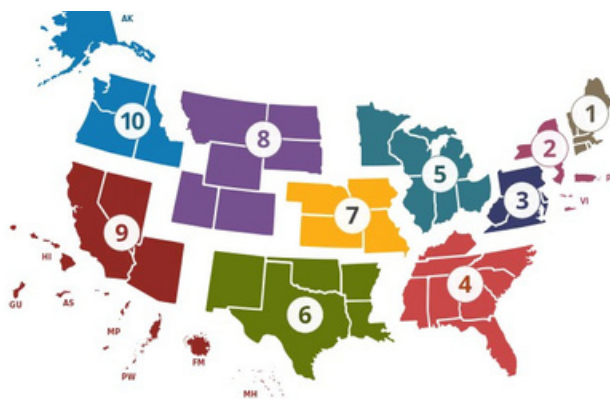
IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Updated Vaccine Toolkit for Medicaid, CHIP, & BHP

CMS recently released an updated vaccine toolkit compiling critical information on vaccine policies, flexibilities, and coverage requirements. This comprehensive resource will help states transition out of the COVID-19 public health emergency and implement new coverage provisions from the Inflation Reduction Act. The toolkit guides enhancing vaccine access through provider qualifications, immunization registries, payment approaches, and more. Check out the [full toolkit](#) to learn about the latest federal policies and best practices to improve vaccination rates.

DO YOU KNOW YOUR HHS REGION?

Click on the map to learn about the HHS Regions and find your HHS representative.



NASOMH MEMBERSHIP DUES

Renew Your NASOMH Membership Today!

As a NASOMH member, you amplify our collective efforts to build sustainability for Minority Health and Health Equity Offices and Programs. Additionally, your membership supports our push for policies, education, programs, and funding that seek to eliminate healthcare inequalities. Please complete and submit the online [membership form](#).

NASOMH now accepts credit card payments for membership dues. If you have questions, please contact Lisa Stafford at nasomh02@gmail.com



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<https://nasomh.org/>