

Million Hearts[®] in Municipalities Tool Kit



Module 3: Partnerships



Acknowledgments

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Million Hearts® in Municipalities: Partnerships

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Module Overview

Scope and User Outcomes

The Million Hearts® in Municipalities* Tool Kit is intended to assist local and state departments of health (LSDOHs) to be active partners in the Million Hearts® initiative, which will henceforth be referred to as MH.

What's included?

- Key concepts, principles, and recommendations to build and maintain partnerships to support municipal MH efforts
- Readiness Assessment and Action Plan to facilitate new MH partnerships or strengthen current ones
- Resources to provide additional information about building and maintaining partnerships
- Summary of partnerships at the national level (Million Hearts® Partners with Municipal Reach)

What's not included?

- This module does not provide a list of municipal partners and contacts to engage or a step-by-step approach to building and maintaining partnerships. Each LSDOH will need to identify and engage key partners that are relevant to the LSDOH's specific cardiovascular disease (CVD) prevention needs.

Expected outcomes for module users:

- Understand the role and importance of partnerships as part of your MH efforts.
- Understand how to connect municipal partners to national efforts.
- Identify current strengths, opportunities, and gaps related to building and sustaining partnerships.
- Identify priorities, strategies, and potential challenges in building, maintaining, and enhancing partnerships for municipal MH efforts.
- Increase awareness of MH resources and materials related to building, maintaining, and enhancing partnerships.

* The term "municipality" is used loosely throughout all modules of this Tool Kit. You may be able to implement these strategies in your city, town, county, state, or other jurisdiction.

Section 1: Introduction

Effective partnerships are a critical component of public health programs.¹ Municipal agencies, private organizations (e.g., insurance companies, medical companies, professional associations, health advocacy groups), individuals (e.g., doctors, nurses, pharmacists, other health care professionals), and nonprofit and community groups have and continue to play a crucial role in MH.

Key Partnership Concepts and Principles for Million Hearts®

The following are key concepts and principles to support development and enhancement of effective MH partnerships:

- **Articulate a vision.** Clearly outline the vision of your MH efforts. When possible, ask partners to commit to specific actions (e.g., ask clinicians to adopt evidence-based treatment protocols for high blood pressure or to establish blood pressure monitors for their patients).
- **Connect.** Connect with municipal partners to understand the work of their organizations. Then determine whether their work aligns with your MH efforts and whether a fruitful partnership is possible.
- **Be specific.** Define the “give” and “get” with partners—that is, what they can contribute to your MH efforts and what they will get out of it. Be prepared to answer questions like “What can we do?” or “How do you want us to be involved?” Provide talking points and summary materials to help partners communicate about your MH efforts.
- **Communicate.** Consistent, planned, and focused communication with partners will help advance your MH efforts. Connecting partners with each other can also help expand MH efforts.
- **Be open.** Be open to all partners and accept their willingness to be engaged in a way that works best for them while staying committed to your goals and strategies.

Million Hearts® Partnership Development and Maintenance: Lessons from the National Level

MH is co-led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Leaders from each agency came together and formed a leadership council at the Department of Health and Human Services. Co-leadership among the public health sector (i.e., CDC) and the health care sector (i.e., CMS) was—and remains—a critical factor in the success of MH. For example, the ability to promote, track, and sustain excellence in the ABCS of heart health (**A**spirin when appropriate, **B**lood pressure control, **C**holesterol management, **S**moking cessation) depends on this type of co-leadership.

As organizations expressed interest in the initiative, the MH team was guided by two principles: “waste no will” and “generate action.” The team asked each organization to look at their mission and priorities and identify where these aligned with MH’s overall goal of preventing one million heart attacks and strokes. Other questions included the following:

- What key actions will your organization take to move MH efforts forward?
- How could partnering with MH make your organization more successful?

These questions set a tone of collaboration and established how partners would be involved.

Materials were developed, such as a partner slide deck and guidelines for logo use, to make it easy for partners to participate in the initiative. The MH team keeps partners informed about new resources, tools, and updates through partner calls, e-newsletters, and other means of communication.

Recommendations for LSDOHs

- Encourage partners to spread the word about their MH efforts. Federal partners and private-sector “podium partners,” who had a wide reach and were willing to show support publicly, helped give the initiative national recognition.

- Establish informal agreements, which require less time and resources and can work just as well as formal agreements. Informal partnerships are more flexible and allow partners to support MH in a way that works best for them.
- Identify key evaluation measures for your MH efforts. Collect success stories and share lessons learned among partners. Ask partners to use the evaluation measures to assess their own efforts and to help measure progress on the overall MH efforts in the municipality.
- Sustain interaction with partners to maintain engagement in the MH efforts. Frequency and form of communication could vary depending on the partnership. Examples include weekly or monthly phone calls, annual progress reports, published success stories, and quarterly electronic updates on the latest news, publications, and tools.
- Connect your partners with the national MH partnership efforts by:
 - Encouraging them to sign up for the [e-newsletter](#).
 - Encouraging clinical partners to embed the [MH microsite](#) and syndicated content on their webpage. This provides credible, curated information for clinicians on MH topics and strategies.
 - Encouraging them to join relevant groups and events, such as the monthly MH partner calls, the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) Collaboration, the Self-Measured Blood Pressure Monitoring Forum, and the Cardiac Rehabilitation Collaborative. Visit <https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/> or e-mail millionhearts@cdc.gov for more information on these opportunities.

Section 2: Preparing to Engage Partners

Pre-Partnership Engagement Tips

- Identify partners and stakeholders who are not yet engaged in CVD prevention efforts but may be interested in collaborating; don't forget to include the "unusual suspects."
- Develop the "elevator speech" to inform potential partners about your MH efforts and how they can be engaged.
- Identify partner roles, benefits, and expectations to garner and sustain commitment.
- Create a plan to re-engage partners who have participated in CVD prevention efforts in the past but are no longer engaged.
- When reaching out to potential partners, have your "ask" ready and approach with a "waste no will" attitude (i.e., be open to a variety of partners from different sectors).

Before Getting Started

Before initiating partnership development and maintenance activities, you/your planning team should begin by discussing the following questions:

- What staff and resources do we have to support partnerships?
- What additional resources are needed to build and maintain partnerships?
- Who is responsible for building and maintaining partnerships?
- Who are the key partners to engage this year?
- How can we most effectively keep our partners engaged?
- What are the expectations of how a partner will be actively engaged?
- What will organizations get out of becoming partners?
- How can our team contribute to partners' success?
- How will our team actively communicate with partners?
- What level of management or leadership participation does our team expect from a partner?

After discussing these questions, see the list of "Million Hearts® Partners with Municipal Reach" at the end of this module for national partners who might be doing CVD prevention work in your municipality or state.

Section 3: Readiness Assessment

Readiness for Building or Enhancing Million Hearts® Partnerships

The statements below are intended to identify current municipal strengths, opportunities, and gaps in building MH partnerships. If possible, complete the following assessment with key internal staff and a couple external partners who are already working and/or have an interest in CVD prevention.

Read each statement in the assessment and indicate which number best describes your current situation on a scale of 0 to 5, where 0 indicates “This is not happening at the municipal level” and 5 indicates “This is happening in a robust way at the municipal level.”

After completing, discuss why you rated each statement as you did. Then, go to the next section to identify ways to develop and expand effective partnerships to enhance your MH efforts.

Table 1. Readiness Assessment for Building or Enhancing Million Hearts® Partnerships

Municipal Partnership Activities	0	1	2	3	4	5
We have identified key staff to initiate, lead, or expand our MH efforts.						
We have identified diverse partners across the public health and health care systems to involve in our MH efforts.						
We have constructed a list of partners and/or stakeholders with up-to-date contact information.						
We have regular contact with key partners and/or stakeholders to discuss current priorities, values, and needs.						
We have aligned efforts with other community initiatives that are relevant to MH efforts.						
We have defined partner roles and rules of engagement for our MH efforts (e.g., clear roles, expectations).						
We have clearly defined partner requests (e.g., what can they do?), benefits, and anticipated outcomes of our MH efforts.						
We have identified specific communication methods (e.g., phone calls, e-mails, group meetings, one-on-one meetings) and frequency (e.g., weekly, monthly) with partners.						
We have allotted adequate dedicated staff and staff time to our MH efforts.						
We have shared MH-related resources and materials with partners to enhance their efforts.						

Section 4: Action Planning

After assessing current strengths, opportunities, and gaps, you/your planning team should begin to develop next steps or actions to move the MH efforts forward. Action plans should focus on a few priority areas that would most benefit municipal CVD prevention efforts.

- Use the Action Plan template below ([Table 2](#)) to identify the next steps, who is responsible for each step, and your due dates.

Getting Started

- Review the results of the Readiness Assessment to identify a few immediate priorities on which you can begin to work. To choose these priorities:
 - Look at the statements you ranked 4 and 5 and ask, "What is the best way to leverage this strength as the MH efforts are developed or enhanced?"
 - Look at the statements you ranked 1, 2, and 3 and ask, "Will this gap delay or prevent progress on the MH efforts? If so, how can this gap or asset be strengthened?"

Developing an Action Plan

Use the template below or one you develop to outline the next steps for you/your planning team. Actions should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. Identify which members of the team will be responsible and the expected date of completion. Any resources that will be needed to complete the action should also be identified at this time. Plan to meet regularly to revisit the action items and provide updates on progress and/or barriers.

Table 2. Action Plan Template

Actions to Take	Who is Responsible	Due Date	Resources Needed	Notes

Section 5: Resources

The following resources will support learning more about MH and developing and expanding partnerships.

Table 3. Partnership Resources

Resource	Description
Million Hearts® Website https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/	This website provides a variety of online resources, including tools, action guides, protocols, and progress reports on MH.
Million Hearts® 2022 Partners https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/partners-progress/partners/index.html	This webpage provides information on how to get involved with the initiative, tools for discussing and spreading the word about MH, and a short list of partner opportunities.
CDC Fundamentals of Evaluating Partnerships https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/docs/partnership_guide.pdf	This guide applies the CDC Evaluation Framework (https://www.cdc.gov/eval/framework/index.htm) to evaluating partnerships.
Million Hearts® Tools https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/tools-protocols/tools.html	This website provides evidence-based strategies and tools to help health care teams, public health professionals, and other partners incorporate MH goals into their everyday work and enhance their CVD prevention and treatment efforts.
Million Hearts® Partnership Network Analysis Publication: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29889170 Key Evaluation Findings and Successes: https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/evaluation_resources/mh-partner-network-evaluation.htm	The analysis describes the results of an evaluation on the structure, content, quality, and quantity of MH partnerships. The study used a social network analysis to assess the network of partnerships and identify potential implications for policy and practice.
NACCHO Million Hearts® Local Engagement Guide https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/Programs/Community-Health/na612pdf.pdf	This resource provides recommendations for cities and counties interested in engaging in MH at a municipal level.
Evaluating Partnerships to Prevent and Manage Chronic Disease https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2009/apr/pdf/08_0200.pdf	This resource explains how to develop an evaluation plan for partnerships and use the evaluation results to improve partnerships and program implementation.
Improving Public Health System Performance Through Multiorganizational Partnerships https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2010/nov/pdf/10_0088.pdf	This article assesses different variables in public health partnerships and why some partnerships are more successful than others.

Section 6: Million Hearts® Partners with Municipal Reach

The following are partners and resources that may be helpful in your efforts to implement MH strategies at the municipal level.

Table 4. Partner Organizations with Municipal Reach

Agency / Organization	Description	Link
500 Cities: Local Data for Better Health	The 500 Cities project is a collaboration between CDC, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the CDC Foundation. It provides city- and census tract-level estimates for chronic disease risk factors, health outcomes, and clinical preventive service use for the largest 500 cities in the United States.	https://www.cdc.gov/500cities/
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) EvidenceNOW	AHRQ seeks to produce evidence to make health care safer, higher quality, more accessible, equitable, and affordable. EvidenceNOW, an AHRQ grant initiative, established seven regional cooperatives focused on MH ABCS. Each cooperative recruits and engages 250 to 300 small- to medium-sized primary care practices (offices with 10 or fewer lead clinicians) and provides them with quality improvement services typically not available to a practice of their size, including onsite practice facilitation and coaching, expert consultation, shared learning collaboratives, and electronic health record support.	https://www.ahrq.gov/evidencenow/index.html
America Walks	This national organization is committed to mobilizing individuals, organizations, and businesses to increase walking and walkability in America to ensure people of all abilities can safely walk and move along and across all streets in their communities.	http://americawalks.org/
American Association of Cardiovascular and Pulmonary Rehabilitation (AACVPR)	AACVPR is a multidisciplinary professional association composed of health professionals who serve in the field of cardiac and pulmonary rehabilitation. Their mission is to reduce morbidity, mortality, and disability from cardiovascular and pulmonary disease through education, prevention, rehabilitation, research, and disease management.	https://www.aacvpr.org/About-AACVPR/Affiliate-Societies-Resources/Affiliate-Contact-List

Agency / Organization	Description	Link
American Kidney Fund's Know Your Kidneys Program	<p>This national program offers free health screenings, nutrition and fitness presentations, follow-up services, and top-rated public education materials at a variety of venues, including churches, expositions and festivals, dialysis centers, community centers, colleges, and corporate offices.</p>	<p>Learn more about the program: http://www.kidneyfund.org/prevention/free-kidney-health-screenings/</p> <p>Find a free screening near you: http://www.kidneyfund.org/prevention/free-kidney-health-screenings/#find_an_akf_screening</p>
American Medical Association and American Hospital Association Target BP Program	<p>This national initiative aims to reduce the number of Americans who have heart attacks and strokes by urging medical practices, health service organizations, and patients to prioritize blood pressure control.</p>	<p>Learn more about this program: https://targetbp.org/about-targetbp/</p> <p>See whether there is a Target BP organization or practice in your area: https://targetbp.org/recognition-program/2017-recognition/</p>
Big Cities Health Coalition	<p>Big Cities Health Coalition is a forum for the leaders of America's largest metropolitan health departments to exchange strategies and jointly address issues to promote and protect the health and safety of the 55 million people they serve. The coalition comprises the top health officials from 30 local health departments representing one in six people living in the United States.</p>	<p>http://www.bigcitieshealth.org/our-members-big-cities-health-coalition-bchc/</p>
CDC Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Programs	<p>CDC provides public health leadership, funding, and technical assistance for efforts to prevent heart disease and stroke in every state.</p>	<p>Learn about the initiatives that are happening in your state: https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/programs/funded-programs.htm</p> <p>Learn more about state and local public health action programs: https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/programs/spha/index.htm</p>

Agency / Organization	Description	Link
CMS Million Hearts® Cardiovascular Disease Risk Reduction Initiative	<p>This initiative seeks to bridge a gap in cardiovascular care by providing targeted incentives for health care practitioners to engage in beneficiary CVD risk calculation and population-level risk management.</p> <p>Participating health care providers receive incentives to engage in Medicare beneficiary CVD risk calculation and population-level risk management to reduce patients' risk for a heart attack or stroke in the next 10 years.</p>	https://innovation.cms.gov/initiatives/Million-Hearts-CVDRRM/
CMS/Quality Improvement Organizations (QIOs)	<p>The QINs/QIOs work with clinicians, community partners, caregivers, and Medicare beneficiaries to improve quality of health care for targeted health conditions. They are committed to improving performance on the ABCS and increasing the adoption and use of standardized treatment protocols. Key goals include improving the health status of communities; delivering patient-centered, reliable, accessible, and safe care; and providing better care at lower costs.</p>	<p>Learn about the organizations: https://qioprogram.org</p> <p>Locate your state's Quality Innovation Network (QIN)-QIO: https://qioprogram.org/locate-your-qio</p>
GirlTrek	<p>GirlTrek is a national nonprofit organization that encourages physical activity and organizes walking events for African American women. Members support local and national policy to increase physical activity through walking, improving access to safe places to walk, protecting and reclaiming green spaces, and improving the walkability and built environments of 50 high-need communities across the United States.</p>	<p>Become a member: http://www.girltrek.org/join</p> <p>Find a GirlTrek group or event near you: http://www.girltrek.org/find_a_trek_near_you</p>
Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)	<p>HRSA funds community health centers to deliver comprehensive, culturally competent, high-quality primary health care services throughout the country. HRSA-funded health centers are required to report patient demographics and their performance on clinical quality measures (including the ABCS). Find the top performing health centers using the Uniform Data System (UDS) website.</p>	https://bphc.hrsa.gov/uds/datacenter.aspx?q=d

Agency / Organization	Description	Link
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention State Learning Network	ASTHO supports state health agencies and other partners in their state to address components of the Million Hearts® initiative, particularly around blood pressure control.	Learn more about this network: http://www.astho.org/Prevention/Heart-Disease-and-Stroke/ Explore the collaborative activities for all 23 participating states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Republic of Palau: http://www.astho.org/Million-Hearts/State-Initiatives-Map/
Move with the Mayor	This campaign works with mayors across the country to challenge their communities to get walking. Mayors encourage their citizens to take literal steps to improve their health by walking since it is one of the easiest ways to lower the risk of heart disease and its risk factors.	Learn more about Move with the Mayor: https://www.nationalforum.org/collaborations/mwtml/ Determine whether there is an upcoming event near you: https://www.nationalforum.org/events/
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD)	This webpage describes NACDD’s portfolio of cardiovascular health activities, resources, and opportunities for working with NACDD and in collaboration with chronic disease directors across the country to promote cardiovascular health.	https://www.chronicdisease.org/page/CardiovascularHealth
National Association of City and County Health Officials (NACCHO)	NACCHO is an association that provides advocacy, leadership, subject matter expertise, and resources to 3,000 local public health departments across the United States. As a MH partner, NACCHO has developed a variety of issue briefs, webinars, case studies, and other resources to optimize LSDOH engagement in preventing CVD and improving CVD health.	https://www.naccho.org/programs/community-health/chronic-disease/cardiovascular
National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) Mind Your Risks	This public health campaign educates people with high blood pressure about the importance of controlling blood pressure in midlife (from the ages of 45 to 65) to help reduce the risk of having a stroke and developing dementia later in life.	https://mindyourrisks.nih.gov/

Agency / Organization	Description	Link
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH) Regional Offices	<p>There are 10 Regional Offices that serve as extensions of OASH. These offices put prevention into practice and foster collaboration among all Department of Health and Human Services operating and staff divisions. Focus areas include prevention, health promotion, agency-wide coordination, and public health integration across federal, state, local, and tribal levels.</p>	<p>https://www.hhs.gov/ash/about-ash/regional-offices/index.html</p>
Park Rx Program	<p>This national initiative encourages health care teams, community partners, and park agencies to encourage the use of parks and open space to increase physical activity and improve individual and community health.</p>	<p>http://parkrx.org/content/directory-programs</p>
The YMCA's Blood Pressure Self-Monitoring (BPSM) Program	<p>The YMCA offers personalized support as participants develop the habit of monitoring their blood pressure; 103 Y's across the United States are currently offering the BPSM Program to eligible community members. The program focuses on regulated home self-monitoring of blood pressure, using proper measuring techniques, individualized support, and nutrition education for better blood pressure management.</p>	<p>Learn more about the BPSM Program: http://www.ymca.net/blood-pressure-self-monitoring</p> <p>See whether there is a BPSM Program near you: http://s3.amazonaws.com/ymca-ynet-prod/files/pdf/BPSM-locations.pdf</p>
Tobacco Control Network (TCN)	<p>The TCN consists of the tobacco control program managers and additional staff from each U.S. state and territorial health agency and the District of Columbia health department. This wide representation gives the TCN access to a wealth of expertise and experience from across the country.</p>	<p>http://tobaccocontrolnetwork.org/about-us/</p>
Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative (TCPI)	<p>TCPI is part of a strategy advanced by the Affordable Care Act to strengthen the quality of patient care and spend health care dollars more wisely. The initiative is designed to help clinicians achieve large-scale health transformation and to support more than 140,000 clinician practices over a four-year period by sharing, adapting, and further developing comprehensive quality improvement strategies.</p>	<p>https://innovation.cms.gov/initiatives/Transforming-Clinical-Practices/</p>

Agency / Organization	Description	Link
Walk with a Doc	Walk with a Doc is a nonprofit organization that encourages physical activity in people of all ages to reverse the consequences of a sedentary lifestyle and improve the country's health and well-being. Walks are free and led by local doctors, who also give a brief presentation on a health topic.	Learn more about the organization: https://walkwithadoc.org/ Find a walk near you: http://walkwithadoc.org/our-locations/
Well-Integrated Screening and Evaluation for Women Across the Nation (WISEWOMAN)	The WISEWOMAN program was created to help low-income, uninsured, and underinsured women ages 40–64 understand and reduce their risk for heart disease and stroke by providing screenings and services to promote lasting heart-healthy lifestyles and behaviors. The program currently consists of 24 programs in 21 states and 3 tribal organizations and is administered through CDC's Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention.	Learn more about the WISEWOMAN program: https://www.cdc.gov/wisewoman/ See whether there is a WISEWOMAN program near you: https://www.cdc.gov/wisewoman/locations/index.htm

References

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