

2024 PROGRESS REPORT

A FAREWELL MESSAGE AND VISION FOR THE FUTURE FROM RITA

Dear Partners,

As I prepare to step down from my role as President and CEO of Better Health Partnership (BHP), I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude and pride for what we have accomplished together. It has been an incredible journey, and I am honored to have led such a talented, innovative, and dedicated Collaborative centered on advancing health and promoting health equity in Northeast Ohio.

Over the past four years, as we broaden our scope to address social drivers of health, we expanded our partnerships to include community-based organizations (CBOs), payers, and public health. We launched a groundbreaking care coordination system for Cuyahoga County - the Better Health Pathways HUB - to help individuals obtain care and resources so they can overcome challenging health and social needs. And we have strengthened BHP's role as a 'backbone' organization to better support CBOs and community health workers (CHWs) by providing professional development opportunities and funding to help sustain their missions.

As we look to the future, there are several key areas I believe will be crucial for continued success with addressing social drivers of health and health-related social needs (HRSN):

- 1. In a rapidly changing world, staying ahead of the curve is paramount. We must continue to foster a culture of innovation, sharing best practices and encouraging creativity and bold ideas. Embrace new technologies and methodologies that can help us gain efficiencies and scale care coordination for greater impact on health and health equity.
- 2. **Our commitment to sustainability must be unwavering.** We have a duty to contribute positively to our community and that includes ensuring there is funding to support backbone organizations and CBOs. "The White House mandate (and accompanying playbook from November 2023) to use federal healthcare dollars to address HRSNs is a significant shift, and one that presents many new opportunities.
- 3. **The clients served by the Pathways HUB are at the heart of everything we do.** Prioritizing exceptional service, understanding client challenges and tailoring our approaches to provide unmatched value are key.
- 4. **CHWs are our greatest asset.** Investing in the growth and development of CHWs, and providing opportunities for continuous learning and advancement, are imperative. Cultivate a diverse and inclusive workplace where every CHW feels valued and empowered to contribute their best.

While I am stepping down, I will always cheer for this incredible Collaborative and its bright future. I am confident that with your continued efforts, and the leadership of BHP's new, incoming President & CEO, Dr. Robert Eick, the best is yet to come.

I am honored to have led such a talented, innovative, and dedicated Collaborative centered on advancing health and promoting health equity in Northeast Ohio.

Rita Navarro-Horwitz, Outgoing President & CEO, Better Health Partnership

CONTENTS





IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

(Feb 2020 - Sept 2024)

16	Care Coordination Agencies (CCAs)	
40	10 Community Health Workers (CHWs)	
\$1.6M*	Reimbursements Paid to CCAs (Medicaid and Grants)	
19,378	Needs Met (Pathways Closed)	
83%	Babies Delivered with Healthy Birthweight	
3,615*	Clients Served (Enrolled)	

CARE COORDINATION AGENCY PARTNERS

The Care Coordination Agencies in the HUB and the community health workers (CHWs) they employ, have helped connect thousands of individuals to necessary care and resources for needs related to food access, stable housing, utility maintenance, transportation to medical appointments and more.

- Beech Brook
- Care Alliance Health Center
- Carmella Rose Health Foundation
- Cleveland Clinic
- Cuyahoga Community College
- Greater Cleveland Food Bank
- Joseph and Mary's Home
- Neighborhood Family Practice
- Pregnant with Possibilities Resource Center
- The Centers
- The Community Builders
- The MetroHealth System
- United Way of Greater Cleveland
- University Hospitals
- University Settlement
- Village of Healing

"The Better Health Partnership Pathways HUB expands the opportunities for care, connection, and support navigating resources via care coordination agencies (CCAs). The training, guidance and support that BHP provides Cuyahoga Community College, a CCA, allows Tri-C CHW student interns to complete their CHW clinical hours by serving students, their families and community members regardless of insurance status. Tri-C remains committed to meeting the needs of Northeast Ohio residents, while building the workforce of CHWs for businesses."

> ~Marquita Rockamore, MA, GCDF, CCHW Director, Health Industry Solutions, Manufacturing Technology Center Cuyahoga Community College

"I'm thankful to the Pathways HUB team for giving me a sense of all the pieces and parts needed to provide holistic care and help clients maintain their dignity though personal and ongoing support. The HUB team demonstrates care and compassion that I then share with my clients, and through this support, the people we help gain access to community resources that allow them to thrive. I'm especially proud of the trusted relationship that I've developed with a resident, who is a double amputee. Through the work in the HUB, I have successfully closed 17 of 19 pathways; providing him with the services he needs. The training and ongoing guidance provided by the HUB team has given me the opportunity to combine my experiences as a social worker and service coordinator, so I can provide better support for my clients, whether visiting them in hospitals or meeting with them to organize their home."

> ~Sheila Brown Community Life Service Coordinator and Licensed Social Worker The Community Builders

"Beech Brook's HUB participation has allowed us to become more visible to a population in our community that we were not very visible to before. This increases our reach into our community and has helped us reach new people in furthering our mission to enhance family health and stability."

> ~Anna Grenier Pawlikowski, LISW-S Director Early Childhood, STRIDE and Health and Wellness Prevention Beech Brook

"Better Health Partnership's willingness to take on the challenge to develop the HUB and support the adult population has enabled Carmella Rose to serve over 1,300 homeless adults – positively impacting their health and well-being. Our membership with the HUB, utilizing the PCHI® Model for financial reimbursement and receiving ongoing training for our community health workers, has given us a reliable and trusted source for professional development and financial sustainability. In 2025, Carmella Rose Health Foundation will celebrate 20 years serving the residents of Cuyahoga County. Without the support from BHP and the Pathways HUB team, we would not have been able to accomplish what we have. We look forward to continuing our work with the HUB as we near our 20th anniversary and beyond!"

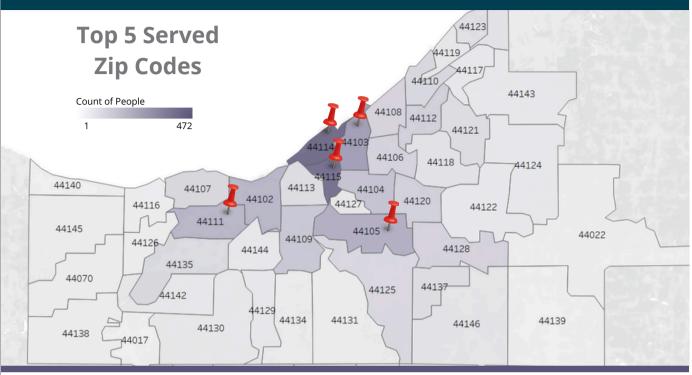
> ~Ginny Pate, C-CHW, Executive Director Carmella Rose Health Foundation





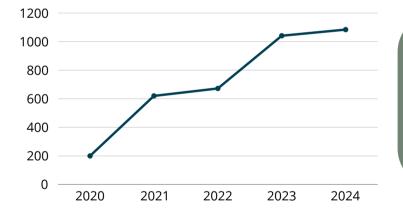
CLIENTS SERVED

(Enrolled)

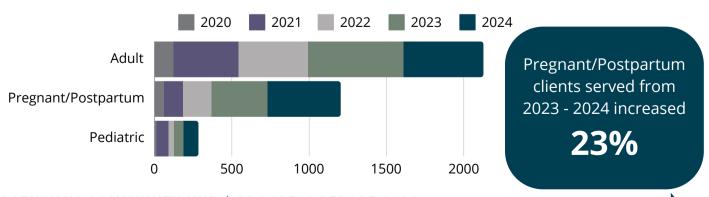


Total Clients Served

(Feb 2020 through projected 2024)



In 2024, the HUB continued to improve its capacity to serve the community and welcomed both **Neighborhood Family Practice** and **University Settlement** as new care coordination agencies.



PATHWAYS COMPLETION RATES & NEEDS MET

Feb 2020 - Sept 2024

Completion Rates

•	Adult Education	33%
•	Behavioral Health	55%
•	Developmental Referral	40%
•	Employment	34%
•	Family Planning	80%
•	Food Security	92%
•	Health Coverage	91%
•	Housing	44%
•	Immunization Referral	80%
•	Immunization Screening	100%
•	Lead	90%
•	Learning	100%
•	Medical Home	53%
•	Medical Referral	66%
•	Medication Screening	90%
•	Medication Adherence	91%
•	Mental Health	45%
•	Oral Health	56%
•	Postpartum	87%
•	Pregnancy	62%
•	Social Service Referral	79%
•	Substance Use	29%
•	Tobacco Cessation	35%
•	Transportation	73%

Want to make a referral?



Client Needs Met

Top 5 Pathways Opened

Social Service Referral Learning Medical Referral Pregnancy Medical Home

Top 2 Pathways Opened

Most Frequent Needs Met

Social Service Referrals	Learning
Transportation Assistance	Pregnancy
Food Benefits / Assistance	Infant Safe Sleep
Clothing / Baby Items	Lead
Insurance Assistance	Primary Care & Prevention Screening
Cellular / Internet / Digital Connectivity	Covid-19/Covid Vaccine
Housing Assistance	Breastfeeding



Improving Birth Outcomes: Maternal / Infant Health



CHW Guides Pregnant Client with Right Care at Right Time

In early 2024, Graciela Emerson, a Cleveland Clinic CHW working in the Better Health Pathways HUB, was assigned a client who was 15 weeks pregnant. Each time Graciela meets a new pregnant client she shares the **Cuyahoga County Emergency Palm Card**.

This resource was **developed by the Cuyahoga County Board of Health and the One Life, One Voice, One Community initiative** to: educate pregnant clients about when to go to the hospital and provide different hospital options; improve participantprovider communication; and increase childbirth preparedness.

In early 2021, The Better Health Pathways HUB collaborated with the Cuyahoga County Board of Health's then-Program Manager Angela Newman, and a MetroHealth OBGYN provider to develop an easy-to-read document for each HUB pregnant participant that incorporated the Palm Card and provided additional information on when pregnant people should go to the emergency department, including signs and symptoms. The HUB implemented this educational information for all pregnant clients in response to data from the Cuyahoga County Board of Health that showed some pregnant people were not going to hospital emergency departments with labor and delivery services.

During one visit, Graciela noticed that her client wasn't feeling well. She began the visit by reviewing SNAP eligibility and confirming an appointment the following day, but quickly realized she needed to adjust what they had planned to discuss. Graciela asked her client to review her symptoms and reminded her about the Emergency Palm Card. ""You gave this mother an extra 6 weeks with her daughter. If she had not gone to the emergency department, she might have had a very different outcome."

~Neonatal Intensive Care Unit Nurse

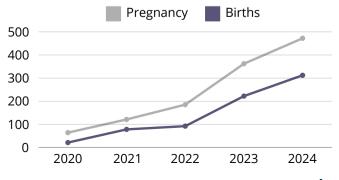
The client shared that she hadn't been feeling well since the previous night and described some of her physical symptoms. Graciela reminded her client that she wasn't trained as a clinician but based on what her client was describing and how uncomfortable she was feeling, she suggested that she go to the **Cleveland Clinic Hillcrest Hospital** emergency department, which has a specialized emergency department for pregnant people.

Later that day, Graciela learned that her client, at 22 weeks pregnancy, was having an emergency C-section. The baby was born at 1.4 pounds and spent six weeks in the neonatal intensive care unit. Graciela visited her client and the baby, and stayed in communication with her via text, and sent her resources and support. Unfortunately, the baby subsequently developed a brain bleed and did not survive. Graciela was devastated but continued to support her client.

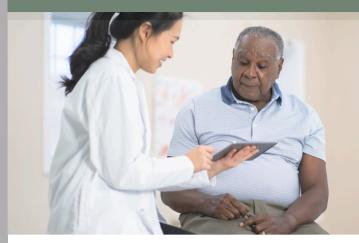
Graciela presented this story at the Better Health Pathways Community Advisory Board meeting and a participating MetroHealth neonatal intensive care unit nurse offered a caring way for Graciela to consider the impact of her role in this client's pregnancy. **"You gave this mother an extra 6 weeks with her daughter. If she had not gone to the emergency department, she might have had a very different outcome."**

Pregnant / Postpartum & Births

(Projected through 2024)



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: COVERDELL STROKE



United Way's CHW Supports Client and Family through Coverdell Pilot Project

A client we will call Sam, faced a life-altering event when he suffered a stroke and the beginning of a challenging journey for him and his family. A managed care plan referred Sam to the Coverdell Project, with a primary need for home support and medication management to address his diabetes; his glucose level was >300mg/dL.

The Coverdell Project connected Sam with a CHW from the United Way of Greater Cleveland. **The CHW identified eight critical pathways to support him, including educating him about strokes, learning the power of social support, managing exercise and screen time, and understanding diabetes.**

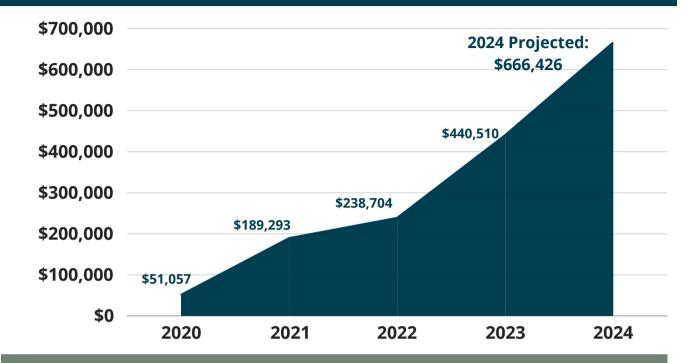
His medical home was established with MetroHealth's Dept of Internal Medicine, where a CHW scheduled an appointment for medication reconciliation, and he was referred to specialty care in neurology. He also received social service support from the Case Western Reserve Ombudsman, who explained to Sam's family that he must be issued an eviction or discharge notice before an appeal could be made. They advised the family to appeal the discharge, ensuring Sam would not be sent to a shelter. Sam was then referred to the Department of Senior and Adult Services (DSAS) for activities of daily living and the Ohio Home Care Waiver was reopened for his long-term care services. The United Way team played a significant role in wrapping community social services around Sam, and their coordination with MetroHealth to provide a registered nurse for his care. Sam's journey included visits to the emergency department, rehabilitation, and ultimately long-term care. Throughout this period, he received essential medication management and support.

Although Sam is not living independently, he is well-cared for in a facility, and his family visits regularly. **Without the intervention of the CHW and the Coverdell Project, as well as the collaborative efforts of The MetroHealth System and his family, Sam's condition could have been fatal.** The project was a success, providing much-needed stability and care for Sam and his family.

The Coverdell Stroke Coach Service Quality Improvement Pilot Project, part of the workplan for the Ohio Department of Health to meet the CDC strategy of the Ohio Coverdell Grant requirements, was a partnership between the HUB and The MetroHealth System to facilitate engagement of patient navigators / CHWs in the management of those at highest risk for stroke events, post-event discharge support, and follow-up of stroke patients across clinical and community settings.

Reimbursements Paid to Care Coordination Agencies

(Medicaid and Grants)



Year-over-year growth in reimbursements returned to care coordination agencies has continued with a projection of **more than §1.6M** by the end of 2024. In 2024 the Pathways HUB reported having returned over \$1M in reimbursements from Medicaid managed care organizations using the Pathways Community HUB Institute® (PCHI) Model. *"This major milestone underscores the positive impact community partnership and collaboration can make on our ability to advance health equity,"* said Jan L. Ruma, President & CEO, Pathways Community HUB Institute.

Better Health Partnership applauds the incredible achievements of its CCA partners and looks forward to continuing to support their missions and CHW workforce in the years to come! The HUB partners with Ohio's MCO's: AmeriHealth Caritas, Buckeye Health Plan, CareSource, Elevance Health (Anthem), Humana, Molina, and UnitedHealthcare. MCO's reimbursements and other funding coming from grants delivered to our agency partners helps them grow their capacity to serve the community and is <u>sustainable revenue resulting from</u> <u>outcomes achieved by CHWs with their</u> <u>clients</u>.

"We at the Pregnant with Possibilities Resource Center are thrilled to celebrate our 4-year anniversary with Better Health Partnership's Pathway HUB. While we've achieved significant progress over the years, we're eager to explore new opportunities, policies, and advocacy initiatives that enhance reimbursements for Community Health Workers."

> ~Veranda Rodgers, MBA Executive Director, Pregnant with Possibilities

BUILDING CHW CAPACITY

Better Health Pathways HUB partners with MetroHealth and others, contributing to the **Community Health Worker Capacity Building Collaborative (CHWCBC).** The CHWCBC aims to increase the number of front-line CHW public health professionals - the link between health and social services providers in Northeast Ohio. This 3-year project, supported with nearly \$3 million in federal Health Resouces and Services Administration (HRSA) funding, is part of a nationwide effort to build the pipeline of CHWs to increase access to care, improve public health needs of underserved communities.

In 2024, the CHWCBC had many things to recognize and celebrate, including the appointment of **Marquita Rockamore, Cuyahoga Community College,** as the Northeast Ohio representative on the CHW Center of Excellence Board and **Carmella Rose Health Foundation's** existing news about enrolling the first active CHW apprentice!

Aimee Budnick and Dennis Kirimi, Community Action Akron Summit, and Karen Cook, Director, The MetroHealth System, Institute for H.O.P.E.TM shared results demonstrating how Pathways HUB Community Action's integration of CHWs in COVID-19 response supported an equitable response to the pandemic, CHWs positive impact on patient care, and how the system has worked to develop protocols, create an infrastructure to support CHWs, and pursue braided funding to support these roles.

CHWs are the heart of the HUB model and the reason for its success. Without CHWs, the model cannot deliver results.



Adrienne Mundorf, Health Equity Director, UnitedHealthcare, offered insight into a new Medicaid Managed Care RFP opportunity to consider for sustaining this important collaborative work after the HRSA grant sunsets. Lisa Pointer, CHW Supervisor, University Hospitals, shared an inspirational example of her career journey to become a CHW, the training she received, patient populations she has served, the importance of career pathing, and current supervisory responsibilities.

A topic of interest for the Collaborative was to learn how CHWs operate within various organizations and actions being taken to recruit, retain and measure CHW impact. A panel of nonprofit agencies, health care providers, and forprofit employers included: Samantha Formica, MSN, Director of Care Management, Akron **Children's Hospital and Akron Children's** Health Collaborative: Marianella Napolitano, **Regional Director of Clinical Transformation**, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Ohio: Ginny Pate, C-CHW, Executive Director, **Carmella Rose Health Foundation; Colleen** Ptak, MSW, LISW-S, Senior Director Population Health, The Centers for Families and Children. "We need to identify and implement best practices with recruitment, onboarding, apprenticeships, *compensation/benefits, and retention to ensure we* have enough CHWs to meet the growing demand for this critically important workforce in Northeast Ohio." said Rita Navarro-Horwitz, President & CEO, Better Health Partnership, when summarizing the focus for next steps and to dig deeper into the CHW employment experience.

Workforce Development: Personal Motivators

The Better Health Pathways HUB hosted a CHW event with guest facilitator, Caroline Carter, MS, LSW, BCC (Board Certified Coach), Starfish Practice, LLC. Ms. Carter led a workforce development session examining personal motivation for over 30 CHWs and Supervisors who partner with the Pathways HUB.

"I loved the engagement level of this wonderful team," said Ms. Carter about her experience facilitating this session. *"The role of a CHW is not easy. They are trusted in their communities to help people in need navigate the complexities of their life situations, mitigate health and social risks, and support them to meet their goals and better outcomes. The work, while rewarding, can also be incredibly frustrating and emotionally demanding. And there is risk for burnout and employee turnover.*





Motivated employees are more likely to be engaged and committed to their work, invest more time and effort into their tasks, be more productive with better outcomes, and have fewer issues with burnout. I hope this session helped the CHWs gain greater awareness of their individual motivators, and they embrace what their results showed them."

Most of the CHW participants identified as 'Caregivers', one of the Motivator assessment identity categories. Caregivers are described as "caring souls who are often more tuned in to others' emotions," and the participants in the room validated this description that highlights what motivates them most about performing the CHW role.

Better Health Pathways HUB Supported Cleveland VOTES Goal to Register 1,500 New Voters

Voting has emerged as an important and actionable upstream social driver of health. **To boost civic participation in the Greater Cleveland area**, **Community Health Workers VOTE launched in Q2 2024.** Led by the nonpartisan Cleveland VOTES - in partnership with Healthy Democracy, Healthy People - this voter registration program engaged community health workers and other community-based organizations to register 1,500 new voters.

Communities served by CHWs - including communities of color, low-income, and people with chronic health conditions - are underrepresented in the voting population. The Better Health Pathways HUB worked closely with Cleveland VOTES to offer HUB care coordination agencies and their CHWs voter education training and other resources to support this program.

Pictured to the right, Erika Anthony, Co-Founder and Executive Director, Cleveland VOTES, participated on a reaction panel at the Better Health Partnership 2024 Learning Collaborative.







2024 Learning Collaborative **Engaging Individuals with SUD**

On October 25, over 40 CHWs attended the Better Health Partnership 2024 Learning Collaborative, with support from the Ohio Commission on Minority Health (OCMH). An afternoon breakout session was offered to better equip CHWs and others on "How to Engage Individuals with Substance Use Disorders (SUDs)."

This session taught participants about resources and support systems available for individuals with substance use disorders and best practices for building a trusting relationship with individuals and their families. Karen Snyder, CPRS, Partnerships & Operations Director, 2nd Act, Secretary of US Attorney's Office Northern District of Ohio, Heroin & **Opioid Action Plan, Prevention & Education** Subcommittee, led an engaging panel discussion, including expert speakers from Thrive for Change, Summa Health, and The MetroHealth System. One participant's feedback recognized the panelists' "honesty, vulnerability and courage" when sharing their stories.

The interactive portion of the session practiced role-playing a conversation with an individual with a substance use disorder or their family, and the panelists guided the engagements with valuable tips and recommendations from their life experiences. "I loved the workshop and role-playing in the substance abuse session," said one participant.



PATHWAYS COMMUNITY HUB | PROGRESS REPORT 2024



Michael J. Biscaro, Psy.D, ABPP Behavioral Health Institute, Summa Health







Aimee Scheidemantel, MS, LPC The MetroHealth System

RECOGNITION

Better Health Partnership 2024 Collaborative Champion Recognized

Ginny Pate, Executive Director of the Carmella Rose Health Foundation and a certified Community Health Worker was recognized as a Better Health Partnership 2024 Collaborative Champion for going above and beyond to support CHWs and the advancement of the Better Health Pathways HUB!

Ginny Pate has been integral to the Better Health Pathway HUB since its inception. She is deeply committed to advocating for and addressing health-related social needs of underserved communities in the Cleveland area – particularly those living in homeless shelters and re-entry populations.



Ginny Pate receives award from Jim Weisman, Chair, Board of Directors

In 2018, Ginny introduced the Pathways HUB model to key leaders in Cuyahoga County. It is because of her strong influence that Better Health Partnership turned its attention to this model as an effective way of connecting clinical caregivers with community health workers to address social drivers of health. Ginny assisted the Better Health team with the discovery and development work – resulting in the launch of the Better Health Pathways HUB in 2020!

She serves as a strong mentor for the care coordination agencies partnered with our HUB and shares best practices to assist others in improving care and gaining efficiencies. She serves on advisory boards for the Better Health Pathways HUB and the HRSA-funded, CHW Capacity Building Collaborative focused on expanding and strengthening the community health worker workforce in Northeast Ohio.

"We Rise by Lifting Others" Event Spotlights Community Health Worker Day





In honor of Community Health Worker Day, Better Health Partnership, Cleveland State University (CSU) and Cuyahoga Community College hosted a celebratory event in June at CSU's Student Center. More than 200 people attended this event to recognize and appreciate the valuable role CHWs perform, working one-on-one with people in underserved communities to navigate the healthcare system, social service sector and identify resources for their specific needs.

The event included several speakers representing Cuyahoga County's Executive Office, University Hospitals, The Center for Community Solutions and Carmella Rose Health Foundation. A vendor section with over 15 social service agencies and managed care plans provided an opportunity for individuals to network and learn about the many services that support the work and professional development of CHWs.



PATHWAYS HUB TEAM



Robert Eick, MD, MPH President & CEO Better Health Partnership



Brittany Battle, MHA Care Coordination Supervisor Pathways HUB



Ndidi Edeh-Larberg, MPH, RRT Director, Research & Evaluation Better Health Partnership



Jonathan Lever, MPH, NRP Director, Population Health & Care Management Pathways HUB



Alexandra Carter Care Coordinator Pathways HUB



Matt Rosenblum, SPHR HUB Finance & Operations Pathways HUB

Connecting individuals to services they need

HEALTH . SOCIAL . BEHAVIORAL

through a network of care coordination agencies and supported by community health workers who care about YOU

Email: HUB@betterhealthpartnership.org

https://www.betterhealthpartnership.org/health-pathways-hub

Founders

The MetroHealth System Health Action Council The Center for Community Solutions Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Health Care Providers

Akron Children's Hospital Asian Services in Action AxessPointe Community Health Centers Care Alliance Health Center Cleveland Clinic Crossroads Health Northeast Ohio Neighborhood Health Services Neighborhood Family Practice Senders Pediatrics Signature Health Summa Health Care System The Centers The MetroHealth System UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital VA Northeast Ohio Health Care System

Foundations

The Bruening Foundation The George Gund Foundation

Employers and Health Plans

AmeriHealth Caritas Ohio Buckeye Health Plan CareSource Elevance (Anthem) Health Action Council Humana Medical Mutual of Ohio Molina Healthcare UnitedHealth Group Vitamix

Community

Beech Brook Bright Beginnings Burton Bell Carr Development, Inc. Carmella Rose Health Foundation Case Western Reserve University Cleveland Department of Public Health Cleveland Metropolitan School District Cleveland State University Cuyahoga Community College Cuyahoga County Board of Health Greater Cleveland Food Bank Institute for H.O.P.E.™ Joseph and Mary's Home Lead Safe Cleveland Coalition Medina County Public Health Ohio Commission on Minority Health (OCMH) Ohio Department of Medicaid Pregnant with Possibilities Resource Center Summit County Public Health The Community Builders United Way of Greater Cleveland University Settlement Village of Healing Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging



Our Vision

Better Health Partnership, the most trusted health improvement collaborative, achieves exceptional health value and eradicates health disparities in Northeast Ohio.

Our Mission

We bring health care providers, social services, and other sectors together to share best practices and accelerate data-informed improvements in equitable population and community health.



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Ted Wymyslo, MD Retired Senior Medical Advisor Ohio Association of Community Health Centers