



Health Improvement Alliance

Partnering to Build Healthier Communities Since 2003

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The recent killings of unarmed Black men and women – George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and too many more – are at the center of a movement that is calling to dismantle the systemic racism that has plagued our country since before its inception. People all across the country are demanding real, actionable change against all forms of racism, to finally put an end to a system that has oppressed too many for too long.

In addition to overt racism, people of color are also predisposed to poor health outcomes in rates that are disproportionate to their population – a phenomenon that has been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic. The reality is that Black, Latinx and Indigenous people are more likely to live in areas with poor quality of and/or inadequate access to basic needs, like healthcare, food, housing, transportation and education, and other factors, known as social determinants of health. These conditions predictably increase their community members' risks of acquiring underlying health problems – like diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular issues – that can negatively impact their overall health. The Greater Bridgeport Region is home to many neighborhoods that are impacted negatively by social determinants of health.

Addressing these inequities is exactly why the Health Improvement Alliance (HIA) was formed in 2003, and it's a commitment we feel compelled to reaffirm. We recognize that change can only happen if we are intentional about our approach and held accountable for our actions. We remain committed to measurably improving the health of our community by offering preventive care, health education, and services. Our grassroots collaborative is anchored by two local hospitals in partnership with seven health departments, and more than 50 community based organizations (click [here](#) to see our list of active partners). Together, we focus on three critical areas to create solutions that address existing disparities and related health outcomes. Our three areas of focus include Access to Care, Healthy Lifestyles and Behavioral Health/Substance Abuse, each of which has a dedicated Task Force within our collaborative. These task forces are focused on the seven towns in our region (Bridgeport, Easton, Fairfield, Milford, Monroe, Stratford and Trumbull).

In addition to the many programs we currently deliver, we feel strongly that the following processes will help guide us on the path to making real change:

- We are currently working on increasing the implementation of Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) standards by health care organizations in the Greater Bridgeport region.
- HIA is actively engaging community leaders to provide input that captures the voices of their communities to inform our work prior to implementation.
- We will prioritize protective factors to build resiliency against ACES – both Adverse Childhood Experiences and Adverse Community Environments – which affect too many children and families in Bridgeport.
- We will incorporate equity reviews of all plans to determine how our work affects health equities, and make any necessary adjustments to ensure the benefit of our work.

We are committed to changing the way we approach the work we do with a keen eye towards a future where systemic racism does not exist, and where all members of our communities can live healthy lives.

For more information about our work or to join the collaborative, visit www.HIA-CT.org.