

The Maine Alliance for Health and Prosperity

A Leadership Network Promoting Systemic and Equitable Change for
Maine People and Communities

Our Focus: The COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented disruptions in our families, communities, and workplaces. Although the brunt of the impacts has lessened in the past few months, the fissures that emerged persist because most exacerbated longstanding inequities and disparities: lack of affordable housing, food insecurity, economic hardship, and more.

Recognizing the deep interconnections among these issues, the Maine Alliance for Health and Prosperity formed and is now working to leverage pandemic crises to advance positive, “upstream” policy changes that can improve the health and economic well-being of all Maine people and communities. The Alliance is a unique coalition of visionary leaders from key sectors (housing, food, transportation, broadband, healthcare, and economic and community development) committed to influencing system-transforming change.

How we Work: The Alliance focuses on engaging new and existing partners across sectors to 1) increase scale through collective action and 2) leverage resources to expand the reach and amplify results. We are not implementers of programs or services – that’s what our network members do best. Our strategies include engaging, educating, and advocating, through actions like conferences, workshops and webinars, issue briefs, policy analyses and op eds.

Our strength lies with the deep experience, longstanding relationships, and commitment to positive, systemic change among leaders who comprise the network.

Our Vision: All Maine people and communities have the opportunity to thrive as the result of statewide, cross-sector collaboration that ensures an integrated approach to improving the public’s health and prosperity. Communities of particular concern are Black, Indigenous, or people of color, rural regions, and those impacted by multigenerational poverty and other health concerns.

Our Belief: Our individual and collective health is inextricably linked with our economic prosperity. The conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship and age determine the presence or absence of both health and prosperity. Health is not only the product of affordable medical care but of safe housing, quality child care, nutritious food, accessible transportation and economic security.

Our Commitment to Action: Hundreds of recommendations or policies, programs, and investments have been proposed to improve Maine’s health and economy – many targeting longstanding structural inequities as well as recent gaps that emerged from the pandemic. The Alliance is committed to lifting up innovative examples and advocating action on policies that offer transformative, systemic solutions such as affordable housing developments that provide on-site access to health services for chronically ill elders, transportation models that connect

workers and employers, regional hubs that facilitate simultaneous access to health and social services and more.

Our Current Priorities:

Housing

- Produce and disseminate an easy-to-understand overview of the housing crisis in Maine examined through the lens of economic status, health, and equity.
- Highlight problems and potential solutions in five key areas – homelessness, affordable rent, special needs, first-time home ownership, and dwelling conditions using current, relevant, and compelling data and stories of real people and communities.
- Identify and advocate for policies and programs to rectify housing inadequacies and inequities.

Hubs

- Define the current state of cross-sector local collaborations (hubs) formed to address challenges to healthy and productive communities
- Strategically support an inventory of current Hubs in order to identify best practices and gaps.
- Advocate for programs that connect service providers in order to compound solutions.

Equity

- Define and communicate the impact of inequities on health care and economic prosperity.
- Ensure equity is at the center of all Alliance strategies and integral to our advocacy for solutions.