

COVID-19 AND BEYOND: THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

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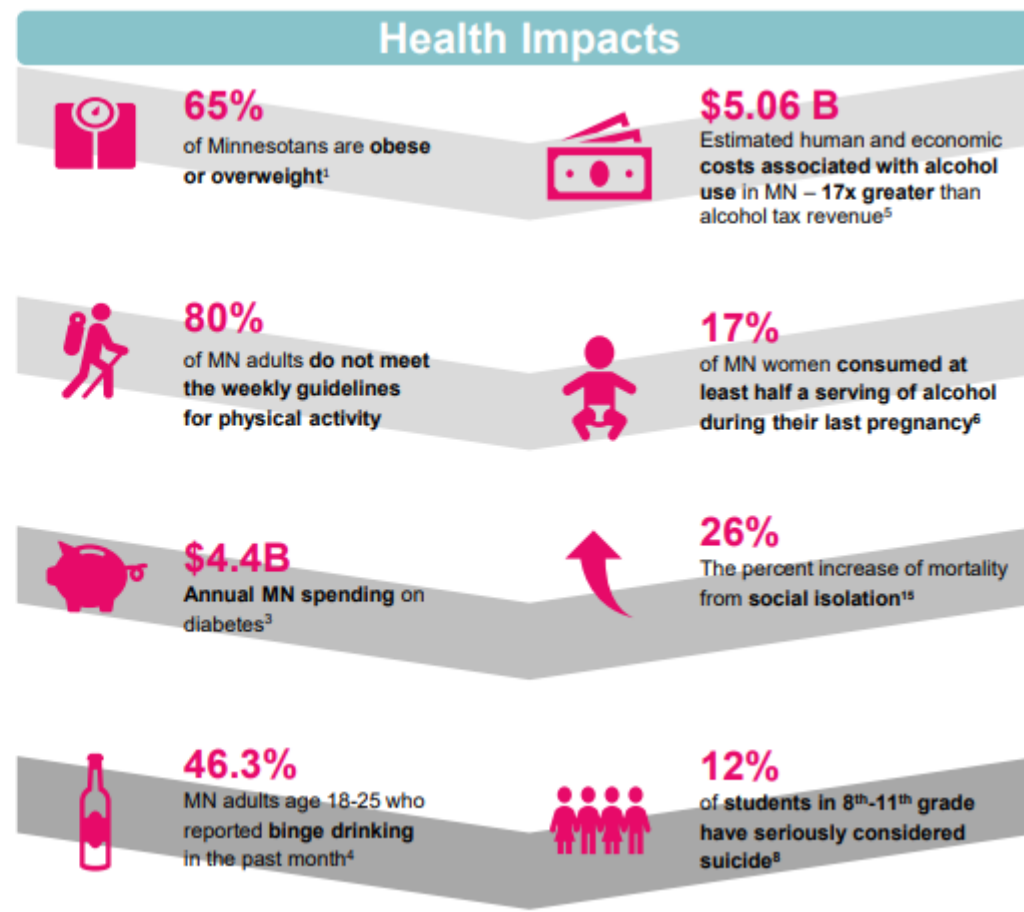
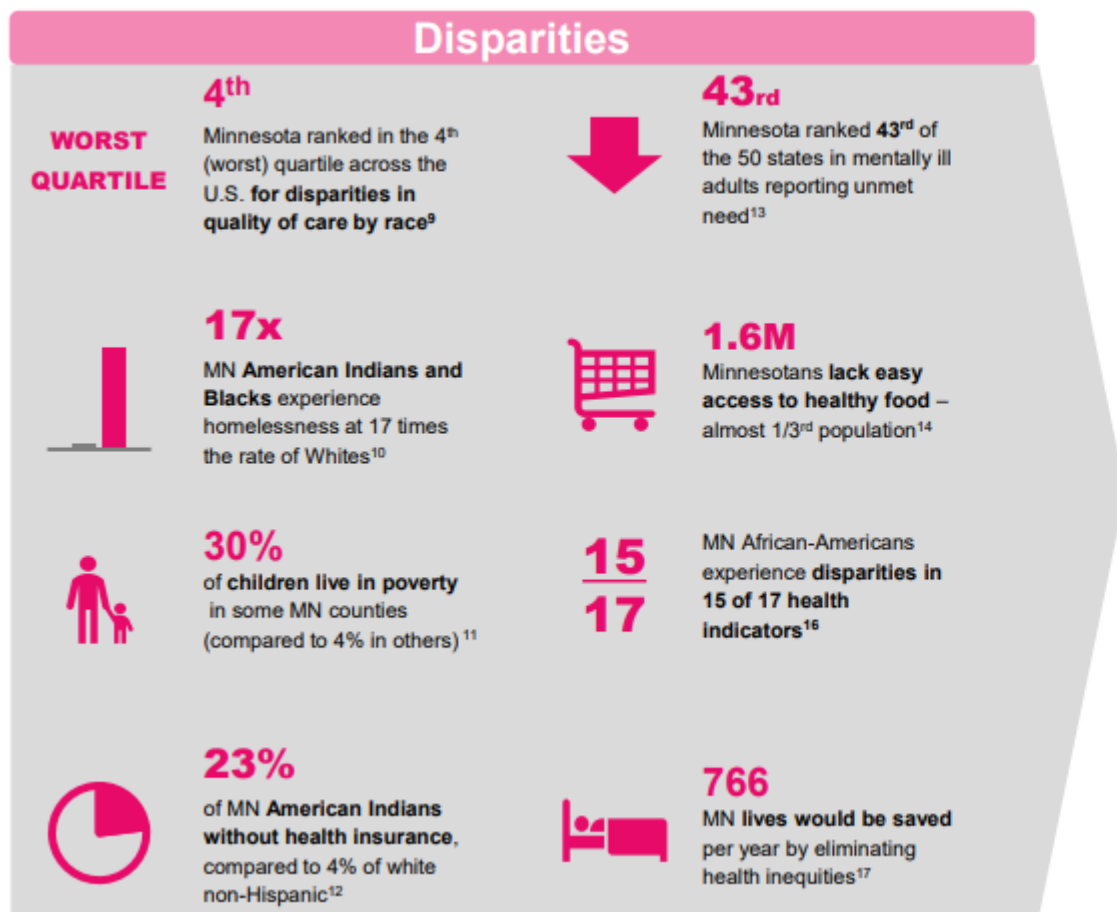
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HEALTH EQUITY IN MINNESOTA

Minnesota has fallen in the “America’s Health Rankings” from #1 in the nation to #7 from 2000-2019

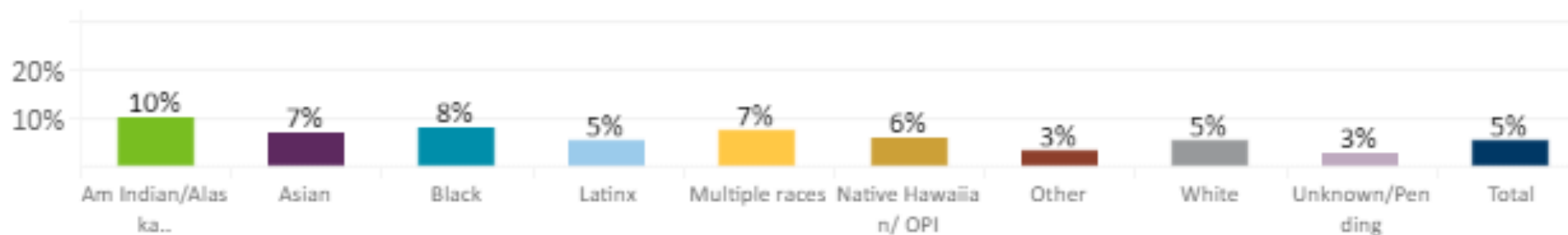


COVID-19 IMPACT

Black, Latinx, and **Indigenous** individuals have the highest age-adjusted rates of hospitalization from COVID.

Of all **Indigenous** individuals who test positive for COVID, 10% are hospitalized, the highest rate of any of the race groups with data collected.

% OF POSITIVE CASES HOSPITALIZED BY RACE/ETHNICITY



THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS IN ADDRESSING DISPARITIES



- The trust factor: many CHWs are a part of the communities they serve
- Research shows that Community Health Worker (CHW) programs have significant, positive effects on a wide range of health issues and quality of care¹
- Blue Cross invested in the CHW model because of the value it could provide to our members by addressing social determinants of health

EVOLVING OUR MODEL WITH COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

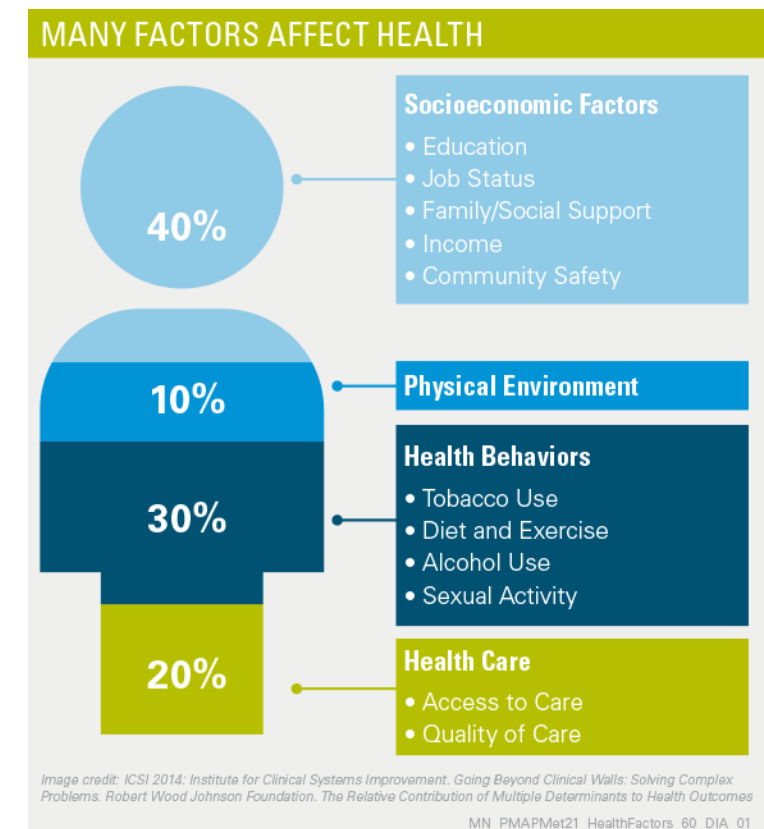
- Our early work with CHWs
 - Partnered with the Minnesota CHW Alliance to develop a certified curriculum
 - Worked with *Pathways Community HUB* model, a comprehensive and evidence-based model that shows improved health outcomes and addresses social determinants of health
 - Funded CHW registry in 2019
 - Created scholarship fund to encourage growth of CHWs
- Here's what we learned
 - Sustainability is dependent on infrastructure both internally and in community
 - Partnership with an established CHW organization increases deployment speed
 - Collaboration and flexibility allows for continuous improvement

CHW INITIATIVES TODAY

- CHW Partnership with WellShare International to tackle COVID-19 education
 - Co-developed model quickly adjusted to address COVID-19 community needs
 - Created a resource guide for CHWs to address health care needs in a culturally appropriate manner
 - Connected members to other important resources (food, housing, etc.)
- We prioritized sustainability and expansion of the model
 - Analyzed rate structure for CHWs
 - Expanding local presence of CHWs throughout the state and for additional needs
 - Development of company-wide strategy

WHAT WE WERE SEEING IN THE COMMUNITY

- Importance of addressing social determinants has never been more pronounced and this model is uniquely suited to make a difference
- Member fear of in-person preventive care
- Dramatic declines in well-child visits in 7-county metro due to COVID-19 (data showed decrease of 20-30% compared to 2019)



INITIAL RESULTS WITH WELLSHARE

- More than 14,000 members received outreach
- 35% member engagement rate, higher than benchmarks
- 2% - 7% of members that engaged with CHWs closed targeted gaps in care
- 7.6% of pregnant women received timely prenatal appointment and a postpartum visit
- An additional 4.7% of members receiving prenatal immunizations, including influenza and Tdap vaccinations

PROGRAM GROWTH & FUTURE STATE

- Responded to member feedback and mailed COVID-safety supplies (adult- and child-sized masks, hand sanitizer, thermometers)
- Partnering for future CHW HUB outside of metro with WellShare and a provider (Mankato, Minnesota)
- Seeking certification for Minnesota's first Pathway Community HUBs in Winona, Minnesota later this year and Minneapolis in Q1 of 2022



SUCCESS STORY

- A woman in her early 40s, mother of two children (aged 2 and 6 years)
 - Recent stroke, still experiencing lingering pain
 - Unable to speak or read English and in need of a stronger support system
 - A WellShare CHW helped her access additional services covered by insurance including acupuncture and physical therapy to help alleviate pain
 - The CHW provided support accessing additional resources for other needs, including a new car seat, food and clothes for her growing sons

SUCCESS STORY

- Hmong man in his 50s, hadn't been to a doctor in more than a year
 - Recently, he and his wife have been feeling unwell and unsupported
 - Unable to make the trip to their physician or refill his prescription, he felt he had no other option but to take his wife's medication
 - A WellShare CHW was put in touch with the couple and was able to help the man reconnect to his preferred physician and get the medication he needed



THANK YOU.