



# LEVERAGING FEDERAL FUNDS TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND EQUITY

Billions in federal funds are designated to transform a historic public health response and recovery and to lay the foundation for an equitable response to future crises. Proven models for this work—such as the Pathways Community HUB approach outlined below—can be prioritized and deployed to efficiently and effectively drive change now and in the long term.

## Featured Model: Pathways Community HUB

**Health doesn't happen in a silo.** Risk factors within medical care, social services, and behavioral health—such as housing status, literacy level, and food security—are interlinking and interdependent.

**Robust and sustainable community health networks are advancing equity and health outcomes,** while addressing risk factors in a coordinated way across partners and sectors.

**One proven model is the Pathways Community HUB,** first developed by Drs. Sarah and Mark Redding in 2005 in Ohio. Now deployed in 35 communities, the evidence-based approach:

- **Focuses on upstream barriers to health and equity.** Community health workers partner with individuals to address up to 20 risk factors—known as Pathways—using standardized checklists. Pathways range from mental health and substance use to employment and adult education.
- **Builds a sustainable workforce:** Trained community health workers are at the core of the Pathways model, helping create sustained change in communities. Community health workers help individuals at greatest risk navigate the worlds of social services and health care simultaneously, learn new skills, get access to needed services, and make vital behavior modifications.
- **Relies on a trusted intermediary:** HUBs are adept at bringing together varied funding streams in cohesive ways that tackle broader health challenges effectively. Each HUB is led by a neutral organization that centralizes processes, systems, and resources, including financial agreements and cross-sector data sharing.
- **Pays for outcomes:** The HUB model is a financially accountable care model with funding by managed care plans (including Medicaid), health departments, and philanthropic funders. Each Pathway has a specific measure that must be completed before the community health worker's employer is paid.

## Saving Babies' Lives in Ohio

Infant mortality rate is a key indicator of community health. Yet disparities exist, disproportionately affecting Black and Indigenous mothers. Using the Pathways HUB model community health workers in Ohio are helping mothers be healthy, live in a safe environment, and access quality care—factors that can prevent infant deaths. **Research demonstrates the cost savings and effectiveness of the Pathways approach.** Improvements in this community include a 60% reduction in low birth weights and a \$5 return for every \$1 invested in the Pathways HUB model.

Aligning in Crisis is a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-supported program that identifies existing cross-sector policy and implementation opportunities that can speed recovery from the triple crises of the COVID-19 pandemic, the resulting economic struggle, and the ongoing impact of systemic racism. To learn more, visit [AlignForHealth.org/Crisis](https://AlignForHealth.org/Crisis)