



**Boston CHNA-CHIP Collaborative**

**2022**

**Community Health  
Improvement Plan**

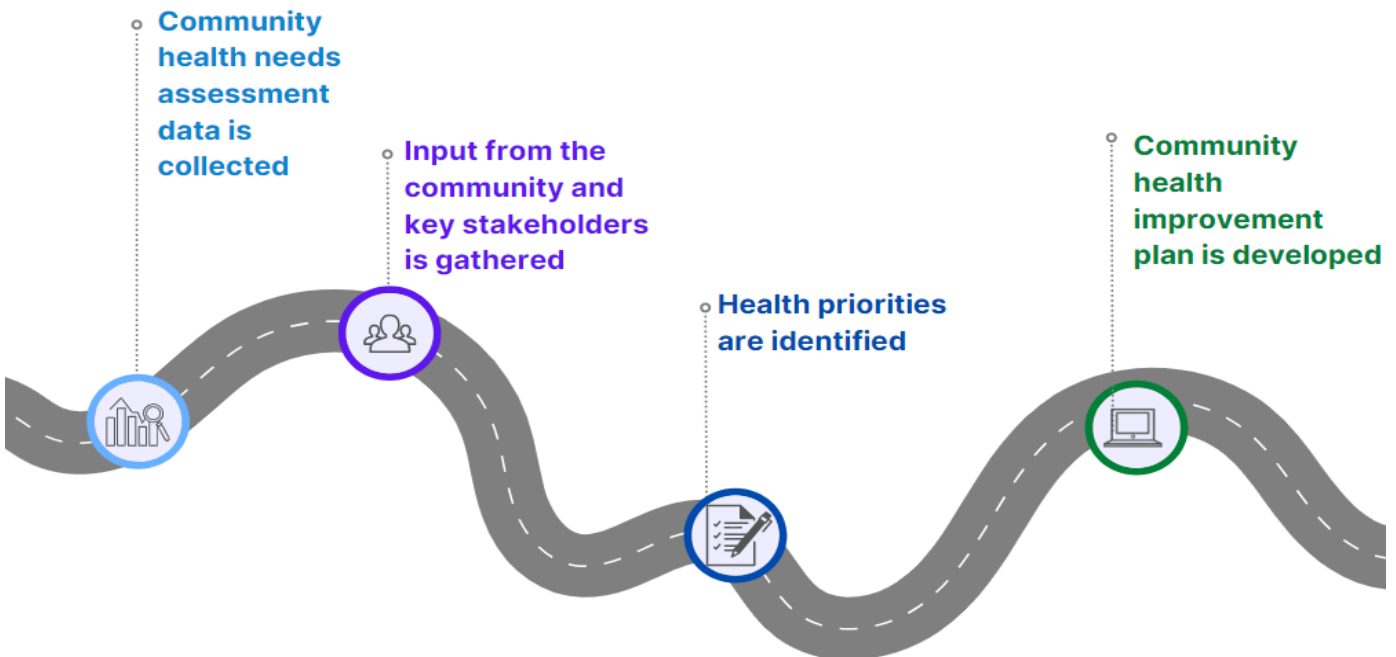
## Background

The [Boston CHNA-CHIP Collaborative](#) (the Collaborative) is a group of Boston health centers, community-based organizations, community residents, hospitals, and the Boston Public Health Commission. The Collaborative aims to achieve sustainable positive change in the health of the city by partnering with communities, sharing knowledge, aligning resources, and addressing root causes of health inequities. A full list of our Steering Committee and Priority Area Working Group Membership can be found in appendices A and B.

### Community Health Needs Assessment 2022

In 2019, the Collaborative conducted the first large-scale joint citywide community health needs assessment (CHNA) which then guided the city's community health improvement plan (CHIP), a blueprint describing how the Collaborative would focus on collectively addressing the key priorities. The CHNA-CHIP process is shown in the graphic below. In 2021-2022, the Collaborative worked together to develop the 2022 Boston CHNA. The 2022 Boston CHNA builds on the 2019 CHNA and takes a deep dive into the key priority areas identified in the 2020 community health improvement plan: housing, financial stability and mobility, behavioral health, and accessing services. The 2022 CHNA was conducted during an unprecedented time, including the COVID-19 pandemic and a reckoning with systemic racism.

## Overview of CHNA and CHIP Process



## CHIP Prioritization & Engagement

The Boston CHNA-CHIP Collaborative undertook an open prioritization process May-June 2022 to solicit community input on key strategies to focus and refine implementation plans for the updated 2022 CHIP. The prioritization process was centered on the 2022 CHNA and the current CHIP's priority areas.

### CHIP Prioritization Process

The 2022 prioritization process focused on reaffirming the previous priorities, identifying any new issues that have emerged, and prioritizing specific strategies as a focus for future action. The CHIP is also designed to inform the implementation and improvement plans of hospitals, health centers, and local public health partners in the Collaborative.

This streamlined CHIP aims to focus the Collaborative's work on the most feasible objectives and strategies while still meeting many of the priorities shared by the community in the CHNA-CHIP processes. All the priorities raised up by the community are being addressed in multiple ways across the membership organizations in the Steering Committee of the Collaborative, even if not specifically included in this CHIP.





The following steps were taken to identify the strategies for CHIP implementation planning:

- Listening sessions attended by 15 community members heard high-level findings from the CHNA. Attendees and registered participants also received a follow-up survey.
- A facilitated breakout session with 42 attendees at a Union Capital Boston meeting discussed priority strategies from the CHIP.
- The 70 strategies outlined in the 2019 CHIP, were on-line and resident feedback was solicited.
- All of the above processes resulted in a smaller list of 38 priority strategies.
- A convening of the Collaborative's priority area workgroup members in late June 2022 identified specific action planning steps for the four priority areas below.
- Subsequently, CHIP actions were further refined with the input of steering committee members, priority co-chairs and members and key City leadership.

### FOUR PRIORITY AREAS:

The priority areas selected in the 2022 CHIP are consistent with the priority areas identified in 2019. These core issues remained a very strong priority for community members in 2022 and COVID-19 exacerbated the persistent health inequities in Boston. The pandemic necessitated Collaborative members to focus on urgent COVID-19 responses in 2020-2021, which affected capacity to address 2019 goals.

The overarching commitment to achieving racial and ethnic health equity in Boston underpins the priority areas for 2022.

 <b>Mental and Behavioral Health</b>	 <b>Housing</b>	 <b>Economic Mobility and Inclusion</b>	 <b>Accessing Services</b>
<i>Mental health and substance use</i>	<i>Affordability, quality, homelessness, ownership, gentrification, and displacement</i>	<i>Jobs, income, employment, education, and workforce training</i>	<i>Healthcare, childcare, and social services</i>

**FUTURE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION ON PROGRESS:**

The Collaborative will plan a series of more in-depth community engagement activities with residents and community-based organizations. This community engagement will build on existing community partnerships and relationships and support the generation of new ideas and actions in the priority area workgroups. These activities will aim to develop the specific plans to implement the strategies in the CHIP. This community engagement will leverage the Boston Public Health Commission and other city and community partners in the Collaborative.

The Collaborative’s action planning process will establish specific outcome measures that will be incorporated as an appendix to the CHIP report, and will be tracked at least annually to be reported on at a yearly community meeting describing progress and success. We will develop these measures in collaboration with community members engaged in our working groups. The document will be updated when additional data about the health of Boston residents or relevant determinants becomes available.

## MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

**GOAL: Promote mental health and emotional wellness by nurturing resilient communities and building equitable, accessible, and supportive systems of care**

Community leaders and residents described trauma, stress, depression, and anxiety as top-of-mind concerns among all populations, but some groups were cited as being disproportionately impacted – such as youth, low-income households, caregivers, elders, and people of color. Initial results from the 2021 Boston High School and Boston Middle School Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) indicate that the percentage of students reporting persistent sadness has increased from 27.0% (2019) to 35.6% (2021) among Boston middle school students and from 35.0% (2019) to 43.9% (2021) among Boston high school students.

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Increase the number of diverse<sup>1</sup> culturally/linguistically responsive licensed clinical behavioral health workers and community-based behavioral health caregivers.

*Strategies:*

- Increase awareness of career pathways, incentives, and supports for individuals from communities of color to join the behavioral health workforce.
- Increase the pool of Community Health Workers and Recovery Coaches with specialized mental health/substance use training who represent low-income, immigrant, LGBTQ+, seniors, and/or communities of color.
- Enhance retention and prevent burn-out of clinical licensed behavioral health workers and community-based behavioral health caregivers from underrepresented communities through worker-informed supports and incentives.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Increase the number of non-traditional places/settings for children, adults and families to access behavioral health services and resources and support.

*Strategies:*

- Explore funding to place behavioral health specialists in every Boston Housing Authority and Boston Public School site.
- Work with the City and other partners to identify and promote additional therapeutic landscapes (such as parks and other outdoor spaces) for positive mental health experiences.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Decrease mental health related stigmas by supporting communications about wellness, mental health, and substance use that offer coping skills to individuals, families, and communities and seek early intervention.

*Strategies*

- Identify opportunities to engage in the City of Boston’s efforts to reduce mental and behavioral health stigma.
- Work collaboratively with the Boston Public Health Commission to expand the capacity and resilience of community partners and neighborhoods to support response and recovery to mental health and substance use.

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<sup>1</sup> Diversity includes race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity, age, differing abilities and lived experiences.

## HOUSING

**GOAL: Support safe, stable, healthy, equitable, affordable housing solutions for the diverse communities of Boston through a racial equity lens.**

Housing concerns of the community included housing affordability, quality, homelessness, homeownership, gentrification, and displacement. Housing is typically the largest household expense, and, for homeowners, housing can be an important source of wealth [\(i\)](#) [\(ii\)](#). For low-income residents, housing instability, the stress of unaffordable housing costs, and poor housing quality increase the risk of adverse health outcomes [\(iii\)](#). Mounting housing concerns in Boston were exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic and led to increased displacement of residents.

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Support efforts to increase Boston’s supply and production of affordable, safe and healthy housing options and decrease the displacement of low/moderate income residents.

### *Strategies*

- Advocate for public and private funding to support the production of affordable housing.
- Support efforts to increase resources towards Community Development Corporations and other non-profit developers in order to increase their ability to construct, preserve, and manage affordable housing.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Reduce housing insecurity and chronic homelessness by enhancing and supporting City initiatives and systems.

### *Strategies*

- Advocate for appropriate housing options for patients upon discharge from hospital emergency departments, inpatient, or post-acute care.
- Support policies that prevent evictions and create resources for residents at risk of displacement.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Support efforts to increase pathways to independence by helping households in subsidized and affordable housing to stabilize and/or move on to home ownership

### *Strategies*

- Advocate for additional resources being allocated to support down payment assistance programs targeted toward low-income homebuyers and first-generation homebuyers.
- Ensure the Boston CHNA-CHIP Collaborative is represented in key housing coalitions and decision-making bodies.

## **ECONOMIC MOBILITY and INCLUSION**

**GOAL:** Close the historic, generational, racial and ethnic income and wealth gaps in the city of Boston

Income, work, and education are powerful determinants of health because they lead to financial security and the ability to thrive. It is a challenge to prioritize health when prioritizing survival. Jobs that pay a living wage enable workers to live in neighborhoods that promote health (e.g., built environments that promote physical activity and resident engagement, better access to affordable healthy foods and the ability to afford it), and provide income and benefits to access health care<sup>ii</sup>. In contrast, unemployment, underemployment, and job instability make it difficult to afford housing, healthy food, goods and services that are linked with health, and health care, and also contribute to stressful life circumstances that affect multiple aspects of health<sup>iii</sup>.

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Contribute to an ecosystem that prioritizes inclusive economic mobility and increases generational wealth building in disinvested Boston communities.

Strategies:

- Systematically connect with public and private partners to identify key areas of collaboration to advance the objective.
- Work with state and local education and training providers to promote career exposure and advancement and educational attainment for Boston residents.
- Partner with key financial education and economic mobility programs to maximize program participation and impact (including providers of financial literacy and saving assistance, small business support and job readiness services for community members experiencing the greatest employment barriers).
- Advocate for employers in Boston to share current practices and adopt innovative and impactful workforce development and procurement strategies and determine a method to track progress and document impact.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Develop accessible systems and tools that provide community members with information on job opportunities and career development tools.

Strategies:

- Disseminate and broadly promote the Economic Mobility Hub (EMH) App to streamline access to living wage employment and career development and community-based resources.
- Identify and advocate for additional support and data tracking needed to ensure quality of user experience of the EMH App.

## ACCESSING SERVICES

**GOAL: Ensure all people in Boston have access to coordinated and equitable health and family support services and resources to support overall health**

Residents and community leaders continued to cite numerous barriers to accessing childcare, social services, healthy food, and health care. Barriers to access include cost, transportation, language access, limited Internet, discrimination and systemic racism, immigration/documentation status, limited culturally appropriate services, and the difficulties in navigating the complex social service and health care systems. Supporting improved access to childcare, social services, and health care were identified as a prominent theme and priority area in the previous community health needs assessment and improvement plan. Some aspect of access limitations came up in nearly every conversation in this recent process, and many issues were exacerbated during the pandemic.

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Partner with community members and organizations to increase awareness and develop innovative outreach models to address persistent health inequities.

### *Strategies*

- Support the Boston Public Health Commission's grant to improve the Mass211/ Helpsteps online social service platform to make it easier to find and access services.
- Work collectively to increase resident enrollment in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and identify additional priority areas of collaborative action to address nutrition security in Boston.
- Continue and amplify targeted efforts on health education and vaccine outreach focused on Boston neighborhoods and populations with lower vaccination rates, specially related to COVID-19 or other infectious public health concerns.
- Identify and pursue opportunities for additional collaborative outreach efforts to address chronic diseases that disproportionately impact people of color and contribute to premature mortality (e.g., heart disease, cancer, diabetes).

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Increase the number of flexible, affordable, high quality childcare options for children birth to 8-years old.

### *Strategies*

- Advocate to improve employer policies and investments towards providing childcare resources to their employees and workplace communities.
- Advocate to increase City, State, and Federal funding to expand access to high quality early education and childcare.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Increase the number of trained health, educational, and family support service staff that provide culturally and linguistically relevant care across Boston.

### *Strategies*

- Work with the City and larger service provider organizations to increase peer and community-based outreach support services for refugee, immigrant, and non-English speaking communities.



## References

- <sup>[i]</sup> Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2013). How Does Employment, or Unemployment, Affect Health? Retrieved May 15, 2022 from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation website: <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2012/12/how-does-employment--or-unemployment--affect-health-.html>
- <sup>[ii]</sup> Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2013). How Does Employment, or Unemployment, Affect Health? Retrieved May 15, 2022 from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation website: <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2012/12/how-does-employment--or-unemployment--affect-health-.html>
- <sup>[iii]</sup> Chambers, E., Fuster, D., Suglia, S., & Rosenbaum, E. (2015). The Link between Housing, Neighborhood, and Mental Health. Retrieved May 15, 2022 from the MacArthur Foundation: [https://www.macfound.org/media/files/hhm\\_brief\\_-\\_housing\\_neighborhood\\_mental\\_health\\_cnb5grx.pdf](https://www.macfound.org/media/files/hhm_brief_-_housing_neighborhood_mental_health_cnb5grx.pdf)

## Appendices





### Appendix A: Key Contributors to the CHIP

The Collaborative is appreciative of the dedication, expertise, and leadership that the following agencies, organizations and people who contributed the 2022 Boston CHIP:

Mary Ellen McIntyre*	Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers
Magnolia Contreras*	Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
Leslie Aldrich	Massachusetts General Hospital
Adrianna Boulin	Fenway Health
Ayesha Cammaerts	Boston Children's Hospital
Johnny Charles	J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, N.A.
Emilio Dorcely	Urban Edge
Sherry Dong	Tufts Medical Center
Louis Elisa	Black Boston COVID-19 Coalition
Catherine Fine	Boston Public Health Commission
Krystal Garcia	Boston Public Health Commission
Hollis Graham	East Boston Neighborhood Community Health Center
Ricky Guerra	Community Resident
Thea James, MD	Boston Medical Center
Nancy Kasen	Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
Michelle Keenan	Brigham and Women's Hospital
Amanda Mastrangelo	Harbor Health Services
Vivien Morris	Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition
Shari Nethersole, MD	Boston Children's Hospital
Tavinder Phull	Mass Eye & Ear
Leslie Reid	Madison Park Development Corporation
Megan Sandal, MD	Boston Medical Center
Tracy Mangini Sylven	Brigham and Women's Faulkner Hospital
Robert Torres	Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center

*\*Steering Committee Co-Chairs*

## Appendix B: Priority Area Working Group Membership (2019-2022)

 <b>Behavioral Health</b>	 <b>Housing</b>	 <b>Financial Security and Mobility</b>	 <b>Accessing Services</b>
Asian Women for Health Association for Behavioral Healthcare Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Blue Cross Blue Shield Foundation Boston ABCD Boston Asian Youth Essential Service Boston Public Health Commission Boston Public Schools Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston Brigham & Women's Hospital Choice Recovery Coaching City of Boston East Boston Neighborhood Community Health Center Elder Health Care Disparities Coalition Fenway Health Harbor Health Services Justice Resource Institute Kiva Centers MA Association for Mental Health MA Association of Community Health Workers MA Bureau of Substance Addiction Services MA Department of Mental Health MA Department of Public Health MA Organization for Addiction Recovery Madison Park Development Corporation Mass General Brigham Mass League of Community Health Centers Massachusetts General Hospital Massachusetts Institute of Technology Peer Health Exchange RIZE Massachusetts The Dimock Center The Home Tufts Medical Center University of Massachusetts Medical School	Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Boston Children's Hospital Boston Department of Neighborhood Development Boston Housing Authority Boston Medical Center Boston Tenant Coalition Brigham and Women's Faulkner Hospital Casa Myrna Citizens' Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA) City Life Vida Urbana Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corp Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation Fenway Community Development Corporation Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation MA Department of Public Health MA Public Health Association MACDC Madison Park Development Corporation Massachusetts General Hospital MassHealth Metro Housing Boston Metropolitan Area Planning Council Mission Hill Health Movement Mission Hill Neighborhood Housing Services New England Baptist Hospital Northeastern University	Asian American Civic Association - Boston Asian Community Development Corp. Bain Capital Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Boston Impact Initiative Boston Medical Center Boston Private Industry Council Boston Teachers Union Brigham and Women's Hospital Budget Buddies Chase Bank Commonwealth Corporation Compass Working Capital Dana-Farber Cancer Institute Economic Mobility Pathways Federal Reserve Bank of Boston Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce Include Web Design Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation Jewish Vocational Services MA Association of Community Health Workers Mass General Brigham Mayor's Office of Workforce Development Metropolitan Area Planning Council More Than Words Northeastern University Project Hope Boston Rapid7 SEIU 1199 Sociedad Latina The Boston Foundation Tufts Medical Center Ujima Boston UMass Boston Union Capital Boston UpTogether (prev. Family Independence Initiative)	Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Boston Children's Hospital Boston Public Health Commission Brigham & Women's Faulkner Hospital Brigham & Women's Hospital Community Labor United East Boston Neighborhood Community Health Center Health Care for All Horizon's for Homeless Children Madison Park Development Corporation Mass General Brigham Mattapan Food & Fitness Coalition Project Right, Inc.

## Appendix C: Acronyms

AMI	Area Median Income
AOP	Acquisition Opportunity Program
APS	Association for Psychological Science
BCCC	Boston CHNA-CHIP Collaborative
BHA	Boston Housing Authority
BPS	Boston Public Schools
CBO's	Community-Based Organizations
CDC's	Community Development Corporations
CHEC	Community Health Education Center
CHIP	Community Health Improvement Plan
CHNA	Community Health Needs Assessment
CHW's	Community Health Workers
DHCD	Department of Housing and Community Development
DND	Department of Neighborhood Development
DPH	MA Department of Public Health
FQHC	Federally Qualified Health Center
FMLA	Family Medical Leave Act
HCV	Housing Choice Voucher
LEHD	Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer
MA DOT	MA Department of Transportation
MBTA	MA Bay Transportation Authority
MCP	Massachusetts Contingency Plan
NACCHO	National Association of City and County Health Officials
NTT's	Neighborhood Trauma Teams
OWD	Mayor's Office of Workforce Development
PBV	Project Based Voucher
PSH	Permanent Supportive Housing
UPK	Universal Pre-kindergarten