



**ALLIANCE FOR A HEALTHIER
SOUTH CAROLINA**

CONVENE. CONNECT. CATALYZE.

2020: ILLUMINATING INEQUITY



**Working together to
improve the health of
ALL South Carolinians.**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 03** Message from Chair Juana Slade
- 04** On the Record: Standing Up for South Carolina
- 05** The Plan: Health Equity
- 06** Leading the Way: 2020 Live Healthy SC Award Winners
- 07** Education and Awareness: Connecting the Dots
- 07** Equity in Action: Bringing the HEAT
- 08** Advancing Coverage = Advancing Equity
- 08** Communicating for Change
- 09** 2021: The Mission Continues
- 10** Thank You to Our Members



CHAIR, JUANA SLADE

Those of us who have served on the Alliance since its inception have been waiting for that fundamental moment when the general public would begin to recognize the grave health disparities that exist in this country. Of course, we never thought it would take a global pandemic to make that happen.

In a year characterized by a deadly outbreak, civil unrest and one of the most contentious elections in our country's history, racial health disparities stayed in the spotlight. Whether it was the police killing of George Floyd – 8 minutes and 46 seconds we can never unsee – or the disparately devastating impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, 2020 has illuminated the inequities that have plagued our society for decades and decades.

And while the Alliance for a Healthier South Carolina alone is not the solution, it's a spark for a greater movement to use science and data to shine a light on the social inequities that separate the haves and the have nots. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided a snapshot in time where we actively and constantly tracked health outcomes based on a variety of data points, yet again indicating that minorities and socioeconomically depressed communities are on the wrong end of a growing

inequity gap. For many of us on the Alliance, we already knew this. Now everyone can know it.

2020 may go down as one of the darkest years in our history, but it will also be remembered as a year of Illumination. My only hope is that this illumination not only serves to spotlight the racial disparities and social injustices that continue to negatively impact people of color, but that it also helps us find a path to address the systemic changes needed to advance true equity.

Thanks to the collective action and support of the Alliance, we increased the awareness of racial health disparities in South Carolina with state leaders and the general public. I appreciate the opportunity to lead this amazing work to address health inequities in a time when they have never been more evident in our society. And I look forward to working with you again in 2021 as we work together to advance a healthier South Carolina for ALL citizens.

ON THE RECORD: STANDING UP FOR SOUTH CAROLINA

Throughout the year, the Alliance was a public voice for health equity in our state and a fierce advocate for the health of all South Carolinians.



As reports from public health officials continued to show that the COVID-19 pandemic was having a disparately negative impact on the African-American community, the Alliance was a leading advocate for health equity in South Carolina.

[See Juana Slade's Op-ed on Health Inequities](#)



While some South Carolinians ignored the science behind mask-wearing and social-distancing, the Alliance was a constant voice encouraging our state leaders to maintain public health policies that protect us all.

[See our letter to Governor McMaster](#)



Protests became a daily occurrence as so many Americans could no longer tolerate the systemic racism and social injustice that led to the senseless killing of George Floyd, and too many others. We were there with a message.

[See our statement on civil unrest](#)



The Alliance was focused on health equity long before it became a focal point in 2020. In March as COVID-19 was just beginning to hit South Carolina, we released an action plan detailing strategies to advance health and racial equity.

[See our plan to advance Health Equity](#)



THE PLAN: HEALTH EQUITY

“Improving access to quality education, food resources and employment opportunities are critical ingredients to a healthy life.”

There is now robust evidence that suggests the greatest health challenge we face in South Carolina is the major equity-based gap in health access and health outcomes. These equity gaps are driven by disadvantages and discriminations most often affecting minorities, children living in poverty, people with different gender identity and sexual orientation, people facing major mental or physical disabilities, and families living in under-served regions, primarily those living in rural communities.

There is growing recognition among health experts that the health and well-being of people and communities is primarily determined by the conditions in which we live. In a sense, your zip code may impact your health more than your genetic code. Improving access to quality education, food resources and employment opportunities are critical ingredients to a healthy life, and everyone should have an opportunity for that. While the extent of these social and environmental factors may vary, many South Carolinians of all ages experience daily obstacles to good health.

The Purpose: to understand and address the root causes of health inequities by increasing healthcare capacity and infrastructure to collectively respond to current and emerging equity-based issues.

Guiding Principles:

- Acknowledge that racism, biases and discriminatory effects of historical injustices have a harmful impact on health.
- Understand that every individual and organization in South Carolina is adversely impacted from a social and economic standpoint by the major existing health and racial equity gaps.
- Commit to equity-based analysis of all relevant health and healthcare data/metrics.
- Believe that meaningful engagement of marginalized communities and those most impacted by health inequities as an equal voice in the health improvement decision-making process is vital.
- Actively support diversity and inclusion in the workforce development pipeline.
- Promote using a “health in all policies” approach to promote health and social equity at the community and state levels.

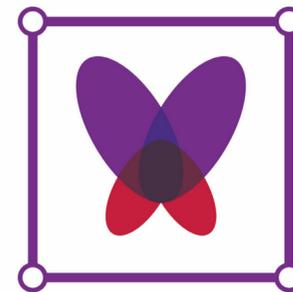
LEADING THE WAY: 2020 LIVE HEALTHY SC AWARD WINNERS

Every movement needs leaders, and we are proud to recognize those who are putting strategies into action to address social determinants and improve population health:



Jennifer Mandelbaum;
Dr. Rick Foster Leadership Award

Jennifer Mandelbaum, a program evaluator for the Department of Health and Environmental Control, was awarded the Dr. Rick Foster Leadership Award for her work in diabetes and heart disease management and childhood obesity in South Carolina. Jennifer is advancing grant opportunities to address the state's racial and socioeconomic disparities by expanding care into medically underserved areas. She is also working with the University of South Carolina's SmartState Center for Healthcare Quality to study how we can improve the state's rate of childhood obesity.



The Road to Better Health (RTBH);
Community Innovation Award

The Road to Better Health (RTBH) is a community collaborative based in Spartanburg that received the Community Innovation Award for its work organizing collective efforts to improve health outcomes and advance health equity. RTBH has partnered on critical efforts to lower the teen birth rate in Spartanburg County and led the push to bring the Racial Equity Institute to Spartanburg to provide training on addressing racial inequities.



The South Carolina Birth Outcomes;
State Impact Award

The South Carolina Birth Outcomes Initiative (SCBOI) received the State Impact Award for its leadership implementing programs to improve health outcomes for moms and babies. Over the last nine years, SCBOI has successfully advanced initiatives to stop non-medically necessary early elective deliveries and expand access to healthy infant breastfeeding in South Carolina's hospitals.

EDUCATION & AWARENESS: CONNECTING THE DOTS

So much happened in 2020, and the Alliance focused on viewing all events through an equity lens to help its members better understand the issues at hand:

2020 Alliance Virtual Education Events

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training attended by 65 members.

Health Equity and COVID-19 webinar reached more than 150 participants.

5th Annual Population Health Summit reached more than 200 participants

3rd Annual Live Healthy SC Annual Meeting reached more than 250 participants

2021 Open Enrollment education provided to 60 members and partners.

The Alliance will continue to offer educational opportunities to increase awareness and share best practices for improving community health and advancing health equity. Stay tuned next year for a new webinar series centered around Live Healthy SC priorities.



EQUITY IN ACTION: BRINGING THE HEAT

The Alliance is driven to achieve a healthier and more equitable state by convening and connecting both public and private sector leaders to work collectively on emerging issues. When it comes to advancing health equity, the Health Equity Action Team (HEAT) is the tip of the spear.

Identifies, communicates, and develops strategies to achieve health equity and reduce disparities.

Throughout 2020, the HEAT conducted monthly meetings, and key members hosted Number additional discussions to understand and address the root causes of health inequities.

2020 HEAT Activities:

Health Equity and Inclusion Training with Dr. Chad Starks reached 65 members and partners.

Launched the Moving Equity to Action Updates, which reached more than 750 members per month.

Developed the Health Equity Resource Guide to inventory resources and educational tools to help implement programs and initiatives to improve health equity.



ADVANCING COVERAGE = ADVANCING EQUITY

Our 2021 Policy and Advocacy Action Team will build on the Alliance Healthcare Coverage and Access Policy Statement based on the following recommendations:

Access to affordable, comprehensive healthcare coverage

Access to and coverage for care in a medical home setting

Coverage and access to programs/services that directly address the social and environmental drivers of poor health outcomes and higher healthcare costs

Targeted focus on the major equity-based coverage and access gaps

Coverage and access gaps in behavioral healthcare services

Evidence-based data informed coverage and access decision-making

The Policy and Advocacy Team agreed in November to focus on Broadband and Telehealth to improve access to care and will launch 2021 Legislative Updates to keep you informed on the issues impacting health equity in SC.



COMMUNICATING FOR CHANGE

For an organization whose primary role is to convene, connect and catalyze its members, 2020 created a unique challenge. Not only did we need to adjust our messaging to recognize the ongoing pandemic, but we needed to continue to engage our members to action without the advantage of in-person meetings.

Like so many organizations, the Alliance's communications strategies had to adapt quickly. By April, only a month after COVID-19 was first identified in South Carolina, the Alliance released a COVID-19 Resource Guide to help members track all the resources available to better understand this deadly virus.

As data began to indicate that COVID-19 was having a disparately negative impact on African-Americans in South Carolina, the Alliance issued a statewide op-ed and a letter to state leaders with recommendations. Throughout the pandemic, the Alliance has served as a voice calling attention to the inequities around us. Whether it was releasing a statewide plan to address health equity or writing a letter to the Governor encouraging the wearing of masks, the Alliance's communications this year were for the health of all South Carolinians.

Alliance Newsletter – 1000+ members and partners.

Moving Equity to Action series -- 1000+ members and partners.

Coming in 2021 – NEW WEBSITE

2021: THE MISSION CONTINUES



- Champion the Live Healthy SC State Health Improvement Plan and the Collaborative Strategies for Advancing Health & Racial Equity in South Carolina to advance equity and health. Since 2017 the Alliance has convened more than 300 meetings to support this work and held 25 live events to showcase our initiatives.
- Serve as the lead convener and catalyst for equity and health improvement work in South Carolina.
- Use the 50-plus evidence-based practices and data from in the State Health Improvement Plan to promote actions that protect health, prevent disease, and reduce disparities.
- Foster collaborative connections among statewide and community-based initiatives to advance health equity across South Carolina. More than 250 collaborative connections made in 2020.

THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS

AARP	Furman University	Clemson University Public Health Sciences	SC Primary Health Care Association
AccessHealth SC	Health Sciences South Carolina	Roper St. Francis	SC Telehealth Alliance
AnMed Health	Healthy People, Healthy Carolinas	SC AHEC	SC Thrive
Atrium Health	March of Dimes	SC Association of Health Underwriters	Select Health of SC
BlueCross BlueShield of SC Foundation	Mary Black Foundation	SC DHEC	South Carolina CHW Association
BlueCross BlueShield of SC	Michelin North America, Inc	SC DHHS	Spartanburg Regional Healthcare System
Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, Inc	Molina Healthcare of South Carolina	SC DMH	The Carolinas Center for Hospice and End of Life Care
Care Coordination Institute	MUSC Health	SC Free Clinic Association	The Carolinas Center for Medical Excellence
Center for Community Health Alignment	New Morning Foundation	SC Hospital Association	The Duke Endowment
Children's Trust of South Carolina	Palmetto Care Connections	SC Institute of Medicine and Public Health	Tidelands Health
Drs Bruce & Lee Foundation	PASOs Programs	SC Nurses Association	WellCare of South Carolina
Fact Forward	Pieces	SC Office of Rural Health	
	Prisma Health		