

2022



 United Methodist
HealthMinistryFund
YEAR IN REVIEW



LOOKING FORWARD

DEAR FRIENDS,

I hope your 2023 is off to a good start. At the Health Fund, as we turn the page on 2022 we celebrate our shared work to improve the health of all Kansans. **There's much to celebrate** – from the extension of postpartum Medicaid coverage for mothers from 60 days to 12 months; to the recognition of community health workers as vital members of health care teams; to securing tens of millions of dollars to improve mental health and health coverage outreach and enrollment in Kansas.

But we are most excited about the work ahead. After spending much of 2022 listening to partners and Kansans, our team – staff and board – developed a new strategic plan to guide our work for the next four years.

Although our mission — *Healthy Kansans through cooperative and strategic philanthropy guided by Christian principles* — remains unchanged, to our values we added **working to advance health and racial equity and reduce disparities**. To our vision statement, we added “**all**” in order to be crystal clear that our vision encompasses *all Kansans* – regardless of background. We hope you'll join us as we work to achieve our vision, that **All Kansans are physically, spiritually and mentally healthy.**

Our new strategic plan continues our commitment to supporting work in the areas of access to care, early childhood development, and congregational and community health. **To highlight our holistic approach to these three strategic areas, we updated two of our program area names to further define our work.**

Early Childhood Development has become **Thriving Children**, which better depicts our goals in the early childhood realm—supporting the healthy starts, safe and stable families, and early development and learning that are necessary for every Kansas child to thrive.

In 2018, *Healthy Congregations* emerged as a focus area. This program supports our work with churches in the Great Plains United Methodist Conference to fund local health ministry projects. To better reflect the program's recent evolution, and the increasing role of churches in engaging beyond church walls, *Healthy Congregations* is now the flagship program under the new **Engaged Congregations and Communities** focus area. This focus area recognizes the role that both team and individual engagement plays in congregational and community health. It's where our work to support *Access to Care* and *Thriving Children* intersects at the local level.

We remain committed to our **Access to Care** programming with a sharp focus on strengthening coverage and services, supporting innovative care delivery and workforce development and ensuring sustainable financing.

We are excited to continue partnering with you to improve the health and wholeness of all Kansans. **Together we will create a healthier future.**

Sincerely,

David Jordan,
President



United Methodist Health Ministry Fund Strategic Plan – 2023-2026

For the next four years, the Health Fund will align its strengths, resources, mission, and Christian values to focus on three key areas where we can make the greatest impact. Below is a snapshot of our strategic focus areas and priorities. You can read the full strategic plan at healthfund.org.



ACCESS TO CARE

GOAL: Innovative and sustainable health systems that ensure people have access to all facets of care

PRIORITIES:

- **Coverage and Services** - We will support health insurance navigators, access to vaccines, and efforts to expand access to KanCare and safety net services. We will advocate for policies that reduce disparities and barriers to care.
- **Innovative Delivery and Workforce Development** - We will help create an environment that fosters scalable new ideas for innovative delivery systems.
- **Sustainable Health Care Financing** - We will support research that can inform policy, advocacy for policy changes and grassroots efforts for sustainable financing, and efforts to sustainably broaden access to care.



THRIVING CHILDREN

GOAL: Ensure thriving children through healthy starts, safe and stable families, and early development and learning

PRIORITIES:

- **Healthy Starts** - We will support home visiting, advocate for state policies for maternal and child health services delivered by community-based providers, and continue to support efforts to improve breastfeeding outcomes.
- **Safe and Stable Families** - We will work to bring awareness to policymakers on the critical roles that food and economic security have in supporting stable families.
- **Early Development and Learning** - We will continue to support programs and policies that will ensure stronger bonds between children and caregivers.



ENGAGED CONGREGATIONS AND COMMUNITIES

GOAL: Engage United Methodist churches and Kansas communities in local projects focused on improving the health of their congregations and communities

PRIORITIES:

- **Healthy Congregations** - The Health Fund will continue to offer annual grants to United Methodist churches in Kansas and Nebraska with a passion for health ministry.
- **Community Leadership** - We will provide special grant opportunities that address community needs tied to a social determinants of health framework.
- **Civic Engagement** - To improve civic engagement, the Health Fund will support efforts for organizations and individuals to learn about and deploy relational organizing.



ACCESS TO CARE

Health Fund and KDHE Workgroup Advance CHW Certification

For three years, the Health Fund has invested to pilot adoption of a new health care team member, known as a Community Health Worker (CHW), in Kansas and build sustainability through convening and policy efforts. We saw great progress in 2022.

CHWs serve as a bridge between patients and providers. They help patients overcome obstacles to care, such as transportation or language barriers. CHWs provide a great return on investment—reducing reliance on emergency care and increasing primary care use.

A 2020 study at Penn Medicine found each dollar invested in its CHW program would have a \$2.47 return on investment to an average Medicaid payor within the fiscal year.

CHWs change lives in ways beyond what we associate with traditional health care.

“The patient has been successful with paying bills, staying healthy and being able to care for her children.”

“A patient referred to the clinic had an eviction notice,” said Stephanie Goetz, a care coordinator at Salina Family Healthcare Center. “She was ill and unable to work, which led to financial hardship. We were able to assist the patient with a KERA application, money for medications through Catholic charities, groceries through our clinic funding, and other community resources. Eventually we were able to assist the patient with CPR recertification so she could return to working as a certified nursing assistant (CNA). The patient has been successful with paying bills, staying healthy and being able to care for her children.”



Kevin Ochoa
Community Health Worker

Hear how CHWs impact health at healthfund.org/a/kansas-community-health-workers.

Until 2022, there was no baseline education and training for individuals like Stephanie to become CHWs in Kansas. Kansas Department of Health and Environment’s (KDHE) decision to move forward with a state certification process changes that, and is the result of recommendations made by a workgroup of health care professionals including providers, payors, community health advocates, and community health workers convened by KDHE and the Health Fund, in partnership with the Health Forward Foundation.

The next challenge to overcome will be creating sustainable funding for CHW positions. The workgroup continues to collaborate on this issue.

What’s clear is that CHWs can improve health and bring down costs. Recognizing the profession through a certification process is an important step forward. Establishing sustainable financing will ensure CHWs are permanent members of health care teams in Kansas, dedicated to delivering better patient care and reducing costs for providers and payors.

Resources

- Kansas CHW certification: kschw.org/certification
- Research and stories: healthfund.org/a/kansas-community-health-workers
- Kansas CHW Coalition: kschw.org

Research Shows Telehealth Increased Access to Care

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, just 11% of US consumers were using telehealth. In 2020, the federal government, states, and private payors lifted previous restrictions on telehealth use to enable safe access to health care during the pandemic. Telehealth use increased dramatically.

The Health Fund commissioned research on telehealth in Kansas to understand how it was being used and where it could be improved. The research included a statewide survey of health care providers and administrators, as well as in-depth follow-up interviews. In partnership with REACH Healthcare Foundation, the consumer perspective was explored through a statewide voter poll and consumer focus groups.

It was clear from provider and patient responses that telehealth use will continue into the future.

“The convenience of it is great,” shared one English-speaking focus group participant. “I have three kids and a job, so trying to schedule with everybody’s schedule, and get everyone in to the doctor, or get this person here, and then I can go to the doctor, it’s just easier if I can sometimes just do it at home real quick.”

While providers were attuned to access and continuity of care, patients were attuned to benefits like convenience, savings of time and money, and the importance of choice between telehealth and in-person services.

Both providers and patients said they would welcome more standardization, certainty in public policy, expansion of broadband internet (especially in rural communities), flexibility in choosing telehealth or in-person services, and respect for clinical judgment.

“It would be pretty tragic if we set up this entire infrastructure and then people change the way



that they reimburse or said that this was no longer allowed,” said one urban Community Health Center administrator during provider interviews.

“It would be pretty tragic if we set up this entire infrastructure and then people change the way that they reimburse.”

All four phases of research and the cross-study results are available at <https://healthfund.org/a/kansas-telehealth>. The Health Fund continues to share the results of these lessons with state and federal policymakers as they debate the future of telehealth.

Ways to Improve the Telehealth Patient Experience

- Make telehealth a more integrated part of health care.
- Improve care coordination between providers seeing patients via telehealth and those doing follow-up services like lab tests or home health visits.
- Improve access to broadband internet for patients and providers alike.
- Ensure greater standardization and certainty in terms of costs and payor policies.



THRIVING CHILDREN

Kansas ABC Pilot Phase 2 Expands Beyond Infants to Reach Toddlers



RCDC group playing Brain Architecture game

The relationships infants and toddlers form with caregivers are foundational, which is why the Health Fund invests in evidence-based early childhood interventions. Strong attachment and nurturance better prepares children for school and to hit developmental milestones on time.

The Attachment and Biobehavioral Catch-up (ABC) home visiting program mitigates the effects of toxic stress in infants and toddlers. The Health

Fund co-funded a pilot program for Kansas infants to determine ABC's effectiveness. The results showed healthier children, more confident caregivers, and stronger families overall.

The second phase pilot is underway, expanding to also focus on toddlers. Our evaluation will measure executive functioning and child well-being, which both relate to school readiness.

"Investing early is an opportunity to help have a profound impact on the health and economic well-being of children and families," said David Jordan, Health Fund president. "For every \$1 invested you see a \$7 return. Ultimately, we all share the goal of having healthier kids and families. ABC helps us get there for some of the most vulnerable Kansans. The results are promising, and the future is bright."

Russell Child Development Center Receives Project of the Year Award

Russell Child Development Center (RCDC) of Garden City was awarded the 2021 Janet Sevier Gilbreath Special Project Recognition Award. Named in honor of the Health Fund's first chairperson, the award is given to one funded project that best exemplifies the Fund's vision.

RCDC was honored for its participation in the Kansas ABC Initiative, supporting implementation of an evidence-based home visiting model to build attachment and mitigate the effects of toxic stress in young children. RCDC is serving 19 counties in southwest Kansas. When the COVID-19 outbreak reached our communities, RCDC was the first ABC site in the country to hold sessions online.

"Our staff believes in the importance of building strong relationships with families," said Katrina Lowry, RCDC's early childhood programs director. "When you have a strong relationship



RCDC group receiving Janet Sevier Gilbreath Award

with someone, you want what is best for them, you advocate for them, and you do everything in your power to help them thrive. So much of life is outside of our control, and this was harshly illustrated during the pandemic.

"RCDC embraced what we could control...**The young children and families in southwest Kansas deserve the best we have to offer;** although not ideal, pivoting to digital services quickly and efficiently during COVID-19 ensured good things continued to happen."

Health Fund Invests to Build a Culture of Breastfeeding in Kansas

Breastfeeding has physical, emotional, and relational benefits for both mom and baby. The Health Fund has supported breastfeeding for more than 15 years to ensure a healthy start to life.

Our High 5 for Mom & Baby program provides training, resources, and a framework to help Kansas hospitals and birth facilities implement five or more evidence-based practices proven to support successful breastfeeding, improving maternal and infant health outcomes while also reducing racial and ethnic health disparities. High 5 for Mom & Baby Premier facilities implement all ten practices. **In 2022, 22 facilities achieved premier recognition, outpacing the number that received standard recognition and demonstrating a growing commitment to breastfeeding best practices in Kansas.**



Latched Legacy highlights Black breastfeeding

To address racial disparities in breastfeeding, we started funding International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) training for women of color. We also provide breastfeeding mini grants for local groups, such as the Wichita Black Breastfeeding Coalition, and scholarships for lactation support specialists.

“The Wichita Black Breastfeeding Coalition (WBBC) created a project called ‘Latched Legacy.’ This project highlights and normalizes that Black women do indeed breastfeed,” said Joyea Marshall-Crowley of WBBC. “The campaign video shows Black mothers confidently sharing the statement ‘I Breastfed; This is My Legacy’...The project’s goal is not only to increase breastfeeding initiation rates in the Wichita Metro Area but also to increase media representation for Black mothers regarding breastfeeding.”

A breastfeeding resource for Kansas

- We offer 15 online breastfeeding continuing education courses. There were 1,354 completed courses for 2022, a jump from 806 in 2021.
- We support hospitals in attaining Baby-Friendly designation. Citizens Medical Center in Colby was designated in 2022.

Health Fund and Partner Advocacy Extends Coverage for Healthy Starts

More than 30% of Kansas births are covered by KanCare, the state’s Medicaid program. When the federal government gave states an option to extend coverage for new mothers, the Health Fund led efforts to help Kansas pursue the opportunity. In 2022, our state announced it was extending postpartum KanCare coverage from 60 days to 12 months. This is a major win for women’s health.

Extending postpartum coverage will allow mothers to access early interventions and coordinated care, preventing postpartum complications that arise more than 60 days after delivery. Now more mothers will have health insurance in the first full

year postpartum when the mother is still at risk for complications, including pregnancy-related death.

“This will positively impact 9,000 Kansas mothers each year.”

“We commend Governor Kelly and the Kansas Legislature for extending postpartum KanCare coverage,” said David Jordan, president and CEO of the Health Fund. “This will positively impact 9,000 Kansas mothers each year—reducing maternal mortality, improving health outcomes, and reducing disparities.”



ENGAGED CONGREGATIONS AND COMMUNITIES



Good Neighbor Experiment facilitators train in Kansas City, Kansas

Health Fund and Neighboring Movement Partner to Expand Program

Through the Lilly Endowment's Thriving Congregations Initiative grant, the Health Fund has partnered with The Neighboring Movement to bring the Good Neighbor Experiment (GNE) to more churches within the Great Plains UMC Conference and throughout the country.

"I am very grateful for this work because it gives churches an opportunity to be 'church' in new ways," said Maddie Johnson, 2022 program director of the Good Neighbor Experiment. "I am seeing more and more churches, especially smaller churches at the margins, become energized by the work of neighboring — because it is giving people of faith the chance to see that they are gifted, and God is still working through them."

"It gives churches an opportunity to be 'church' in new ways."

Since its inception, 21 churches have completed the GNE program, and now alumni can further their experience by joining the Faith-Based Animator Network (FAN).

FAN offers a continued learning community for GNE alumni. The program has a more intensive onboarding month that leads to the development of a community action plan, followed by a bi-monthly check-in on the plan's implementation.

Building Financial Health: Helping Others Take Control

In 2022, the Health Fund partnered with Hutchinson-based Interfaith Housing and Community Services to offer trainings in Take Control Collaborative Coaching. The training equips staff or volunteers to move beyond short-term crisis assistance to building relationships and walking alongside individuals toward their goals for economic sufficiency with dignity.

"I have worked with food banks and commodity distribution for several years," said Sheryl, a 2022 course participant. "We are always in crisis mode. In this course, I learned how to talk to people to move into a more personal relationship."

"How can we be there if they decide to make a change in their lives? We need to be able to respond with visioning activities, open-ended questions, and support of what is available. I believe it is possible to impact lives, using different forms of communication, setting different expectations for myself, seeing that there are resources available. The client determines the course of action and the outcomes."

"The client determines the course of action."

Healthy Congregations Spotlight: Newton First UMC

Beginning in 2021, the Newton First United Methodist Church Healthy Congregations team began work on a new focus area: racial equity.

The team hoped that congregants would gain a new understanding of racial equity by examining issues in a safe setting, that they would learn of resources in the community to further their engagement, and that they would better understand United Methodist social policy and resources around racial justice and racial equity.

The team tackled this important topic through a discussion group that met most weeks. They watched video series such as *Holding Up Your Corner* and read many books, including Robert P. Jones's *White Too Long*.

The group also engaged beyond the church walls. They actively attended monthly meetings of the Newton Community for Racial Justice (NCRJ). Some participated in a day of service in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The team used most of its annual grant to provide scholarships for Newton High School students to attend Antiracism Analysis Training facilitated by Roots of Justice. They added their signatures to a letter to

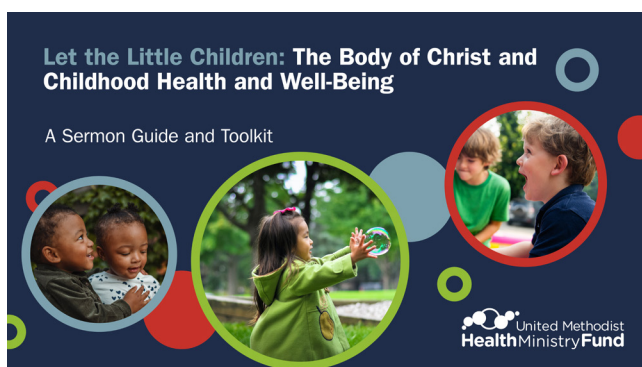
the local school board, requesting a more diverse voluntary reading list for middle school and high school that came under fire from some parents and members of the public. They also attended the school board meeting where the letter was read by NCRJ members and students spoke in support of the reading list.

“We continue to learn that this is hard work. Facing our own biases with the help of other white bodies within our racial justice study group and holding each other accountable is an important first step. We’ve learned we can make changes in our thinking and behaviors. We’ve also learned there are wonderful community partners we can engage with and learn from.”

Newton FUMC's Anti-Racist Actions

- Educate yourself first
- Become aware of systemic racism
- Support local anti-racist efforts
- Engage elected officials about systemic racism
- Support BIPOC-owned businesses
- Look for the gifts and talents in each person

Health Fund Sermon Guides Connect Faith and Health



Our Healthy Congregations churches requested more resources to discuss important health issues in their churches. Last year we completed

a series of sermon guides that bring together scripture, theology, and health.

The sermon series covers a variety of health topics including health and wellness; mental health; children's health and well-being; maternal health; trauma and resilience; and civic engagement. Each all-inclusive guide features a call to worship, hymn selections, children's sermon, and benediction, along with an exegesis and sermon notes. The guides also include bulletin inserts and links to supplemental materials. The full series, along with a video walkthrough of each guide, is available at healthfund.org/a/sermon-guides.



HEALTH FUND NEWS



Pictured: 2023 Board of Directors, staff, and committee member Kevin Walker

Health Fund Thanks Retiring Director



Dr. Bob Cox

In May, we honored retiring director Dr. Robert Cox, Hays, for his nine years of dedicated service guiding the Fund’s work to ensure all Kansans are healthy.

In his career as a pediatrician serving in rural Kansas, Dr. Cox was a pioneering leader in telemedicine and the first primary care physician in Kansas to leverage telehealth in his practice. After retiring from pediatric practice, he continued working to support telemedicine, rural health care access, and quality improvement.

“During the COVID-19 pandemic, telemedicine and telehealth rapidly moved to the forefront of health care, were frequently featured in the national news, and have suddenly been used by patients across the lifespan in every U.S. state,” said Dr. Ryan Spaulding, acting director of the KU Center for Telemedicine & Telehealth. “While many states and practices had to move rapidly to implement telehealth for COVID, Kansas was well ahead of the others with many years of experience in telemedicine. That substantial head start was due largely to one man, Dr. Robert Cox.”

Bob’s insights, experience, passionate dedication to rural and child health, and ability to think outside the box made him a valued board member and left a legacy that will endure in our work ahead.

Health Fund Welcomes New Director



Kate Davis

In 2022, we welcomed a new director—Kate Davis of Wichita—to the Health Fund board.

“I am excited to join the board because I am passionate about Kansans and appreciate

the broad view that the Fund takes of health,” said Kate. “I hope to help the Fund continue in its legacy of impactful investments that improve the lives of Kansans.”

2023 Board of Directors

- Thomas Bell - Topeka, KS
- Kate Davis - Wichita, KS
- Susan Evans - Colby, KS
- Bryce Flaming - Benton, KS
- Jee Sook Gil - Paola, KS
- Lori Hartnett - Hutchinson, KS
- Jeff Horlacher - Colby, KS
- Lynette Juresic - Andover, KS
- Kendal Kay - Ashland, KS
- Rev. Ronda Kingwood - Wichita, KS
- Daniel Lord - Wichita, KS
- Erick Nordling - Hugoton, KS
- Matthew Penner - Hutchinson, KS
- Michael Shockley - Wichita, KS
- Monte Wentz - Concordia, KS
- Yolanda White-Oliver - Wichita, KS
- Bishop David Wilson - Topeka, KS

Health Fund Investments Bring in Grants, Strengthen Behavioral Health

Federal funds offer significant resources to improve health, but Kansas lags in drawing down those funds. For rural communities especially, accessing federal funds can often be challenging.

To facilitate greater access to behavioral health services, the Health Fund provided grant funding and technical assistance to help Kansas community mental health centers (CMHCs) apply for federal grant dollars enabling transformation to the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) model. CCBHCs use an integrated care approach designed so all individuals can access coordinated comprehensive behavioral health care, such as outpatient mental health and substance use services.

Last fall, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) awarded CCBHC planning, development, and implementation grants to 10 Kansas CMHCs, including four that received Health Fund assistance: Elizabeth Layton Center in Ottawa, Iroquois Center for Human Development in Greensburg, Southwest Guidance Center in Liberal, and Spring River Mental Health & Wellness, Inc. in Riverton.

Over the four-year grants, we expect more than \$15 million to return to Kansas to support these four CMHCs transitioning to the CCBHC model.



“It is a huge win not only for the centers but most importantly for the communities they serve.”

“This is a big lift for CMHCs to increase capacity to meet the new requirements,” said Kyle Kessler, ED of the Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas. “The grant funding awarded by SAMHSA provides the support they need to recruit and retain staff, complete necessary trainings, and implement new programs. We are thankful to the Health Fund for assisting our members to successfully apply for the grant funding; it is a huge win not only for the centers but most importantly for the communities they serve who will now have easier access to a broader array of behavioral health services.”

Health Fund Supports Mental Health First Aid Training for Kansans



When surveyed, Healthy Congregations churches shared that mental wellness was a top pain point in their communities. To better equip churches and communities to help those in crisis, we offered Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training sessions throughout 2022, and soon opened trainings to all interested Kansans.

MHFA participants learn the risk factors and warning signs for mental health and substance use concerns, strategies to help someone in crisis and non-crisis situations, and where to turn for help. In 2022, 234 individuals completed the training.

“What I learned in taking Mental Health First Aid Training is that both Medical and Mental Health First Aid Training are important to my spiritual health and the spiritual health of others,” said Rev. Shelly Petz.



PO Box 1384
Hutchinson, KS 67504-1384

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

BY THE NUMBERS

\$1.70

**MILLION GRANT DOLLARS
AWARDED IN 2022**

118

GRANTS AWARDED IN 2022
• 14 ACCESS TO CARE
• 18 THRIVING CHILDREN
• 82 ENGAGED CONGREGATIONS
• 4 OTHER

\$16.5

**MILLION IN FEDERAL
GRANT AWARDS BROUGHT
TO KANSAS WITH HEALTH
FUND ASSISTANCE AND
FUNDING SUPPORT**

\$76.9

**MILLION GRANT DOLLARS
INVESTED SINCE 1986**