

## Questions Asked During November 16, 2021, Virtual Community Town Hall

**1. How will health education be implemented in the community?**

The South Side Healthy Community Organization (HCO) will focus first on educational materials that address some of the most prevalent health priorities right now, including high blood pressure, mental illness, pregnant patients, and individuals seeking preventive care. The HCO will provide access to educational tools at two points: 1) online, via the technology platform being designed, and 2) through Community Health Workers.

**2. Can you share more on the IHFS Equity Tool?**

Please go to the Illinois Healthcare and Family Services web page here [https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/RacialJusticeImpactAssessment\\_v5.pdf](https://www.raceforward.org/sites/default/files/RacialJusticeImpactAssessment_v5.pdf) to learn more about the national equity tool being used with Healthcare Transformation Collaboratives in our state.

**3. The community engagement process lifted up a holistic approach to community wellness: how are other social determinants of health being addressed through this project?**

The HCO is identifying community-based organizations that provide critical social resources for South Side residents. We anticipate screening patients to identify specific needs and creating referral channels to resources throughout the community. Some high-priority social determinants of health are: transportation, employment, lack of technology, education, healthy foods/grocery store access, care navigation support, depression, and substance use/alcohol. Patients may require additional support in the areas of housing, and social services.

**4. Are certified nurse midwives and nurse practitioners part of the planned staffing to enhance primary care access? Will the HCO coordinate care with public health nurses?**

Certified nurse midwives and nurse practitioners are valued members of a care team and will certainly be leveraged to enhance access. As we look to connect as many dots as possible to enhance care and improve health, coordination with public health nurses should be considered.

**5. Are there plans to open any other locations, especially in areas where this is little or no access, which is one of the issues highlighted?**

Currently, the HCO is starting by enhancing access to care at clinics and hospitals that are currently located on the South Side and run by one of our thirteen collaborative partners.

**6. How will this organization work with CPS and other neighborhood elementary and high schools in black communities to prepare African American students for med**

**school and clinical research? What type of academic and financial supports might be offered, especially for Black students?**

More educational opportunities in the community driving toward medical careers will be critical for the future of care in communities of color. The HCO will consider ways to engage with Chicago Public Schools in this space down the road once critical foundational elements of the program are established.

**7. How can interested resident/ leaders connect to be considered for the Community Advisory Council?**

Early in the new year, 2022, the HCO will establish a process for launching the Community Advisory Council and seeking applications from interested community members. Individuals can reach out now through the Community Feedback portal on our website – [www.southsidehealthycommunity.com](http://www.southsidehealthycommunity.com) -- so that we start compiling a list for when we are ready to activate the process.

**8. Will specialists include psychiatrists, psychologists and other mental health specialists?**

Yes. We intend to hire mental health professionals at various levels including Psychiatry, Psychology, and Licensed Clinical Social Workers.

**9. To address high blood pressure, diabetes and kidney disease, will there be any component to include educating the community on healthy, affordable food buying, eating and cooking that supports a holistic way to manage obesity?**

The HCO will focus on educational materials that are relevant for specific groups including individuals with high blood pressure, those living with mental illness, pregnant patients, and individuals seeking preventive care. The HCO will provide access to educational tools at two points: 1) online, via the technology platform being designed, and 2) through Community Health Workers.

**10. Will the HCO board push to have high speed broadband implemented on the South Side so more residents can access technology?**

The HCO will utilize technology for connectivity and collaboration across our various health systems, and for patients to have enhanced access to their Care Team members. While advocating for high-speed broadband may be outside of our scope, our work will always recognize that not everyone has easy access to technology.

**11. How will this project connect with existing Healthy Start programs and projects that are addressing infant mortality on the South Side?**

The goals of the HCO are to supplement the various efforts already existing on the South Side, and to connect patients to existing successful programs to the greatest extent possible. We are currently reviewing A) existing technology that catalogues various resources, and, B) surveying our partners to understand what programs exist that could be leveraged for partnership and referrals.

**12. Do you intend to put together workgroups that will focus on strategy and implementation on various goals?**

We currently have nine workstreams right now across our 13 federally qualified health centers, hospital and health systems working on strategy, infrastructure and ultimately, implementation. One role of the Community Advisory Council will be to work with the Board of Directors on strategic planning and holding us accountable for achieving our implementation goals.

**13. Three community reps on the board are outstanding but outnumbered by providers – how will the HCO maintain focus on social determinants of health instead of just medical and hospitals?**

The HCO is focused on improving health outcomes through better access to clinical care and social resources, communication amongst partners (including community-based organizations), and quality. We are working hard to integrate social determinants of health into the Healthy Community Organization Model. We are excited to have three Board Members directly from the community to provide feedback and direction in this area, and the Community Advisory Council to come will provide even greater community input and guidance.

**14. How are we using nurses in the community and in the project?**

Nurses will be an integral part in the Care Model design. We anticipate hiring nurses to support Primary Care Providers as well as care navigation, education and communication with patients.

**15. Will practical applications of digital technology be available to those without internet connectivity?**

There are two primary focus areas of the digital technology platform we are developing: 1) communication among and between partners and 2) enhanced communication with patients. Communication among partners will enable more connected and seamless care for patients – without requiring that the patient interact with the technology. To the extent we deploy patient-facing technology, the HCO is mindful of inequities in access to technology and internet and will consider this and alternatives throughout development.

**16. Will the SSHCO address access to dental services?**

Currently, dental services are not one of the focus areas of the HCO Model. We will continuously assess if there are needs, outside of the scope of our initial proposal, that we may be able to add or help address over time.

**17. Will efforts be made to train and recruit black healthcare providers?**

Yes. The HCO is accountable for hiring diverse providers that represent the community.

**18. How are you planning to interface with CDPH's Healthy Chicago Equity Zones?**

The SSHCO's work will be accelerating going into 2022, however leaders on our

organizations' community health teams have already begun looking for areas of alignment between our collaboration and the work of CDPH's Equity Zones.

**19. What are the details around the health navigator initiative? What will be their duties and responsibilities?**

There are several roles under consideration that will help with navigation and coordination of care for patients. Duties and responsibilities will include supporting patients in making appointments, addressing barriers to maintaining health like lack of transportation, and working with doctors and nurses on additional follow-ups or resource needs for patients.

**20. Can we post the requirements for the CEO?**

We plan to post them on our website as soon as the Board of Directors officially approves the requirements. We anticipate being able to share this early in the new year.