



# Michigan Thumb Public Health Alliance

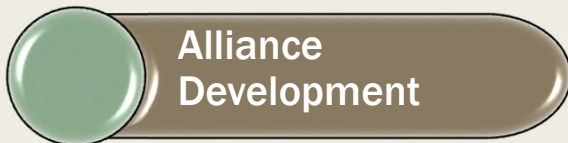
## 2017-2018 Annual Report

**Vision:** Improved health and wellness of residents of the Thumb of Michigan.

**Mission:** To develop, implement, and sustain models of shared public health services that increase capacity, contain costs, maximize assets, and more effectively impact health outcomes

### Six Focus Areas

1. Aligned Policies and Procedures
2. Grant Seeking and Writing
3. Information Technology
4. Development of Workforce
5. Shared and Leveraged Purchasing
6. Community Outreach



### Alliance Development

- ❖ **Community Health Assessment and Improvement – CHAI:** Future projects and ongoing efforts of the Alliance are based on community needs. The Alliance recognizes that each of the local counties has their unique needs but also that there are a number of areas where needs overlap. In order to increase impact on health and to leverage resources, the network has dedicated time and resources to conducting a comprehensive community needs assessment and health improvement plans. The project used Rural Healthy People (RHP) 2020 Volume I and Volume II reports as a framework. Data related to RHP indicators was collected from various data resources. The alliance identified a prioritized list of needs. Local conversations and surveys were used to learn more about the priorities and potential actions. Each county also has an assessment that analyzes data and trends which point to local strengths and needs.
- ❖ **Academic Health Department:** Alliance members reviewed public health workforce models across the state, including Kent County. As the Alliance moves forward, there is an interest in surveying colleges about placement and rotation needs. Kent County indicated that the volume of students wanting internships/preceptorships is more than adequate to meet local capacity. Steps forward include establishing a committee to review prospects and addressing liability issues, particularly for unpaid placements. Research regarding other models will continue and alliance members will explore increasing connections with other career collaborations such as the Local College Access Networks, Talent Consortiums, STEM projects, and county technical education centers.
- ❖ **Medical Director:** Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, and Tuscola Health Departments have a long history of sharing a medical director. In 2017, tele-commuting equipment was installed to increase access to the medical director for staff in all counties and decrease travel time for the medical director. In preparation of retirement of the medical director, a search for a new medical director was conducted. In July 2018, The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services approved a new medical director, Dr. Mustafa Mark Hamed, to replace Dr. Russell L. Bush, who is retiring from his post as medical director. Dr. Bush is remaining in the position as medical examiner in Huron and other counties.
- ❖ **Working and Sharing Across Counties:** Alliance members continually look for ways to leverage expertise and find efficiencies by working together. This has included peer reviews, continuation of tele-health applications for lactation consulting and registered dietician services, sharing of resources and outreach materials, alignment of policies, and networking between staff in similar roles.



## Projects to Address Community Needs

### Chronic Disease

- Two priorities were identified during the community health needs assessment. One of those priorities was Cardiovascular Disease.
- Heart Disease and Stroke accounted for 1/3 of all deaths in the Thumb in 2016 and 24% of deaths for those under age 65.
- Using input from community conversations and surveys, Alliance members will be developing a plan of action to address cardiovascular disease. Addressing the causes of CVD will also impact the impact of other chronic condition such as diabetes.

### Immunizations

- All four health departments that are members of the Alliance continually work to promote and encourage immunizations across the lifespan. While each county has varying immunization rates, they are working to learn best practices and identify ways to improve rates.
- Alliance members share outreach materials and ideas. As busy immunization seasons ensue, issues regarding vaccine supply and reimbursement are discussed and problems solved by Alliance members.

### Environmental Health

- The Alliance has recognized a need for increased technology and support for Environmental Health programs. Multiple projects were launched to increase access to information in the field, decrease time responding to information requests, and improve customer satisfaction.
- Each health department has increased use of health space, improved record retention using electronic documents, and updated equipment to meet expanding processing needs. The Alliance has experienced cost savings, made progress toward standardized processes, and shared expertise.

### Community Conditions

- There are a wide number of community conditions that impact health: substance use, the physical environment, and social determinants of health.
- Many programs provided by health departments are designed to assist people who are low income. The Alliance provided joint training using the Bridges to Health and Healthcare program created by Aha Process! The project included a two hour interactive polycom introduction, a full day in person training. and four polycom follow up sessions. For sustainability, videos have been created for orienting new staff.

**Next Steps:** In 2018-2019, the Alliance will create county level Community Health Improvement Plans and a regional action plan. The Community Health Assessment Data and Community Health Improvement Plans will be shared with the public and utilized by local hospitals as part of their Community Health Needs Assessments. Efforts will be made to coordinate efforts and collaborate with many organizations to address regional priorities.