



## Community Focus & Goals

The Healthier Together Initiative's areas of community focus and goals are:

- housing: creating healthier homes
- trauma: overcoming trauma and growing resilience
- hunger: accessing healthy food
- poverty: creating financial stability and prosperity

# CASE STUDY

## Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

### Healthier Together Initiative

*Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) leverages their Healthier Together Initiative to increase procurement dollars with local, diverse vendors and support vendors in registering as MWBEs in Pennsylvania, while addressing the social determinants of health.*

### Overview & Background

In 2019, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) launched a \$25 million, five-year commitment called the Healthier Together Initiative to address the social determinants that influence patient health and well-being in the neighborhoods surrounding the hospital. Through collaborations with government agencies, nonprofits, and community groups, Healthier Together develops and supports evidence-based and community-informed programs that improve child health.

Embedded within this initiative is an intentional strategy to help local, diverse contractors and businesses get certified as Minority- and Women-owned Business Enterprises (MWBEs), train those businesses and contractors in the specific needs of CHOP's Healthier Together programing, and collaborate with CHOP's equally committed partners to hire the trained MWBEs to fulfill those needs.

In this way, the impact of the initiative is multiplied: CHOP is simultaneously facilitating economic mobility and inclusion while addressing the health needs of the neighborhood and families in West and Southwest Philadelphia.



***The system is intentional in efforts to “purchase goods and services from local companies that value a diverse workforce and provide meaningful work opportunities to underrepresented members of [the] community,” says Alonzo South, CHOP’s senior director for community engagement***

## Program Design

Healthier Together was the product of bringing together and expanding a variety of previously disparate programs and initiatives within CHOP. Recognizing that meeting the needs of the West and Southwest Philadelphia communities required a more coordinated and structured effort, Peter Grollman, senior vice president of external affairs, and representatives of existing CHOP programs created an internal coalition to determine how to align and expand existing and new work to address the social determinants of health (SDOH) and uplift the local community.

Using the results of the triennial Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), the coalition identified three zip codes to focus their work, based on the health disparities apparent in these zip codes located near the hospital’s Philadelphia campus. Within these communities, the health system picked four areas to focus on: housing, hunger, trauma, and poverty. These focus areas were determined based on the needs shown by the CHNA, the recognition of opportunity and ability to help address those needs, and the community-based resources and programs already in place at CHOP.

The housing focus area of the initiative is spearheaded by CHOP’s Community Asthma Prevention Program Plus (CAPP+), which works to eliminate sources of asthma triggers in homes with patients suffering from childhood asthma through education, environmental remediation, and home repairs. Alonzo South, senior director for community engagement, explained that CAPP+ was critical to developing buy-in for the larger Healthier Together Initiative, because it was an already successful program with proven results prior to the launch of the larger initiative.

Since the launch of Healthier Together, CHOP has worked to expand on the success of this program and build community prosperity in West and Southwest Philadelphia by working with and procuring from local MWBEs to meet the needs of CAPP+. The system is intentional in efforts to “purchase goods and services from local companies that value a diverse workforce and provide meaningful work opportunities to underrepresented members of [the] community,” says South.

To meet the construction and contractor needs of CAPP+ and further support local businesses and create economic opportunity and security, CHOP partners with a local community development

corporation (CDC) and community development financial institution (CDFI) to identify eligible local minority and women owned businesses from the West and Southwest Philadelphia area. Then, through the partnership, CHOP helps these businesses receive state certification as a Minority-owned Business Enterprise (MBE) and/or a Women-owned Business Enterprise (WBE)—if they do not already have it. By supporting businesses in filing for these certifications, and by subsidizing the certification costs, the system helps local contractors both grow and qualify for CHOP contracts. This process also enables these businesses to become more competitive for other city and local institutions' contracts, as many procurement contracts prioritize or give preference to businesses with these certifications.

After becoming certified as a MBE or WBE, CHOP and its partners then further support these businesses by helping them receive training and certifications for the specific construction skills needed to be qualified to perform asthma trigger removal from households. CHOP then recommends these businesses to their home repair partner that hires and subcontracts with these businesses to remove the asthma triggers from households of vulnerable children in West and Southwest Philadelphia.

The CAPP+ program covers the cost of the home repairs, which averages between \$13,000-\$15,000. These repairs often include the removal of “asthma triggers such as mold, pest residue, and dust by replacing and repairing roofs, fixing plumbing leaks, removing carpeting, and sealing holes and gaps to keep out pests and water.” In order to ensure these repairs are offered to low-income households, CHOP has expanded the CAPP+ program to make rental properties eligible for the program (with landlord agreement), as well as family-owned homes.

## Program Impact Quick Numbers

As of 2022, the Health Together Initiative has:

- helped 90+ local businesses receive MWBE certification
- engaged in 21 partnerships and collaborations (contracting and implementation phase)
- completed 100 asthma-related home repairs
- distributed 66,200 pounds of food
- directly impacted over 6,800 individuals
- awarded \$1.6 million in contracts to local, diverse businesses
- provided \$5 million of support for West and Southwest Philadelphia



## Funding

Since Healthier Together's inception, CHOP has raised \$2.24 million to support programming. Of this \$2.24 million, \$1.24 million was raised in grants—primarily from TD Bank, Rite Aid Foundation, and the Mattel Children's Foundation, while other donations included in-kind contributions and money raised by CHOP's development department. In addition to the \$2.24 million raised from outside funders, CHOP also contributed \$5 million in funding and in-kind support of its own to this initiative.

## Partners

Partnerships have been key for the success of this initiative to date. When building and implementing the Healthier Together Initiative, CHOP relied on community based organizations and corporate partners to connect with the community and build on systems that the partners have already put into place within the community.

Along with partnerships with TD Bank and Rite Aid Foundation for funding, CHOP has worked with a number of other organizations to help with the implementation of this initiative, including Rebuilding Together Philadelphia, Clarifi, Campaign for Working Families, Uplift, The Enterprise Center, and Food Connect, to name a few. CHOP also works with a number of groups who serve as community advisors guiding the initiative. These advisors include the School District of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Philadelphia Housing Authority, City Council District 3, Keystone First, the Philadelphia Mayor's Office, and Walnut Hill Community Association.

## Lessons Learned & Takeaways

### **Communicate regularly both internally and externally about progress**

Communicate about the efforts, progress, and impact produced by the initiative in multiple formats and with consistency and repetition; leadership, staff, community members, and partners are all inundated with information and constant communication is key to ensuring continued buy-in internally, community recognition and participation, and effective partnerships.

### **Maintain a focused, local geography and well-defined issue area(s)**

Narrow geographic focuses are important for making sure projects are impactful on a community and not spread thin, and well defined issue areas keep leadership on track and allow the initiative to move forward without being bogged down in a plethora of potential projects outside the scope of the initiative.

### **Use existing programs to spearhead new work to increase buy-in**

By initially focusing on building out existing programs, the initiative could start work within the community right away while also internally planning and gaining buy-in to expand to other projects and areas of focus.

## Sources

Alonzo South, interview by Nora Hennessey and Abby Massey, July 31, 2020.

George, John. “*Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia asthma prevention program achieves key milestone.*” Philadelphia Business Journal, February 7, 2022. <https://www.bizjournals.com/philadelphia/news/2022/02/07/chop-asthma-prevention-100th-home-philadelphia.html>.

*Health Care Improvement Foundation and Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Community Health Needs Assessment* (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Department of Public Health, 2019), <https://media.chop.edu/data/files/pdfs/chop-chna-june-2019.pdf>.

Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. “*Healthier Together Initiative.*” <https://www.chop.edu/centers-programs/healthier-together>.



***To get this kind of initiative off the ground you need to start somewhere—start with one thing you know can work,” suggests South.***

