

Health Equity Dashboard – Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH), Office of Health Equity (OHE) engaged with Milliman, Inc. (Milliman), and Milliman brought in assistance from Day Health Strategies, to develop a data driven health equity strategy, data analytics, and a Health Equity Dashboard (hereafter referred to as “dashboard”) to support KDPH in advancing the Commonwealth’s health equity strategy. This work was supported by the CDC National Initiative to Address COVID-19 Health Disparities Among Populations at High-Risk and Underserved, Including Racial and Ethnic Minority Populations and Rural Communities.

The dashboard includes several pages which visualize both a customized Health Opportunity Index (HOI) and a set of Key Performance Metrics (KPMs). The HOI explores the relationship between complex social drivers of health and health outcomes across the Commonwealth through a series of place-based opportunity scores (where higher scores indicate greater opportunities for good health). KPMs are defined metrics used to monitor progress in key priority areas identified by KDPH to advance its health equity strategy. As further described below, the dashboard aligns a variety of factors that influence health and health outcomes, with a focus on the social determinants of health, or the conditions in the environment that influence health and wellbeing, ultimately to empower public health practitioners and communities to understand the health environment and health outcomes of Kentuckians.

Key Performance Metrics Page – This section of the dashboard gives an overview of the three priority areas selected for inclusion in the Health Equity Dashboard, as well as offering the ability to navigate to each of the areas and explore the KPMs. KPMs are measures that will be tracked over time to enable Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) to monitor progress toward its strategic goals. KPMs were developed by convening public health subject-matter experts across KDPH to identify specific priorities to advance the Commonwealth’s health equity strategy. These experts explored a wide range of KPMs based on the experience of programs, data sources, and goals and selected three key priority focus areas, as listed below:

PRIORITY AREAS		
Access to Health Care and Social Services	Adverse Childhood Experiences	Substance Use Disorders

Prior to the development of the Health Equity Dashboard, KDPH and other leaders within CHFS undertook robust strategic planning activities that established health equity as a Cabinet priority (e.g., the CHFS strategic plan and the State Health Improvement Plan). To support OHE in operationalizing these strategic goals for health equity, a set of KPMs was developed to allow for systematic monitoring of progress toward measurable objectives in relation to the three strategic focus areas. To select these KPMs, in partnership with experts from across CHFS, OHE first prioritized areas most in need of improvement in the respective

focus areas. OHE then worked with these experts to shape the metrics by identifying baselines, setting targets for improvement, and identifying populations of focus. These KPMs are intended to track several of the most urgent priorities for each focus area, balancing both upstream factors and key outcomes. The dashboard is not an exhaustive list of health equity issues facing the Commonwealth, but rather highlights priorities identified by experts within CHFS who are working to make progress in each area.

For the Access to Healthcare & Social Services focus area, the dashboard includes three KPMs that measure and monitor equitable access to healthcare and social services:

- Increasing the proportion of people with health insurance in Kentucky
- Increasing the Community Health Worker (CHW) workforce in Kentucky¹
- Increasing access to nutritious foods in Kentucky

For the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) focus area, the dashboard includes three KPMs that emphasize decreasing exposure to ACEs and on increasing participation in programs that can help prevent ACEs:

- Decreasing the percent of children living in poverty in Kentucky
- Increasing Health Access Nurturing Development Services (HANDS) program enrollment among pregnant women in Kentucky
- Decreasing the rate of child maltreatment in Kentucky

For the Substance Use Disorder (SUDs) focus area, the dashboard includes five KPMs that track progress towards improving equitable access to recovery resources and reducing overdose deaths:

- Increasing access to recovery housing in Kentucky
- Increasing the proportion of patients diagnosed with opioid related disorders receiving medications for opioid use disorder in Kentucky
- Increasing the proportion of patients diagnosed with opioid related disorders receiving medications for opioid use disorder for at least 6 months in Kentucky
- Increasing access to providers with the ability to prescribe medications for opioid use disorder in Kentucky
- Decreasing drug overdose deaths in Kentucky

Wherever possible, each KPM has been assigned a defined SMARTIE Goal – a target that is **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable**. These goals are informed by data and focus on addressing disparities in each priority area. During KPM development, public data sources and data sources from individual agencies within CHFS were used to identify population groups or geographic areas with unfavorable access or outcomes. For most KPMs, a specific group (e.g., geographic area, racial or ethnic group) is identified to track the reduction of disparities. In some cases, available data did not allow this level of analysis. In those cases, goals were selected that are SMART, but not SMARTIE, and instead focus on collectively making improvements. Each KPM sets a target for Kentucky to work to achieve by the end of 2028. This target date was selected to align with the timelines of other strategic priorities for CHFS.

¹ Please see <https://www.chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dpgi/cdpc/Pages/chwp.aspx> to learn more about the community health worker profession in Kentucky.

A detailed description of each development step and additional information for each KPM can be accessed by downloading the KPM document from the Methodology page of the Dashboard.

Health Opportunity Index Page – This section of the dashboard examines the relationship between complex social drivers of health and health outcomes across the Commonwealth through a series of place-based opportunity scores (where higher scores indicate greater opportunities for good health). Similar to the HOIs completed for other states such as Ohio and Virginia, the Kentucky HOI includes a composite score as well as scores within five domains: Economic Stability, Education Access and Quality, Health Care Access, and Quality, Social and Community Context, and Neighborhood and Built Environment. The Kentucky HOI tab is organized by the following pages:

- **Main Page:** Explains the HOI and the profile scores, visualizes the HOI statewide at the county level, and includes statewide scores for each of the five domains for the selected year.
- **State/County Comparison:** For the chosen year, shows the statewide HOI score and profile scores for Kentucky compared to the selected county's HOI score and profile score.
- **Counties Over Time:** Shows the trended HOI score and profile scores by county in Kentucky, over time. This view can also include multiple counties, based on user selection. The plot also indicates how the selected county is performing relative to the other Kentucky counties by stratifying the counties into low, medium, and high cohorts (where a score of "high" indicates *greater opportunity* for residents to experience good health).
- **HOI by Census Tracts:** Shows the HOI score for each census tract. As with counties, a ranked analysis was done to assign each census tract into an HOI category "cohort" as either having low, medium, or high health opportunities (again, where "high" indicates that a community has greater opportunity for residents to experience good health).
- **HOI Indicators:** Data table that shows all HOI indicators by each profile.

By displaying this information geospatially at the county level, dashboard users can see the variability of social determinants of health within a specific region, as well as compare those determinants across regions. Understanding that social determinants of health are complex and multifaceted, this visualization can also be used to identify where a geographic area may exhibit different advantages and disadvantages in one facet compared to others. The tool enables Kentucky's public health officials and citizens to prioritize its investments by identifying communities that may benefit most from interventions or supports to address the social, economic, and structural barriers that influence health outcomes. The HOI will be monitored over time to track changes in HOI scores at the community and state level.

A detailed description of how the HOI scores were developed can be found in the Methodology Section by downloading the HOI methodology document.

Methodology Page – This section showcases the high-level methodology of both the KPMs and HOIs and includes a link to a full version of the methodology and a citation for the dashboard. Dashboard users should understand key caveats and limitations noted in these methodology documents while interpreting dashboard results.

FAQ Page – This section provides a list of potential questions that a user may have as they navigate through the dashboard.

The Health Equity Dashboard is an important tool to support public health monitoring and decision-making for Kentucky policymakers, public health practitioners, and the public. Data is a useful foundation for any equity strategy, and by displaying data in a user-friendly way, the dashboard can play a central role in providing visibility to existing health disparities, guiding useful interventions, supporting evidence for funding needs, and promoting engagement with community partners and stakeholders.

