



ROOTED IN EQUITY

Growing Stronger Together



**mhs health
wisconsin**

Health Equity Impact Report | 2023

HEALTH EQUITY

Commitment Statement

MHS Health Wisconsin is committed to transforming the health of our community, one person at a time. Our goal is to improve the access and availability of care regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, race, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socioeconomic background. We are committed to embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion in all the work we do. We will continue to work diligently to dismantle systemic and interpersonal racism, bias, discrimination, and the social and structural inequities that threaten the health of our community.

We commit to:

- Improving equitable access, availability, and accountability of services to drive health and well-being.
- Focusing our efforts where disparities exist and continuously working toward equitable outcomes for all.
- Including our diverse and talented workforce at all levels of decision-making.
- Combatting racism and discrimination in all forms.
- Facilitating the identification of unconscious bias and implementing change to address it.
- Prioritizing community-led strategic planning, partnerships, and presence.
- Celebrating authenticity and bringing one's true and whole self to every interaction.

You. Belong.

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At a Glance

Health Equity by the Numbers

65

members enrolled in programs to manage chronic diseases

6%

of members report speaking a language other than English

161K+

health plan members served

400+

members facing homelessness received housing assistance

12.1K

members assessed for DoH Needs

50%

reduction in PMPM costs for members in the diabetes coaching program

29

outreach events with Member Advocates

55%

or more members reported being a person of color

55.2K

live member calls made for Medicaid renewal eligibility

65%

reduction in PMPM costs for members who received housing support

12.6K

member DoH needs reported (avg. of 1.5 needs per member)

7.7K

meals delivered to members facing food insecurity

35+

DEI Council events and activities

Welcome

The MHS Health Wisconsin Health Equity team is celebrating our second year together, and we are proud to share our 2023 Health Equity Impact Report. In compiling this report, we reflected on the remarkable progress we made over the past year and are humbled by the collective action from our entire team in getting us where we are today. The unwavering commitment to transforming the lives of our members, and the community, has been truly inspiring to witness. We are grateful for the continued collaboration with our stakeholders, community partners, and providers — all of whom play a critical role in nourishing the roots of health equity work in Wisconsin and beyond.

Throughout 2023, our focus has been on continuing to strengthen our commitments and impact across our pillars of consumer, community, and culture through innovating programming, improving access to social and health services, and tackling pervasive inequities.

We have implemented leading-edge, personalized solutions such as digital smart inhalers for our members with respiratory conditions to ensure timely medication use and improved health management. Our medically tailored meal and grocery programs cater to the unique dietary needs of our members, directly support food security, impact chronic illnesses, and enhance overall health and well-being.

Improving access to care remains the north star of our efforts. Our teams work diligently to break down barriers to care, whether they be logistical, financial, or cultural, by offering resource navigation assistance, translation and interpretation services, and housing support. We expanded virtual services and created methods to reach underserved communities so every individual has access to essential health services. An example of this body of work is our commitment to prenatal and postpartum healthcare and healthy birth outcomes in Wisconsin.

Health literacy is another critical component of our health equity mission. We launched educational programs and community workgroups to empower our members to make informed health decisions. Additionally, we developed opportunities for our providers and partners to gain a deeper understanding of health disparities and their shared responsibility to address them. The knowledge accumulated from this focused work nurtures a cycle of learning and empowerment among all stakeholders.

Our commitment to health equity extends to all aspects of our work, ensuring that every person, regardless of race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status, receives accountable and equitable care. In 2023, we made significant advances in our health equity infrastructure and impact, as evidenced in our commitment to people, expansion of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, advancement of our health equity strategic plan, and cohesive alignment between MHS Health's and Centene's health equity framework and roadmap. Through this integration, we are paving the way for a future where health equity is not just an aspiration but a reality for all.

We hope you enjoy reading *Rooted in Equity*, as this report is a testament to our collective efforts to build healthier, more equitable communities. MHS Health Wisconsin continues to sow seeds of change that will flourish for generations to come.

In humble service to our mission and those who bring it to life ~ Katherine



Katherine Kasabuske
Vice President, Health Equity

About Us

MHS Health Wisconsin (MHS Health) is a managed care organization (MCO) and a wholly owned subsidiary of Centene Corporation, (CNC: No. 22 on the Fortune 500® List (2024)).

MHS Health was established in 1984 as a nonprofit Medicaid plan by former hospital bookkeeper, Elizabeth “Betty” Brinn. MHS Health was Centene’s first health plan, and its guiding principles are based on Brinn’s experiences growing up in Wisconsin’s foster care system.

For 40 years, MHS Health has successfully provided high quality, whole health solutions for its diverse membership by recognizing the significance of the many different cultures its members represent and by forming partnerships in communities that bridge social, ethnic, and economic gaps.

OUR MISSION

Transforming the health of the community, one person at a time.

OUR VALUES

Accountability ● Courage ● Curiosity ● Trust ● Service

OUR BELIEFS

We must treat the whole person, not just the physical body.

We will treat people with kindness, respect, and dignity to empower healthy decisions.

We know healthier individuals create more vibrant families and communities.

We believe local partnerships enable meaningful, accessible healthcare.

We have a responsibility to remove barriers and make it simple to get well, stay well, and be well.

OUR SERVICES

Medicaid



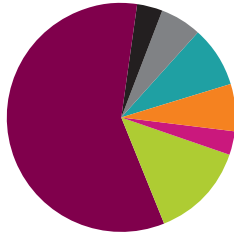
Medicare



OUR TEAM

The MHS Health Wisconsin office is located in the city of West Allis within the heart of Milwaukee County, but the health plan's 158 diverse and dedicated team members live throughout Wisconsin and the United States. MHS Health takes pride in having a team that is as vibrant as the communities it serves.

MHS Health Team Members¹



Race/Ethnicity

MHS Health¹

American Indian and Alaska Native	4%
Asian, Pacific Islander, and Native Hawaiian	8%
Black and African American	16%
Hispanic and Latino	10%
White and Caucasian	69%
Other	4%
Prefer not to say	7%

**This data was captured through an internal self-assessment tool¹ that allowed team members to select more than one race/ethnicity*

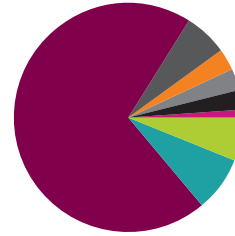


86%	Team members identify as female
13%	Team members identify as male
1%	Team members prefer to self-describe



90%	Team members identify as heterosexual
13%	Team members identify as LGBTQIA+
3%	Team members prefer not to say

State of Wisconsin Population²



Race/Ethnicity

Wisconsin²

American Indian and Alaska Native	1%
Asian, Pacific Islander, and Native Hawaiian	3%
Black and African American	6%
Hispanic and Latino	8%
White and Caucasian	70%
More than one race	6%
Other	3%
Unknown	3%



59%	Wisconsinites identify as female ³
41%	Wisconsinites identify as male ³

**Information on Wisconsin residents who identify as non-binary or gender diverse is not currently available³*



6%	Adult population in Wisconsin report they identify as LGBTQIA+ ³
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Foundations of Health Equity

Health Equity Framework

Health equity encompasses the principle of ensuring that every individual has the opportunity to attain their highest level of health. The significance of health equity and its transformative power is fundamental in shaping the future of healthcare. By integrating health equity in every department, program, and initiative at MHS Health, the health plan endeavors to create a more equitable healthcare system for every individual and community it serves.

MHS Health assembled its Health Equity team in 2022, and it is now a fully integrated business unit. The Health Equity team leverages data to identify and address the diverse needs of its members and collaborates with all health plan departments to develop programs that advance health equity. This strategy and approach enables MHS Health to cultivate partnerships with providers and community-based organizations, mitigate health disparities, and improve health outcomes.

Health Equity Pillars

Addressing systemic and structural inequities requires uncovering foundational issues and tackling them both individually and collaboratively. MHS Health identified critical areas of focus to effectively address the root issues of health inequities: impact on members; community relationships and partnerships; and internal systems, structure, and team members. These focus areas naturally led to the emergence of three core tenets: *consumer*, *community*, and *culture*, which serve as the pillars supporting the health plan's health equity strategic plan.

Consumer

We strive to create hope and improve the total health of our members.



Community

We believe health equity is a shared goal.

Culture

We commit to nourishing a culture of transformative change.

“

Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health, such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.

~ The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation⁴

Health Equity Roadmap

MHS Health recognizes advancing health equity is an ongoing journey, which is why the Health Equity team aligned to the Health Equity Roadmap pictured below. The roadmap’s intents are to identify and address systemic inequities by charting clearly defined goals, objectives, and actionable steps.

Each of the six steps is grounded in principles of social justice and population health, designed to ensure that everyone — regardless of race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, or preferred language — has the opportunity to achieve total health.



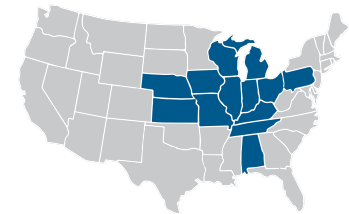
This structured approach positions MHS Health to better navigate the complex landscape of disparities, implement targeted interventions, and foster an inclusive environment that prioritizes equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for both individual members and communities.

Health Equity Center of Excellence

Advancing Health Equity and Drivers of Health with Centene's Central Region

The accomplishments of Centene's Central Region Health Equity and Drivers of Health Center of Excellence underscore a steadfast commitment to advancing health equity and addressing drivers of health. By aligning strategic objectives, leveraging data-driven insights, and fostering collaboration, the Central Region continues to pave the way towards a more equitable healthcare landscape.

Throughout 2023, Health Equity leadership at MHS Health organized and supported Centene's Central Region's Health Equity and Drivers of Health (DoH) Center of Excellence for the second consecutive year. The alignment within the team marked a significant stride towards addressing disparities in healthcare access and outcomes across the region.



Centene's Central Region is comprised of 13 state health plans that embrace a collaborative approach, focusing on the pillars of consumer, community, and culture to bring their health equity and DoH strategies to fruition.

The Center of Excellence team's strategic blueprint centered on five key areas:

1. **Program Development**
2. **Market Analysis**
3. **Alignment**
4. **Operations Enhancement**
5. **Data**

These strategic focal points paved the way for many accomplishments foundational to the continued evolution of the Center of Excellence and advancement of each health plan's objectives.

Notable accomplishments achieved within the five strategic domains include:

- **Program** Thorough program evaluation, gap analysis, and goal setting ensured a comprehensive understanding of existing initiatives and areas for improvement.
- **Regional Portfolio Analysis and Presentation** Comprehensive analysis and examination of regional programs identified gaps and opportunities, guiding future interventions.
- **1115 Medicaid Demonstration Waiver/Pilot Analysis and Presentation** In-depth analysis and presentation of the 1115 Medicaid Demonstration Waiver/Pilot Analysis highlighted avenues for innovation and policy advocacy.
- **Market** Robust market analysis provided insights into local demographics, needs, and preferences.
- **Drivers of Health (DoH) Market Analysis** The creation of a comprehensive 32-page DoH Market Analysis for each health plan informed tailored interventions and targeted outreach efforts.
- **Alignment** Alignment of quality, population health, medical and clinical, and health equity initiatives ensured a cohesive and integrated approach towards improving outcomes.
- **Disparity Reduction Initiatives** Collaborative projects aimed at reducing disparities within a select group of Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) measures showcased a commitment to equitable healthcare delivery, quality, and performance improvement.

- **Operations** The operational launch of support systems dedicated to health equity and DoH within the Central Region’s streamlined information-mining processes and enhanced program effectiveness.
- **Resource Development** A robust library of DoH and health equity resources was created to facilitate informed decision-making and capacity building.
- **Best Practice Sharing and Presentations** Continuous sharing of best practices promoted a culture of growth and collaboration.
- **Request for Proposals (RFP) Support** Providing support in responding to RFPs ensured alignment with health equity objectives and maximized opportunities for impact, growth, and retention.
- **Impact Reporting** The Central Region Impact Report for 2022-2023 highlighted achievements and impact from each health plan across the region.
- **Data** Establishment of regional data collection and management systems facilitated evidence-based decision-making and ongoing progress monitoring.
- **Disparity Analysis** Quarterly disparity analysis was provided for 11 health plans and enabled timely identification of emerging trends and targeted interventions.
- **HEDIS Measure Stratification Dashboard Access** Access and training was provided on the HEDIS measure stratification dashboard, which enhanced monitoring and optimization of health equity and quality performance metrics.



MHS Health Wisconsin extends its sincerest thanks to the health plans in Centene’s Central Region Health Equity and Drivers of Health Center of Excellence for the exceptional thought leadership, collaboration, and dedication to improving equity, access, and support to our members and communities.



Health Equity Accreditation

MHS Health believes health equity is possible through a unified commitment among stakeholders, including the healthcare industry, employers, regulators, and community-based organizations. This collaborative approach is beneficial and essential for driving meaningful change and ensuring that everyone, regardless of their background, has access to quality healthcare.

Given the complex nature of this task, the healthcare industry relies on the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), which provides an official and impartial evaluation of the health plan's services to ensure practices meet national standards of equitable care — known as Health Equity Accreditation.

This process assesses health plans on the following six standards: Organizational Readiness; Race/Ethnicity, Language, Gender Identity, and Sexual Orientation Data; Access and Availability of Language Services; Practitioner Network Cultural Responsiveness; Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services Programs; and Reducing Health Care Disparities.

The accreditation process serves as a catalyst for continuous improvement within MHS Health. It validates the efficacy of the health plan's existing health equity initiatives and illuminates potential areas for refinement and expansion of MHS Health's health equity strategic plan.



In 2023, MHS Health obtained NCQA Health Equity Accreditation for its two Medicaid contracts, MHS Health and Network Health.



MHS Health's health equity accreditation areas of focus include:

Optimizing collection and analysis of social and health needs prevailing among members.

Enhancing cultural humility and competency for MHS Health's leadership, workforce, and board.

Bridging linguistic care gaps through improved communication and language assistance.

Improving the cultural responsiveness of MHS Health's provider network.

Expanding partnerships with local organizations and increasing presence in the community.



We strive to create hope and improve the total health of our members.

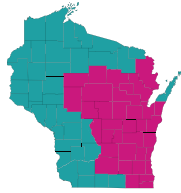
CONSUMER

MHS Health's programming is a huge success with our community. I've heard from our shoppers and volunteers that they found MHS Health to be friendly and informative. I appreciate that MHS Health engages with community members of all ages. Y'all have been incredibly supportive of Kinship and really go above and beyond for our community.

~ Natalie Ross, Senior Culinary Associate, Kinship Community Food Center

Who We Serve

MHS Health manages two Medicaid contracts: MHS Health Wisconsin and Network Health. To assess overall membership demographics, MHS Health analyzed the cumulative number of unique members served throughout the course of 2023 as opposed to the membership at a single point in time. MHS Health believes this approach is more reflective of the work being done, offering a more dynamic and complete understanding of the health plan's performance and its impact on members.

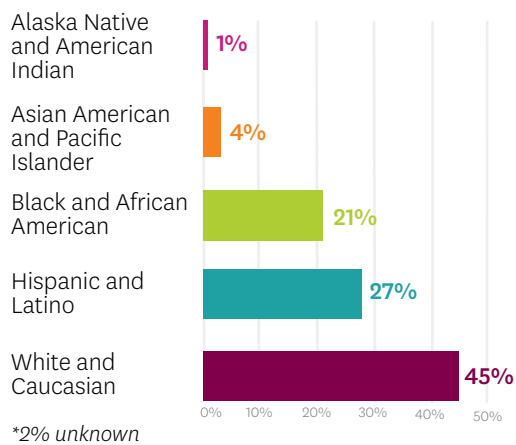


157,517 Medicaid (BadgerCare Plus and SSI) members in all 72 counties.
4,181 Medicare (Wellcare By Allwell) D-SNP* members in 35 counties.

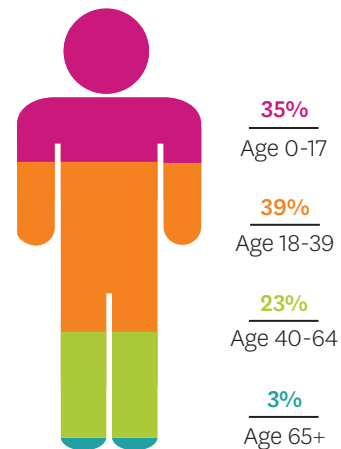
161,698 Total members served throughout the course of 2023.

**Dual Special Needs Plan (D-SNP) members have both Medicaid and Medicare*

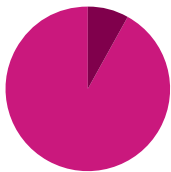
Race/Ethnicity



Age



Preferred Language



91% Members speak English
6% Members speak another language:
78% speak Spanish
8% speak Hmong
2% speak Somali
10% speak a language not listed

**3% of members declined to answer*

Type of Community Residence



76% Members live in urban communities
24% Members live in rural communities

Gender



50% Members identify as female
50% Members identify as male

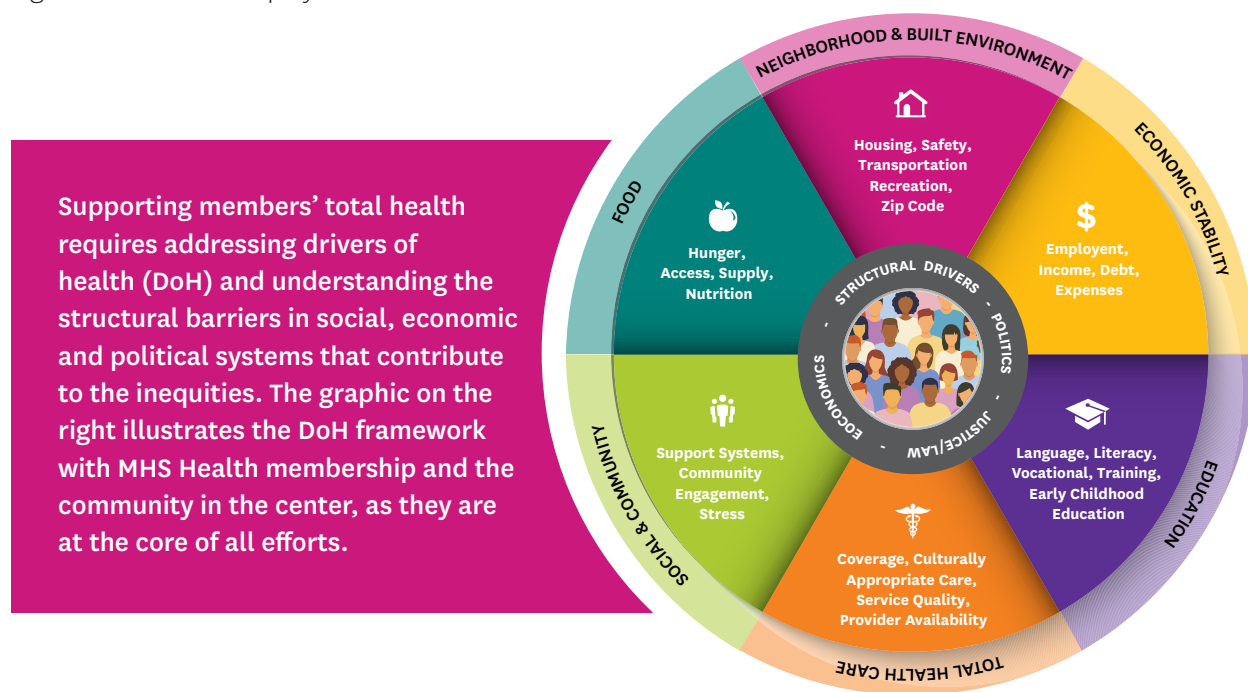
**Information on members who identify as non-binary or gender diverse is not currently available*

Drivers of Health

Drivers of health (DoH) play a critical role in shaping individuals' well-being and affect overall population health. They encompass the social, political, environmental, and cultural conditions in which people live and profoundly influence health outcomes.⁵ Remarkably, the link between DoH and individual health is so powerful that it can surpass the influence of healthcare and lifestyle choices, accounting for 30%-60% of all health outcomes in the United States.⁶

Drivers of Health Framework

DoH are often rooted in long-standing structural and systemic policies and practices that date back to the founding of the United States (U.S.).⁷ These policies, based on race, class, and gender hierarchies, shape the distribution of power and resources across the population, embedding health inequities along racial, class, and gender lines.⁷ Understanding and considering this reality is essential to developing and guiding the organization's health equity initiatives.



The Health Equity team uses a standardized process to collect, analyze, and report on drivers of health among its members by examining medical diagnoses, self-reported social needs, race, ethnicity, age, and primary language to ascertain the correlation between any or all DoH factors and the potential impact on member and community health.

In 2023, the team embarked on a more rigorous approach to identify linkages between member DoH needs and their chronic conditions by race, ethnicity, and region/zip code.

Collecting and Assessing Drivers of Health

MHS Health embraces every opportunity to obtain and address member DoH needs. The health plan collects DoH information in two ways: directly from members through assessments and from Z-codes (ICD-10 codes that providers use to document a member’s DoH needs).

Over the past year, MHS Health focused on DoH efforts with healthcare providers and encouraged them to conduct DoH assessments with their patients who are members of MHS Health. The completed assessments allow MHS Health to contact members with timely and tailored support that meets their needs and closes gaps in care.



- 12,155** Unique member DoH assessments administered.
- 4,990** Unique member Z-codes received on claims.
- 12,655** DoH needs reported among members.
- 1.52** Average needs per assessed member.

40% of members live in areas with high indicators of poor housing quality and lack of transportation.

Drivers of Health Care Coordination

DoH care coordination programming represents a critical shift in healthcare, acknowledging that health outcomes are profoundly influenced not only by healthcare but also by deeply entrenched systemic and structural factors. Effective DoH care coordination is underpinned by four key premises: focus on member-centeredness, community-centeredness, structured yet adaptable DoH programming, and the realignment of systems to provide whole-person care.⁸

Member-centeredness is the core of DoH care coordination, recognizing that individuals must be active participants in their healthcare journey. Programs are tailored to meet the unique needs and preferences of each member.

Community-centeredness extends focus beyond individual interventions to encompass broader community-level initiatives. Engagement, investment, and collaboration with local organizations and stakeholders help address barriers to health equity for all Wisconsin communities.

Structured yet adaptable programming allows for systematic assessment, intervention, and evaluation while remaining responsive to evolving needs and framework. Standardized screening tools and protocols ensure comprehensive identification of social needs.

Realignment of systems for whole-person care requires integration across healthcare, social services, and other community sectors to break down silos and address the complex interplay of factors influencing health and health equity.

Findhelp Drivers of Health Referrals

Findhelp is an online-based service directory that connects individuals to a network of more than **5,250 social care organizations** and **7,700 unique programs** in Wisconsin. This vast network enables MHS Health to better customize support and interventions according to each member's unique needs, preferences, and location.

Through the expediency of digital platforms, MHS Health actively supported its members' DoH needs by sending **3,351 referrals directly to members** throughout 2023. These referrals helped to address DoH barriers reported by members and facilitate connections to appropriate resources. Top needs identified and supported through Findhelp referrals include:

- 16%** Assisted members facing housing issues.
- 14%** Addressed food security needs.
- 8%** Helped members manage their utility expenses.
- 8%** Addressed employment needs.
- 3%** Targeted transportation barriers.
- 3%** Supported educational needs.

Community Health Workers

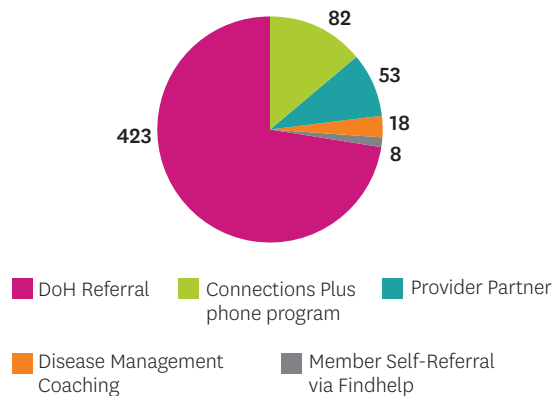
MHS Health employs a dedicated team of Community Health Workers (CHWs) to conduct outreach to members who report one or more DoH needs, such as food security, financial stability support, legal aid, and employment assistance.

580+ Referrals received by the CHW team in 2023.

50+ Came from providers in communities with known DoH needs.

64 Wisconsin counties served by the CHW team.

2023 Referrals to Community Health Workers



Connections Plus Phone Program

Access to a reliable phone is critical for members to fulfill basic needs, navigate healthcare, and effectively engage with MHS Health CHWs and Care Managers. Recognizing this, MHS Health leverages Centene's Connections Plus phone program to assist members who do not have reliable phone access.

Eligible members receive a free, high-quality smart phone equipped with 1GB of data, unlimited talk and text to enhance communication and provide easy access to virtual healthcare and support.

CHWs offer personalized support to help members increase technology literacy and effectively use their phone for healthcare and personal needs. In 2023, MHS Health **provided phones to 94 members**.



Quality Improvement Measures

When measuring quality improvement performance, each contract managed by MHS Health receives a distinct score for the following member populations: MHS Health BadgerCare Plus (BC+), MHS Health Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Network Health BC+, and Network Health SSI. Within these populations, there are striking inconsistencies when looking at health and healthcare data through the lens of race and ethnicity. MHS Health believes that by focusing on these health disparities and actively improving health outcomes within specific racial and ethnic groups, the overall health of MHS Health’s entire membership, as well as the communities it serves, will improve.

Care Innovation Workgroups

In 2023, MHS Health launched Care Innovation Workgroups to address individual measures that the health plan is responsible for maintaining. The four workgroups — Behavioral Health (BH), Chronic Conditions, Member and Provider Experience, and Women, Children, and Preventative Care — convened regularly throughout the year to collaborate on specific responsibilities, core strategies and initiatives.

A key feature of each of these workgroups was the participation from Health Equity team members. This integration wove health equity thought leadership throughout the approach to each Care Innovation Workgroup. The collaboration between cross-departmental teams facilitated improved health disparity analytics, which enhanced member outreach efforts, cultural and linguistic inclusive communications, and the health plan’s responsiveness to the diverse needs of its membership.



Beyond this, other broad interventions were implemented or enhanced across the health plan to further improve these measures. This includes the use of the appointment unit, additional education on care gaps to member-facing MHS Health teams, and increased collaboration and education with the health plan’s provider network. These strategies help to ensure members are getting the services they need.

The Care Innovation Workgroups have been continued into 2024 with the addition of a workgroup focused on NCQA Accreditation.

Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set

The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) offers essential resources for advancing health equity through the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®). MHS Health utilizes the HEDIS performance measures to better assess, measure, and track performance and outcomes in essential domains including preventive care, chronic disease management, and member experience. By leveraging HEDIS metrics, MHS Health gains more accurate insights on where disparities exist and can implement focused interventions to address them.

Prenatal and Postpartum Care HEDIS Measure For Network Health BC+ Members

Within its Network Health BC+ population, the health plan implemented health interventions such as maternal community health workers (MCHWs), doulas, and medically tailored meal programs that targeted non-Caucasian pregnant and postpartum members. The goal was to improve the HEDIS Prenatal and Postpartum Care (PPC) sub measure rates of both the target population (non-Caucasian) and the overall population. In this data set, it was found that using targeted interventions and outreach to non-Caucasian members improved the 2023 PPC sub measure rates for the target population as well as the overall population.



PPC HEDIS Measure Final Measurement Results: Target Population (2023)

Measurement Year (MY)		Numerator	Denominator	Rate	Change
MY2019	Baseline	Not reported	Not reported	46.01%	N/A
MY2020	Year 1	Not reported	Not reported	52.02%	+ 13.06%
MY2021	Year 2	Not reported	Not reported	58.33%	+ 12.13%
MY2022	Year 3	189	296	63.85%	+ 9.47%
MY2023	Year 4	240	367	65.40%	+ 2.40%

**Final measurement results for the target population are administrative rates.*

This improvement was found to be statistically significant, evidenced by a Pearson's r score of 0.9836 and a p-value at the 0.01 level.

PPC HEDIS Measure Final Measurement Results: Study Population (2023)

Measurement Year (MY)		Numerator	Denominator	Rate	Change
MY2019	Baseline	287	411	69.30%	N/A
MY2020	Year 1	288	411	70.07%	+ 0.34%
MY2021	Year 2	277	348	79.60%	+ 13.60%
MY2022	Year 3	324	411	78.83%	- 0.97%
MY2023	Year 4	344	411	83.70%	+ 5.99%

**Final measurement results for the study population are hybrid rates.*

This improvement was found to be statistically significant, evidenced by a Pearson's r score of 0.9394 and a p-value at the 0.05 level.

Hemoglobin D less than 8% HEDIS Measure For Network Health SSI Members

The health plan implemented interventions such as the Diabetes Management Health Coaching Program and Good Measures for food prescriptions and nutritional counseling (see pages 24 and 33 for more information), specifically for non-Caucasian members within the Network Health SSI membership for the Hemoglobin D less than 8% (HBD <8%) HEDIS measure. The Health Equity team found that 2023 rates improved within both the target population (non-Caucasian) and the overall population.



HBD <8 HEDIS Measure Final Measurement Results: Target and Study Populations (2023)

Measurement Year (MY)		Numerator		Denominator		Rate		Change	
		Target	Study	Target	Study	Target	Study	Target	Study
MY2021	Baseline*	N/A	198	N/A	411	N/A	48.18%	N/A	N/A
MY2022	Year 1	55	234	239	411	78.83%	56.93%	N/A	+ 18.16%
MY2023	Year 2	57	235	195	384	83.70%	61.20%	+ 6.00%	+ 7.50%

*Target population data unavailable.

Colorectal Cancer Screening HEDIS Measure For All Members

MHS Health identified health disparities as it relates to compliance with obtaining a colorectal cancer screen for Black and African American males as well as members with a primary language of Hmong, Lao, Burmese, or Spanish. Targeted mailings were developed and sent to Black and African American males, and a translated version was sent to members that reported their primary language to be Lao, Hmong, Spanish, or Burmese.

COL HEDIS Measure Final Measurement Results (2023)

Measurement Year (MY)	MHS Health BC+	Network Health BC+	MHS Health SSI	Network Health SSI
MY2022	30.28%	28.27%	37.17%	48.18%
MY2023	36.53%	34.53%	45.68%	56.93%
Change*	+ 6.13	+ 6.26	+ 8.51	+ 7.70

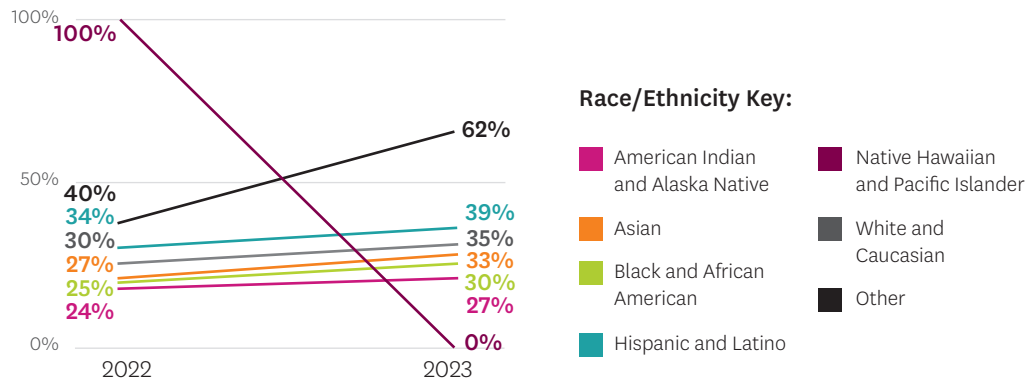
*Percentage point.

MHS Health improved the 2023 rates in the Colorectal Cancer Screening (COL) HEDIS measure within all four membership populations.

Colorectal Cancer Screening HEDIS Measure, continued

The COL HEDIS measure also revealed improvement in almost every racial category, which powered the overall increase in measure success across each contract managed by MHS Health.

2022-2023 COL HEDIS Measure Rates: HEDIS Year Trend



Follow-Up After Emergency Department Visit HEDIS Measure For MHS Health and Network Health SSI Members and Network Health BC+ Members

In 2023, MHS Health improved the rates in the Follow-Up After Emergency Department Visit for Mental Illness (FUM) HEDIS measure across three racial/ethnic groups. Interventions such as Neuroflow, a program that provides virtual access for members all over the state, and advanced training for member-facing MHS Health team members aided in making improvements in this measure across three populations.

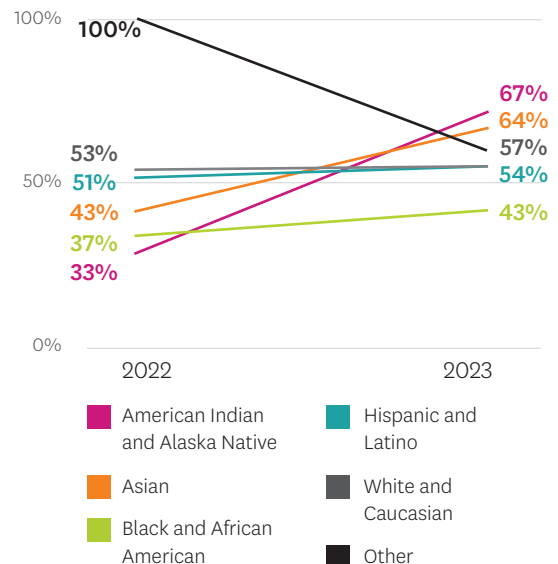
FUM HEDIS Measure Final Measurement Results (2023)

Measurement Year (MY)	Network Health BC+	MHS Health SSI	Network Health SSI
MY2022	48.17%	57.50%	59.78%
MY2023	50.89%	60.87%	68.89%
Change*	+ 2.72	+ 3.37	+ 9.11

*Percentage point.

The 2023 FUM measure demonstrates improvement in almost every racial category, again contributing to the overall increase in measure success for three contracts managed by MHS Health.

2022-2023 FUM HEDIS Measure Rates: HEDIS Year Trend



Chronic Disease Management

Culturally sensitive care and evidence-based interventions are pivotal in effectively managing chronic diseases. For members who have one or more chronic health condition, MHS Health offers specialized programs designed to prevent exacerbating symptoms, increase health literacy, improve overall health, and address DoH needs prevalent within these populations.

Coaching Programs

MHS Health offers two disease-specific health coaching programs for asthma and diabetes that are led by the Community Health Worker (CHW) team. Members who choose to enroll in a CHW coaching program receive personalized health education about their diagnosis using peer-based language to help them gain a deeper understanding of their condition and how they can make healthy lifestyle changes. CHWs assist members in goal setting, addressing DoH needs, connecting with appropriate providers, accessing diagnostic testing, and facilitating referrals to support services to increase positive health outcomes.

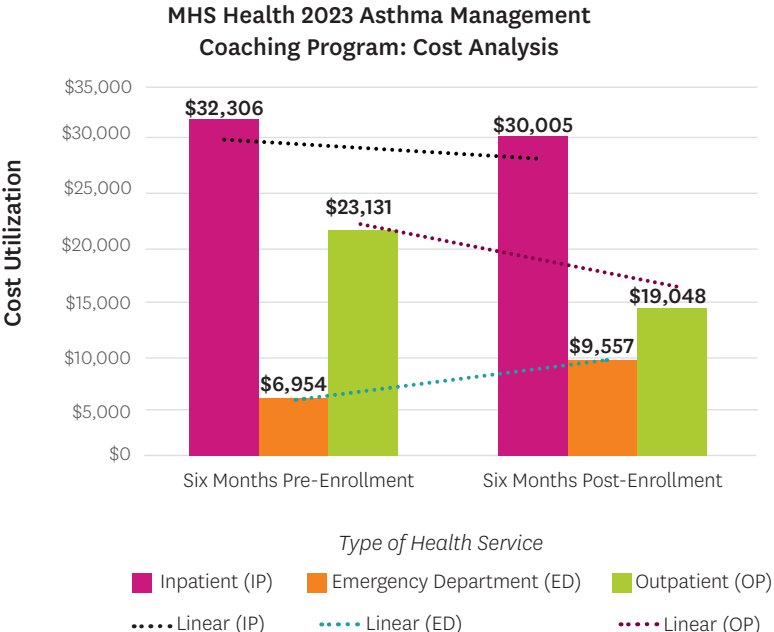


Asthma Management Coaching Program

The Asthma Management Coaching Program is conducted over four weeks and emphasizes advancing members’ knowledge of their diagnosis with a strong focus on environmental triggers for asthma. Upon enrollment, members are provided with a welcome tote, green cleaning supplies, a hypo-allergenic pillow and mattress cover, and educational materials. CHWs meet with members individually to establish and track goals and provide education on topics such as healthy medication routines and effective strategies for managing and reducing asthma attacks, and how to use low-cost supplies to create their own cleaning products.

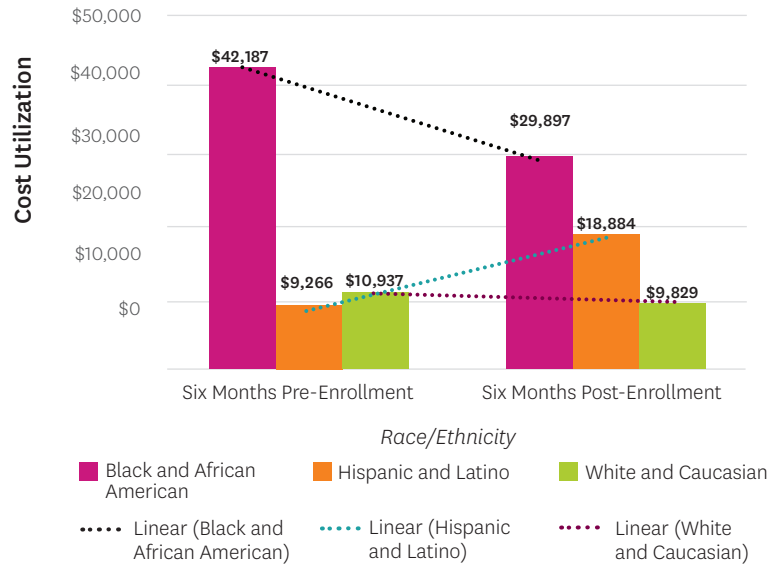
Financial Impact

The following pre- and post-intervention analyses examine the total cost for all members who participated in MHS Health’s Asthma Management Coaching Program six months prior to the intervention and six months after the intervention.



Asthma, continued

**MHS Health 2023 Asthma Management Coaching Program:
Cost Analysis by Race/Ethnicity**



When costs are reviewed from the lens of race and ethnicity, data from 2023 reveals there were significant changes among members who are Black and African American.

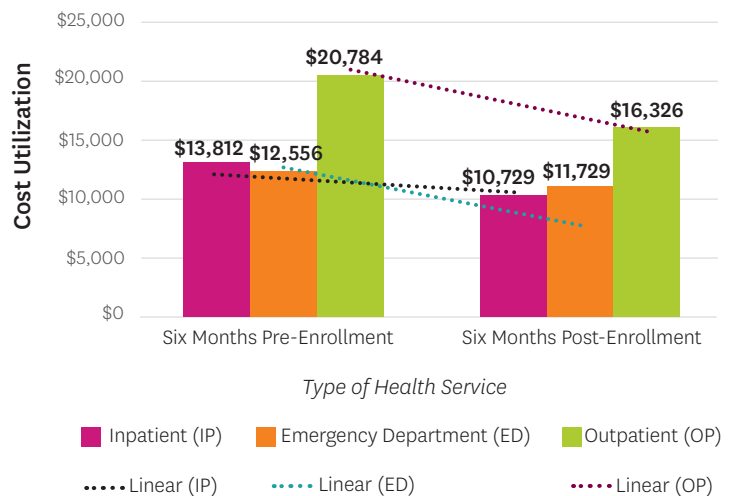
34% Overall decrease in inpatient (IP) costs among members who are Black and African American (from \$23,922 pre-enrollment to \$12,217 post-enrollment).

CapMedic Asthma Management Program

MHS Health utilizes CapMedic, an interactive smart inhaler developed by Cognita Labs, to help members improve their medication adherence and reduce asthma exacerbations. The smart device attaches to existing inhalers, providing coaching for correct usage, adherence monitoring, and real-time feedback on inhalation techniques as well as home spirometry to measure lung function, tracks trends, and share data remotely. This direct communication channel with members allows for timely intervention and support, including reminders for missed doses and guidance on managing their asthma action plan. Eligible members receive the device upon enrollment in the program and benefit from personal guidance by a registered nurse to ensure effective onboarding and usage.

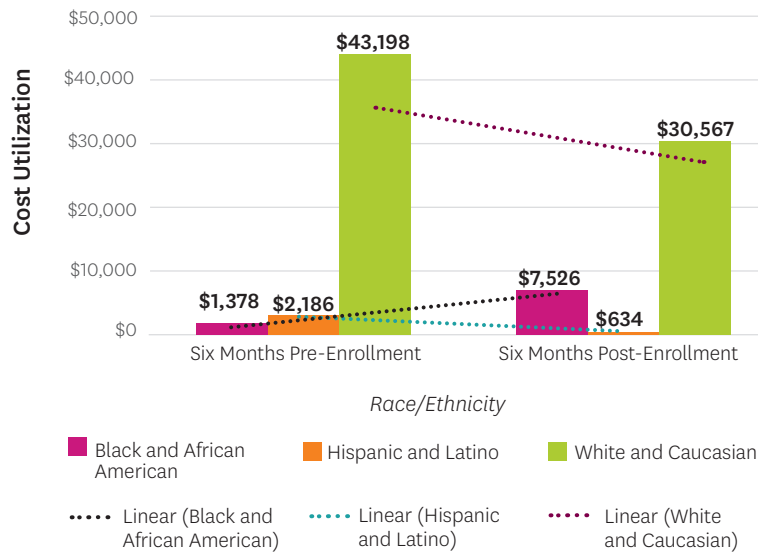
- 567** Members were invited to join the 2023 CapMedic Program.
- 64** Members were successfully reached but declined participation.
- 17** Members enrolled in the program.
- 11** Members participated in the program but did not fully onboard.
- 6** Members completed program onboarding and demonstrated improvement in inhaler technique.
- 5** Members actively used the CapMedic inhaler device and tracked outcomes.

2023 CapMedic Program: Cost Analysis



CapMedic, continued

2023 CapMedic Program Pre-Post Analysis by Race/Ethnicity



As part of the CapMedic intervention, MHS Health tracked program member CapMedic inhaler usage six months pre- and post-intervention.

18% Overall cost decrease noted for this intervention (from \$47,152 to \$38,784).

1.58 Times more likely for MHS Health SSI members who are Black and African American to have asthma compared to the total population.

Diabetes Management Coaching Program

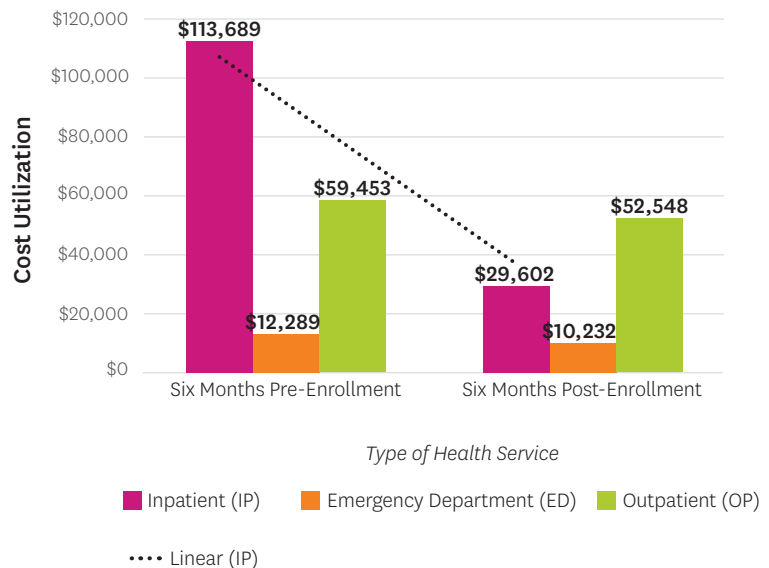
Members who choose to enroll in the Diabetes Management Coaching Program complete the program in four weeks. Each module aims to enhance member knowledge of their diagnosis and improve healthy decision-making and motivation as it relates to living with diabetes. Upon enrollment, members receive a welcome tote with educational materials, a food scale, portion control containers, and an insulated lunch bag. CHWs meet with each member to provide education on topics such as understanding their diabetes diagnosis, monitoring blood sugar and medications, and healthy eating.

Financial Impact

The following pre- and post-intervention analysis examines the total cost for each member who participated in the Diabetes Management Coaching Program six months prior to the intervention and six months after the intervention.

Throughout 2023, a total of **28 members** enrolled in the Diabetes Management Coaching Program, resulting in an overall medical cost savings of \$93,051.

MHS Health 2023 Diabetes Management Coaching Program: Cost Analysis



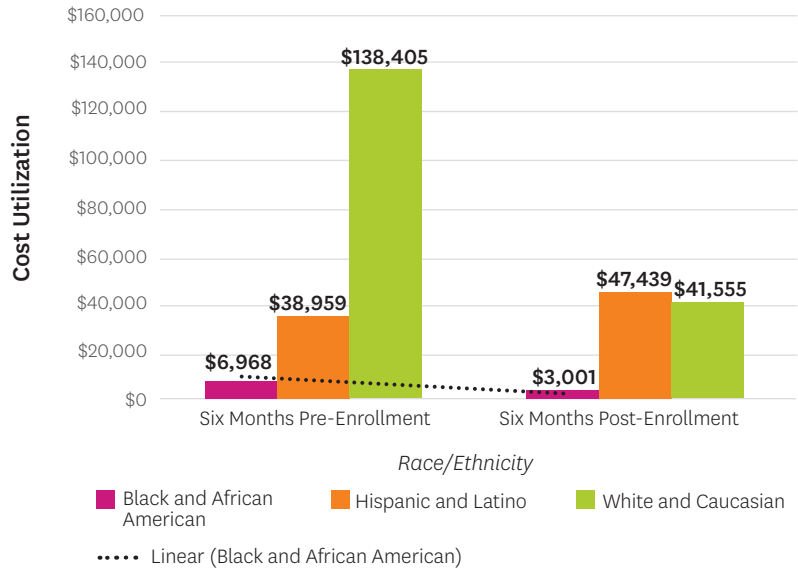
Diabetes, continued

The pre- and post-intervention cost analysis shows a significant drop in the post-intervention cost during 2023 (\$92,381).

50% Lower cost during post-intervention when compared to 2022 (\$185,432).

\$93,051 Overall cost reduction for 2023.

MHS Health 2023 Diabetes Management Coaching Program: Cost Analysis by Race/Ethnicity



Member Testimonials

The following graphic highlights anonymous testimonials from members who completed optional surveys after they went through one or more of the 2023 chronic disease management coaching programs.

- It made me more conscious of decisions I was making.*
- It helped me a lot. It didn't heal me, but it helped me.*
- I was able to understand things I wasn't able to before.*
- It made me want to get up and do things and be aware of my surroundings.*
- The information given to me was tailored to different health issues I have.*

Pregnant and Postpartum Care

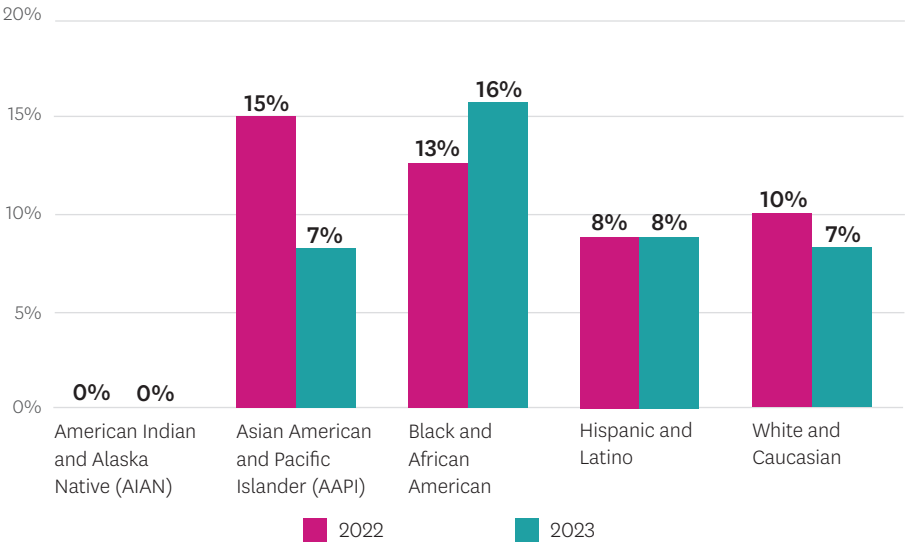
In 2023, MHS Health supported more than 375 members during their pregnancies and after delivery. Beyond the coordination of routine prenatal and postpartum care, MHS Health expanded its programs and services to improve additional healthy birth indicators. MHS Health employs a tailored approach to working with pregnant and postpartum members that aims to eliminate DoH needs, reduce health disparities, and advance health equity.

Health Disparity Analysis

Pre-term deliveries and low birthweight can have serious short- and long-term effects on health. Infants who experience these circumstances are at an increased risk of physical complications, such as chronic disorders of the respiratory, cardiac, renal, and endocrine system disorders.¹² Some of these complications can result in disability or even death.¹² Approximately 10% of infants are born pre-term in the U.S. and these rates are rising.¹³

In 2023, the mean birthweight for all deliveries among MHS Health members was **3,209 grams** (SD = 598), which is approximately **27 grams** more than the prior year at MHS Health. While the year over year (YoY) difference in grams for average birthweight of members was an improvement (approximately 27 grams), the health plan is working to address disparities by race and ethnicity.

Distribution of Low Birthweight among Members by Race/Ethnicity (2022, 2023)



Data analysis reveals significant YoY changes in low birthweight rates across three demographic groups: Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) members experienced a **77.6% decrease**, White and Caucasian members experienced a **26.9% decrease**, and Black and African American members experienced a **23.9% increase**.

As seen in the YoY low birthweight rates in the health plan’s overall birthing population, there is a stark contrast when comparing rates among members who are either White and Caucasian (7.4%) or Hispanic and Latino (8.4%) to rates among members who are American Indian and Alaska Native (0%), AAPI (6.7%), and Black and African American (15.9%).

Start Smart For Your Baby®



MHS Health’s Start Smart For Your Baby (Start Smart) Care Management team is dedicated to working with pregnant and postpartum members for optimal family health. Upon notification of a member’s potential or confirmed pregnancy, the team reaches out to evaluate each member’s unique circumstances and are encouraged to participate in one or more of MHS Health’s specialized pregnant and postpartum care programs or care management services. Members enrolled in the 2023 Start Smart program experienced the following pregnancy and postpartum outcomes noted below.



- 93%** Experienced a pregnancy with a term rate of more than 37 weeks.
- 7%** Experienced a pre-term pregnancy of less than 37 weeks.
- <1%** Less than 1% of term rate pregnancy outcomes were unknown.



- 95%** Had a baby considered to be a normal birthweight (more than 2500 grams).
- 5%** Had a baby considered to be a low birthweight (less than 2500 grams).
- 1%** Birthweight outcomes were unknown.



- 89%** Birth outcomes were considered healthy (no NICU admission).
- 11%** Birth outcomes were considered sick (NICU admission).
- <1%** Less than 1% of birth outcomes were unknown.
- <1%** Less than 1% experienced fetal demise.

Several factors impact birth outcomes, including social drivers (e.g., access to quality healthcare, lack of social and financial support, unstable housing, and poor nutrition), physical health (e.g., age of birthing parent, obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and complications with chronic conditions), and behavioral health (e.g., substance use disorder, smoking, chronic stress, anxiety, depression, and other diagnosed conditions).

Doula Programs

Doulas offer culturally sensitive services to ease the burden of access, address cultural barriers, and improve pregnancy, postpartum, and birth outcomes. Research shows positive effects of doula care are greater for racial minorities and for those who are socially disadvantaged.¹¹ MHS Health’s doula services are designed to meet the needs of all members and cater specifically to those who live in rural areas by providing both local and virtual service options. Eligible members are offered unlimited video visits and telephone consultations, ensuring access 24/7 to care regardless of location. The virtual doula agency support includes ongoing education and guidance throughout every stage of pregnancy and up to one year post-delivery from doulas, lactation consultants, care managers, pediatric nurses.



Diaper Pilot Program

In April, MHS Health’s Start Smart team launched a pilot Diaper Program. Members received a package of **108 diapers** upon program enrollment and were eligible to receive an additional package of **100 diapers** upon completion of a post-partum visit (PPV) with their provider and a follow-up with their designated MHS Health Start Smart Care Manager. The Diaper Program promotes safe hygiene practices, reduces health risks associated with diaper shortages, and alleviates financial strain for families facing economic challenges.



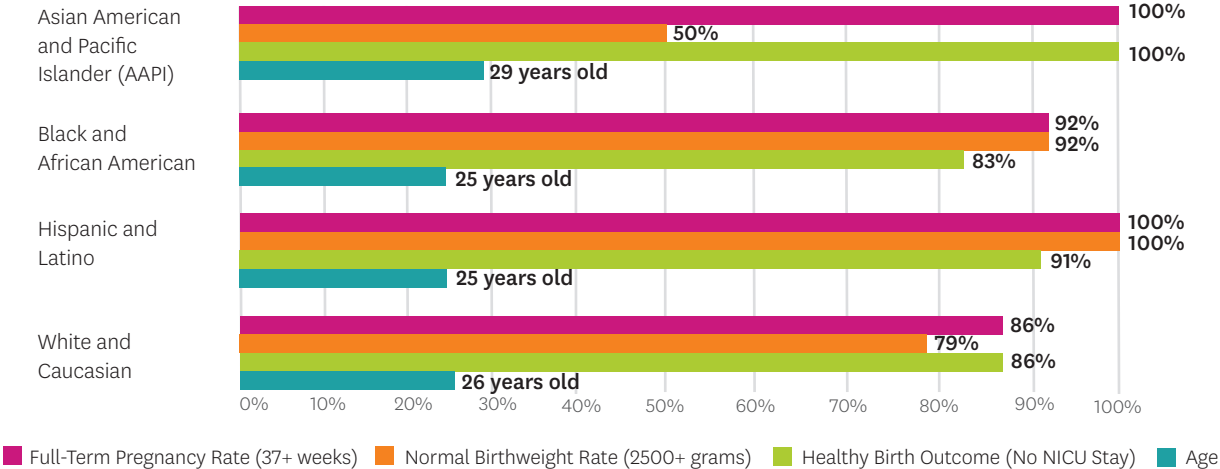
- 100** High-risk members invited to participate in the pilot program.
- 98** Members chose to enroll.
- 64** Members had a healthy birth outcome (37 weeks or greater and birthweight >2500 grams).
- 20** Members had a poor birth outcome (36 weeks or less and birthweight <2500 grams).
- 10** Member birth outcomes were unknown.
- 4** Members had a miscarriage.

Maternal Community Health Worker Coaching Program

MHS Health Maternal Community Health Workers (MCHWs) engage with members enrolled in MHS Health’s Perinatal Coaching program to achieve positive pregnancy outcomes. MCHWs work with members to address DoH needs and provide guidance on how to prepare for delivery and life with their new baby. MCHWs also provide referrals to community-based organizations and programs that provide low- or no-cost essential baby items (such as cribs and car seats).

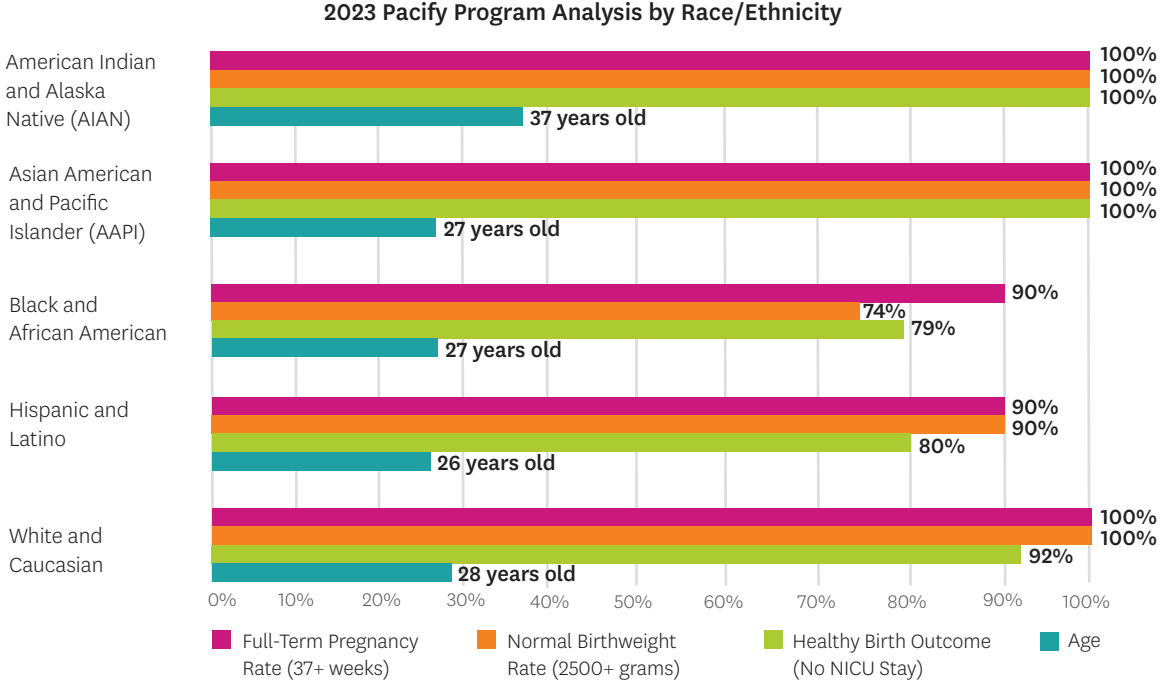
In 2023, MHS Health worked with **41 members through their delivery and into the postpartum period, with 27 members reporting they are people of color** (12 Black and African American, 11 Hispanic and Latino, and four Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI)). The mean birth outcomes for racial and ethnic groups among MCHW program members are listed in the figure below.

MHS Health 2023 Maternal Community Health Worker Coaching Program Analysis by Race/Ethnicity



Pacify Program

MHS Health partnered with Pacify, a tech-enabled resource that connects members with round-the-clock access to lactation consultants, doulas, and registered nurses. In 2023, MHS Health and Pacify worked with **58 members** through their delivery and into their postpartum period, with **32 members** reporting they are people of color (19 Black and African American, 10 Hispanic and Latino, two Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI), and one American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN)). The mean birth outcomes for racial and ethnic groups among program members are listed in the figure below.



Member data from Pacify’s 2023 program indicates disparities in birth outcomes among distinct racial and ethnic groups. As displayed in the table above, members who identify as Black and African American experienced decreased rates of normal birthweight and healthy birth outcomes when compared to other member groups.

Pacify program members who were either AIAN or AAPI performed better than all other member groups in each variable associated with birth outcomes, including gestational weeks, birthweight, and neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) admissions.



Members who are either AIAN, AAPI, or White and Caucasian also experienced **100% full-term births**, which is **10 percentage points higher** than member groups who are Black and African or Hispanic and Latino.

Behavioral Health Support

The need for behavioral healthcare is on a concerning upward trajectory, particularly in Wisconsin, where services climbed by 36% from 2019 to 2021.¹⁴ Even more alarming is the rise in suicide rates among Wisconsinites, which increased by nearly one-third from 2000 to 2020 and ranks as the 10th leading cause of death in the state.¹⁴ In response, State Governor Tony Evers declared 2023 as Wisconsin’s “year of mental health,” urging intensified and collaborative efforts in addressing these needs.

Recognizing the critical role of behavioral health (BH) in overall health and well-being, MHS Health uses an interdisciplinary approach to support members who are facing BH challenges. Alongside comprehensive care management services, MHS Health understands it has a unique opportunity to serve as a conduit between its provider network and community-based organizations. This role enables MHS Health to continually innovate, implement, and share best practices that meet the diverse needs of its members and communities.

NeuroFlow[®] Program

MHS Health’s partnership with NeuroFlow offers members an interactive platform that delivers personalized resources to improve mental health and well-being. In addition to health education and access to crisis resources, the platform empowers users through a mobile application to monitor and track their food intake, sleep quality, pain, and physical activity. MHS Health was chosen as one of four Centene health plans to pilot the NeuroFlow program beginning March 2023. The outcomes reported below are from March to December 2023:



- 127** Members registered for NeuroFlow.
- 117** Members engaged in the program.
- 38%** Symptom reduction among these members based on the PHQ9 depression screening assessment (December 1-31, 2023).
- 40%** Symptom reduction among these members based on the Generalized Anxiety Disorder screening assessment (December 1-31, 2023).

Start Smart For Your Baby Behavioral Health Interventions

Weekly Start Smart Behavioral Health rounds convene a multidisciplinary team to review high-complexity cases and care plans for members who screen positive for substance use disorder (SUD) or score medium to high on the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale. MHS Health’s licensed BH clinicians assist the Start Smart team, offering their guidance in supporting members who have BH needs. In 2023, the Start Smart Behavioral Health team developed a claims-based report to identify and outreach to high-risk pregnant and postpartum members who were diagnosed with SUD, BH conditions, or both. Upon successful member outreach, the team conducts comprehensive BH and SUD assessments. Treatment plans are discussed at Start Smart Behavioral Health rounds to ensure each members’ needs are appropriately met.



Gap Closure Trainings for Team Members

MHS Health’s internal Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) gap closure process involves licensed behavioral health team members who conduct clinical assessments to assist with closing gaps for the HEDIS Measures: Follow-Up after Admission for Mental Illness (FUA), Follow-Up after Hospitalization for Mental Illness (FUH), and Follow-Up after ED Visit for Mental Illness (FUM). MHS Health was the **top performing Centene health plan** for the completion of optional trainings on best practice strategies to effectively close gaps in BH-related HEDIS measures.



550+ BH measure gap closure trainings completed by MHS Health team members in 2023.

60% Increase (from prior year) in MHS Health BH Care Management team members completing **1,056 internal assessments** to aid with gap closure.

12% Improvement in FUH measure since 2022.

Suicide Prevention Training for Providers

MHS Health worked with Centene to offer a two-hour training session concentrated on suicide risk and protective factors, identifying high-risk groups, prevention strategies, and integrated healthcare. The training shared best practice strategies to encourage a member-centric approach to care.

More than **150 eligible attendees received 1.5 free continuing education units**, and post-event survey responses indicated the content was highly valued. Feedback suggested future topics include suicide safety planning, an overview of mental health diagnosis and treatment, substance use disorder treatment, and pediatrics and suicide risk.



Nearly 50% of Americans who die by suicide see a primary care provider in the prior 30 days.¹⁵

Support and Service: National Alliance on Mental Illness

To raise awareness for behavioral health needs in Wisconsin, MHS Health was a second-time bronze sponsor of the 2023 National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Walk at the Milwaukee County Zoo. Hundreds of attendees enjoyed the pre-walk festivities and a leisurely stroll through the zoo.

As an event sponsor, MHS Health hosted a table that became an instant attraction for families. Children and adults alike participated in exercise games that earned them prizes. More than **25 MHS Health team members** and their loved ones participated in the annual charity walk and donated to NAMI Southeast Wisconsin.



Food Support

Food poses a challenge for many members, compounded by factors such as limited access and security to healthy foods, poor dietary habits, and the February 2023 conclusion of the increased FoodShare benefits that were put in place during the COVID-19 pandemic. To address these pressing needs, MHS Health offers a range of interventions.

Northwest Fresh Food Access Council

Every month a diverse group of local residents, representatives of the City of Milwaukee Housing Authority, leaders from community organizations, students from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, and MHS Health gather to discuss fresh food access. Together, this group forms the Northwest Fresh Food Access Council (NW Fresh), dedicated to strengthening the food system in Milwaukee's Silver Spring neighborhood. NW Fresh supports the work in the Westlawn community garden, creates fresh food education programs, and builds local partnerships to achieve its vision of a community with the power to access, use, and share fresh food and wellness resources with each other.

For the second consecutive year, MHS Health participated in the NW Fresh Summer Community Jam. MHS Health team members provided health information and school supplies, distributed nearly **120 free backpacks** and children's books, and facilitated fun activities that encouraged kids to get and stay active.



In the fall, MHS Health participated in the NW Fresh Harvest Fest, which celebrated the season with autumn-themed activities and a community meal made from the garden's harvested food. MHS Health provided reusable bags to carry garden produce and handed out educational children's books about gardening. A few weeks later, MHS Health sponsored the NW Fresh Garden Clean Out day, where **a dozen MHS Health volunteers** helped to clear out garden beds, harvest the remaining food, and prepare the garden for winter.

Kinship Community Food Center

In 2023, MHS Health was the sole healthcare partner of Kinship Community Food Center® (Kinship), a 501(c)3 non-profit based in Milwaukee's Riverwest neighborhood. Kinship's mission centers on ending hunger, isolation, and poverty through volunteer engagement and community programs promoting food security.

Throughout the year, MHS Health participated at least once quarterly in Kinship's Tuesday night food distribution events to provide health information and answer questions about the Medicaid eligibility renewal process. In time for the new school year, MHS Health coordinated a back-to-school vaccine event at Kinship in collaboration with Hayat Pharmacy. Attendees were offered COVID-19 and flu vaccines, blood pressure checks, and testing for blood glucose levels.

Food is the highest need reported among MHS Health's SSI members with diabetes (2023).

Good Measures

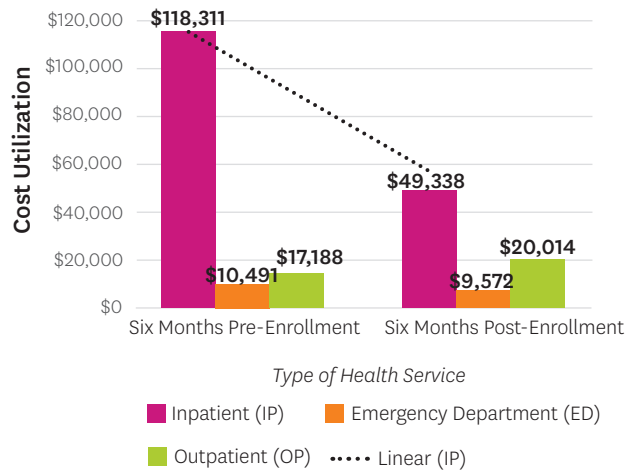
MHS Health’s partnership with Good Measures offers a complete approach to diabetes management. Through its Good Food Prescription™ program, Good Measures provides free, culturally appropriate, medically tailored groceries and virtual health coaching to address food access and security barriers, helping to improve sustainable eating habits and health literacy.

MHS Health leveraged the Good Measures program in 2023 by implementing a targeted intervention for members who were identified as having a high-risk hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) level greater than seven (>7): **32 members enrolled in the Good Measures coaching program, and 11 participants elected to receive medically tailored grocery deliveries.**

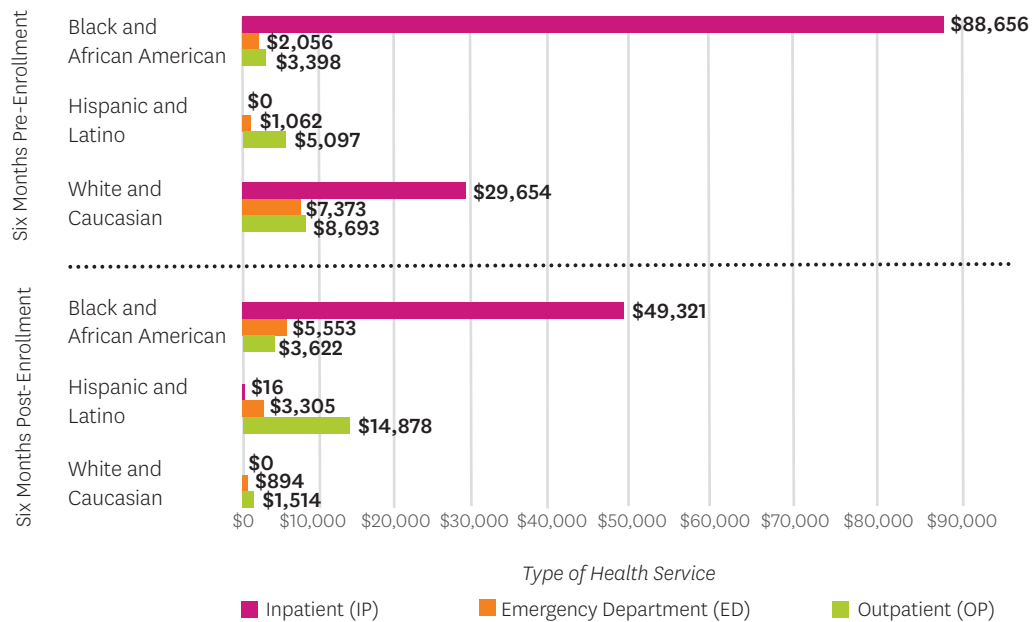
This intervention resulted in an **overall cost decrease of approximately 49%** (from \$145,507 to \$74,773). As demonstrated below, both Emergency Department (ED) and Outpatient (OP) costs remained relatively stable throughout 2023, while **Inpatient (IP) costs showed a decrease of 58%.**

The data analysis revealed distinct patterns in healthcare costs across unique racial and ethnic groups. Members who are White and Caucasian, as well as members who are Black and African American exhibited a significant decrease in costs post-enrollment, with White and Caucasian members demonstrating the largest decrease. These findings highlight the complexity of healthcare costs and the importance of considering racial disparities in cost management strategies.

MHS Health 2023 Good Measures Program: Cost Analysis



MHS Health 2023 Good Measures Program Cost Analysis by Race/Ethnicity

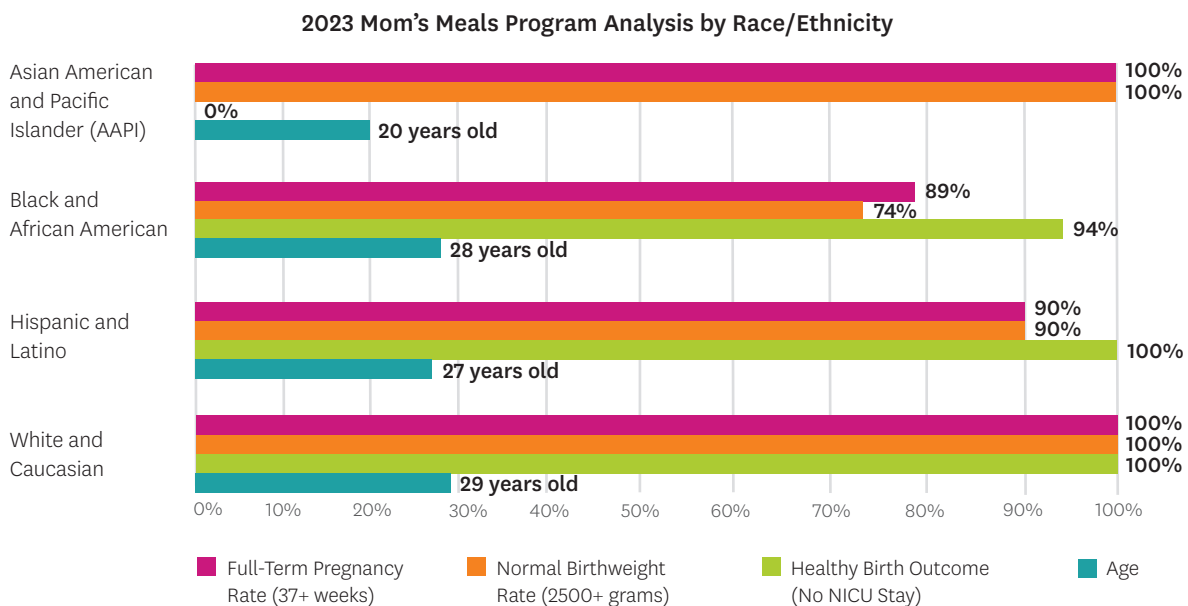


Mom's Meals Program

By supplying at-risk pregnant and postpartum members with free, healthy food options, the Mom's Meals program helps to improve maternal health and birth outcomes and address food insecurity, as measured by increased birth weight, decreased pre-term and early term deliveries, as well as decreased high-risk births for both birthing person and baby, including postpartum complications. Mom's Meals is a national meal delivery service that provides high-quality and nutritious meals tailored to support the nutritional, cultural, and dietary needs for each member. The member receives a referral for two meals per day for a duration of one month, three months, or six months, depending on the member's risk level.



In 2023, MHS Health made **81 referrals** to Mom's Meals, resulting in a total of **7,710 meals delivered** to pregnant and postpartum members. Of these members, **49% were considered as high-risk**. MHS Health worked with **48 Mom's Meals program members** through delivery and into the postpartum period. **Twenty-nine of these members reported that they are people of color** (one Asian American and Pacific Islander, 18 Black and African American, 10 Hispanic and Latino). Birth outcomes by race and ethnicity are shown in the figure below.



Among 2023 Mom's Meals program members, **94% of members experienced a healthy birth outcome** (meaning the baby did not spend any time in a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU)) and **6% experienced a poor birth outcome** (the baby spent time in a NICU). Overall, **96% of members had a normal birthweight** and **94% of pregnancies were full-term**. Compared to the birth outcomes of members who were not enrolled in Mom's Meals, **85% experienced a healthy birth outcome**, **10% had a poor birth outcome**, and **5% of birth outcomes were unknown**.

Housing

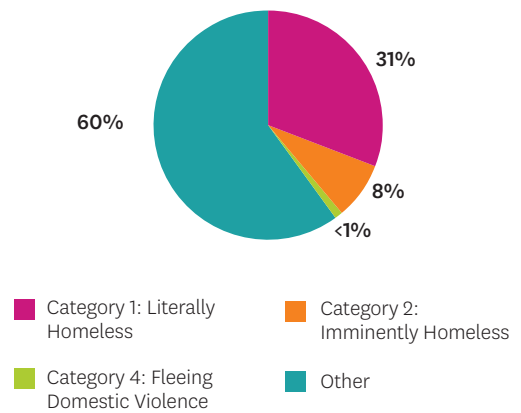
In 2023, Wisconsin recorded the highest number of unhoused residents compared to the past five years.⁹ Homelessness and housing instability continue to pose significant health and social risks.⁹ The absence of stable housing subjects individuals to adverse living conditions, creates complex barriers to healthcare access, and increases vulnerability to chronic physical and behavioral health conditions.¹⁰ In response to this escalating issue, MHS Health expanded its 2023 housing program.

Housing Specialists

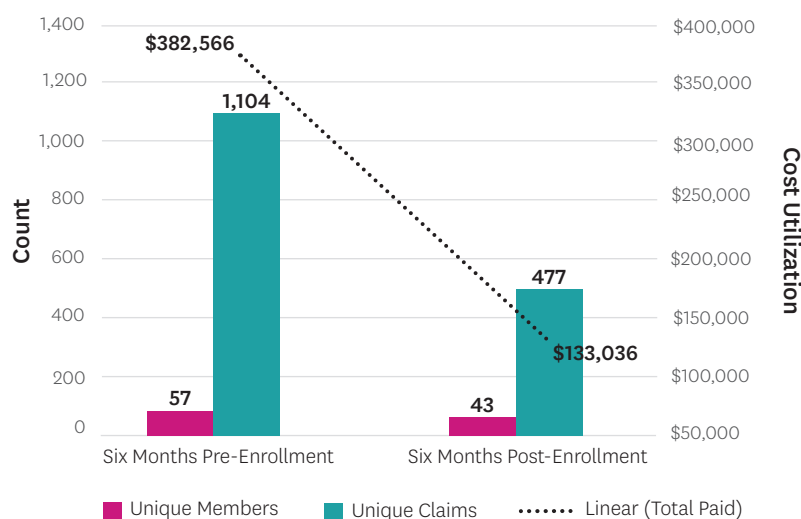
MHS Health employs two full-time Housing Specialists who assist members with navigating housing systems and resources. In their roles, they help to establish and maintain partnerships with local and state housing-related community organizations, such as local landlords and Wisconsin’s state housing coalition.

- 410** Members facing housing instability, homelessness, or both were supported.
- 40%** Members reported experiencing unsheltered homelessness, imminent homelessness, were fleeing domestic violence, or a combination of these (a 30% increase from 2022).
- 40** Wisconsin counties served.
- 64** Total members assisted with obtaining or maintaining stable housing.

HUD Housing Categories Experienced by Members Referred to MHS Health’s 2023 Housing Program



MHS Health 2023 Housing Program: Cost Analysis



The following pre- and post-intervention analysis examines the total cost for all members in the housing program six months prior to enrollment and six months after enrollment.

Financial Impact

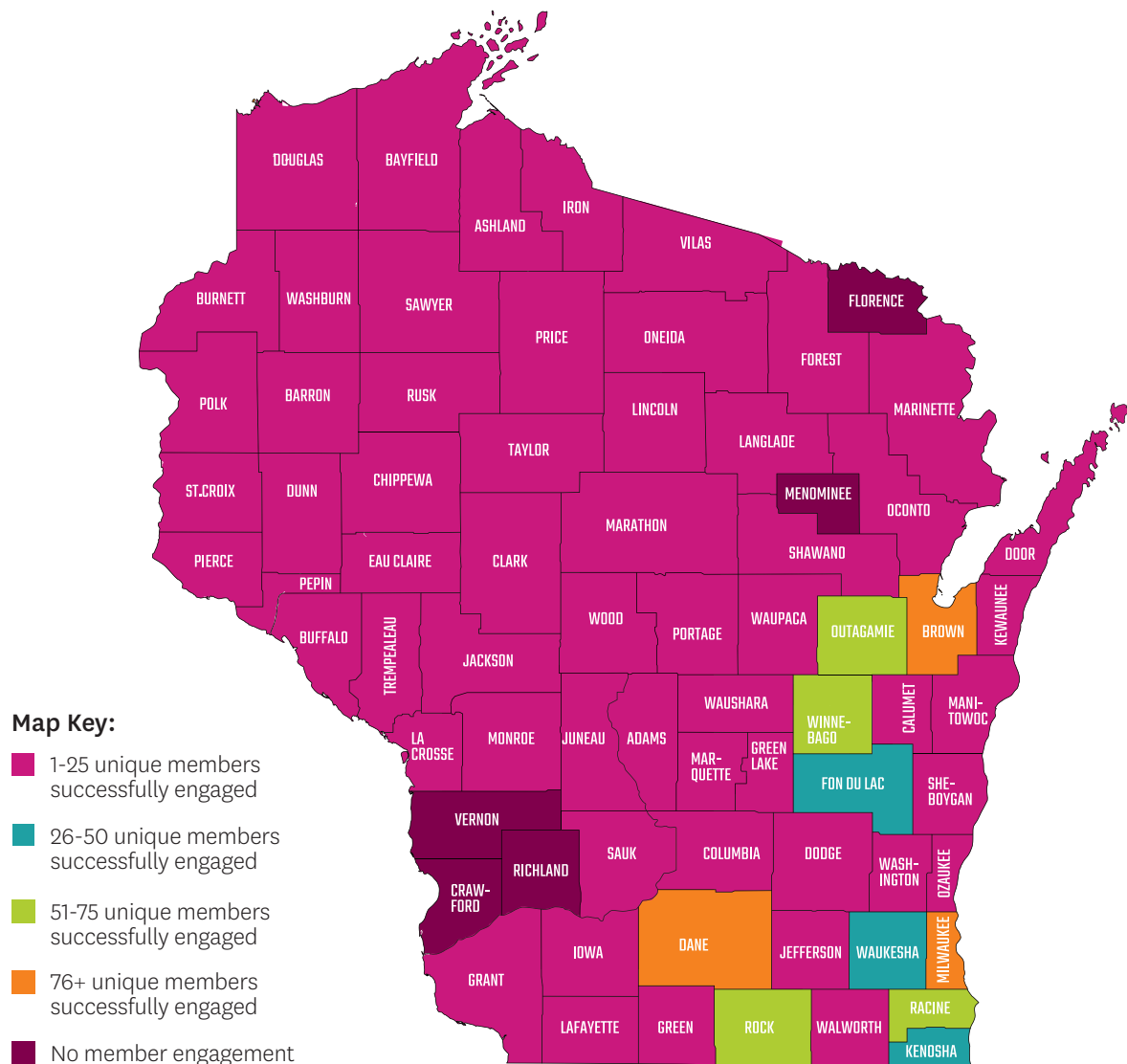
MHS Health’s 2023 Housing Program resulted in a **\$249,530 savings in healthcare costs for the 64 members** who experienced a positive housing outcome.

Member Outreach

MHS Health’s equity-focused programs and services reach members in communities throughout Wisconsin. These programs focus on addressing and improving outcomes in maternal health, chronic disease management, housing, behavioral health, and food security.

MHS Health is proud to showcase its commitment to tackling challenges through innovative programs and initiatives aimed at empowering members and strengthening communities.

The map below displays the geographical distribution of the dedicated members who actively participated in the health equity programs and care coordination described within this report. This visual representation highlights the reach and impact of MHS Health’s health equity initiatives across the state of Wisconsin. Notably, Milwaukee County experienced the highest count of unique member engagement, totaling nearly 45% of engagement within MHS Health’s health equity initiatives.





We believe health equity is a shared goal.

COMMUNITY

MHS Health is a great partner to Couleecap. They provided donations to hand out to our guests, which have been incredibly valuable to individuals who are struggling to meet their daily needs. MHS Health reached out when there were changes to Medicaid benefits to share their knowledge and expertise so we can better support our consumers.

~ Becky Koske, Asst. Deputy Director of Housing & Community Service of Couleecap, Inc.

Promoting Unity

Community partnerships play pivotal roles as they allow MHS Health to meet members in their own neighborhoods. By recognizing the interdependence between community well-being and health outcomes, MHS Health continues to strengthen its commitment to collaboration, innovation, and advocacy, ultimately paving the way for a healthier and more equitable future for all of Wisconsin.

Medicaid Eligibility Renewal

MHS Health believes every individual deserves access to quality healthcare, and that means prioritizing member outreach to help ensure members remain eligible for Medicaid coverage.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic warranted the initiation of a national public health emergency (PHE). States received additional federal funding to support the increase in Medicaid members. In return, states were required to provide “continuous coverage,” which meant most Medicaid members’ coverage could not be terminated until after the PHE concluded. During that time, Medicaid enrollment increased nearly 30% nationally.¹⁶ **In Wisconsin, Medicaid enrollees grew to 1.6 million covered lives.**¹⁷

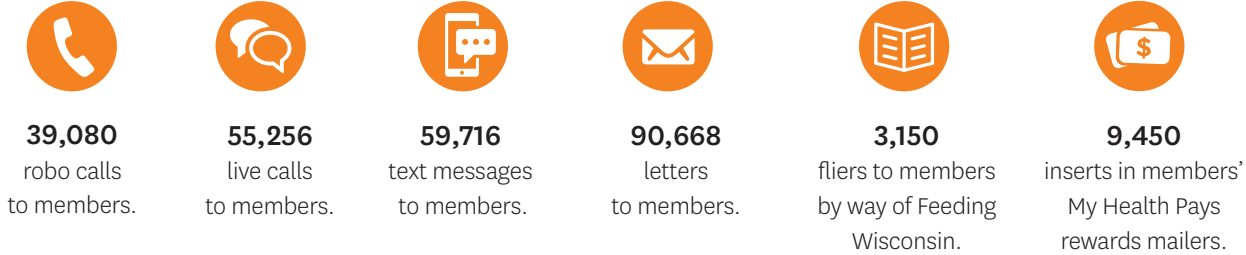
In the 18 months prior to the anticipated PHE ending, several multidisciplinary workgroups with representatives from Wisconsin’s Department of Health Services (DHS), MHS Health, and other Wisconsin managed care organizations convened regularly to plan for the unwinding of continuous coverage and reinstatement of the standard Medicaid eligibility renewal process.

The PHE ended on April 1, 2023, and Wisconsin began requiring current Medicaid members to renew their eligibility starting in June 2023. To encourage timely renewal, the state leveraged a phased approach over the next 12 months.

Three years passed between the start and end of the PHE, so it was expected that many members would not be familiar with the renewal process. Additionally, the increase in members who became eligible as a result of the pandemic may find themselves no longer eligible after continuous coverage ended. MHS Health worked closely with Centene and Wisconsin DHS to coordinate and implement a comprehensive communications plan focused on providing members with ready access to information and resources needed to navigate the Medicaid renewal process.

Communications targeted not only MHS Health members but also the entire Wisconsin Medicaid community, a strategy aligned with MHS Health’s mission.

Direct member contacts related to Medicaid Eligibility Renewals, June 2023 - June 2024.



Reaching Members Where They Shop

MHS Health identified an opportunity to reach Medicaid members while they go about their activities of daily living through advertising on receipts at popular discount stores frequented by members. A 12-week ad campaign was deployed at Family Dollar and General Dollar stores throughout Wisconsin. The large color ad informed of the reinstatement of Medicaid renewals and a QR code directed members to the Wisconsin DHS renewal web page.

Discount Store Ad Campaign Profile and Results

- 64** Wisconsin Family Dollar and General Dollar stores featured the ad receipts.
- 4K** Weekly customer visits at each store.
- 3M** Customer impressions in 12 weeks.
- 46%** Average engagement rate from those who scanned the QR code.



DOLLAR GENERAL

MEDICAID MEMBERS

! Annual health care renewals have started

Don't miss your deadline!

- Find out when and how you need to renew.
- Sign up for reminders.
- Update your contact info at access.wi.gov.



scan me

mhs health wisconsin 1-888-713-6180 (TTY 711)
mhswi.com/renew

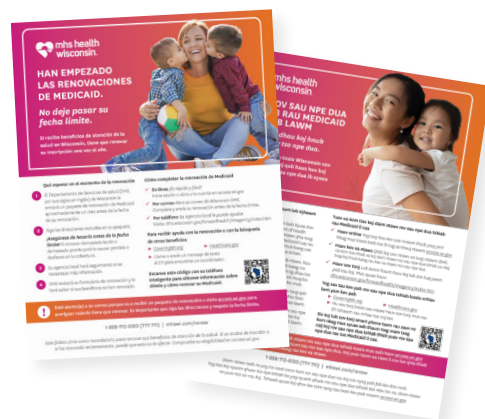
The outreach strategies and tactics implemented during the unwinding campaigns provided discoveries for improved member retention during standard Medicaid member renewals going forward.

Taking it to the Streets

The MHS Health Member Advocate team supported the Medicaid eligibility renewal process by providing education to Medicaid members and community-based organizations (CBOs) during community events. These efforts were crucial to ensure all Wisconsin Medicaid members understood how to retain their health insurance coverage and be prepared to find other health insurance options should they be no longer eligible.



69 community events and presentations by the Member Advocate Team.



The Medicaid Eligibility Renewal flyer was created by MHS Health and distributed at CBOs and during events. The flyer was also translated into the two most prevalent non-English languages used by members, Spanish and Hmong.

Member Advocacy

The MHS Health Member Advocate team (better known as the “A-Team”) utilizes a comprehensive approach to support members and advance community health. Member Advocates play a critical role in the healthcare landscape, responsible for recommending necessary improvements and resolving barriers related to member experience, access to care, cultural sensitivity, appeals and grievances, and communication materials delivered to members.



The A-Team significantly amplified their presence in 2023, doubling their event engagement compared to 2022, and spanning to numerous Wisconsin counties including Brown, Jackson, Kenosha, La Crosse, Milwaukee, Monroe, Outagamie, Racine, Rock, and Waukesha. The services ranged from supporting back-to-school fairs and homeless initiatives to supporting Juneteenth celebrations and community baby showers.

Back to School at the Betty Brinn Children’s Museum

MHS Health played a pivotal role as a primary sponsor for an important back-to-school fair hosted at the Betty Brinn Children’s Museum in Milwaukee. This event held special significance for MHS Health as its roots are deeply intertwined with the museum’s namesake.

1,800 Event participants in attendance.

1,500 Children’s backpacks distributed.

MHS Health participated in a total of **nine back-to-school events** during 2023, supporting areas such as Beloit, Green Bay, Milwaukee, and Racine.



Harvest Health Fair

In partnership with Milwaukee Health Services, Inc., a federally qualified health center (FQHC), MHS Health hosted the Harvest Health Fair at the Isaac Coggs Heritage Health Center. This clinic is located in Milwaukee’s 53218 zip code, an area facing limited access to fundamental resources. MHS Health was the sole managed care organization (MCO) working with the FQHC, alongside other CBOs and local businesses who were brought together by the MHS Health Member Advocates.

Those who attended learned about important health information, such as COVID-19 vaccinations, how to find a doctor, behavioral health services, blood lead testing, and health insurance enrollment. Attendees received a warm BBQ lunch and a three-pound bag of fresh fruit to take home. They could also participate in a healthy cooking demonstration, face painting, and bouncy house fun. Additionally, **150 new winter jackets for children** were handed out.



Juneteenth Celebrations

Across Appleton, La Crosse, and Milwaukee, the A-Team made a significant impact at three unique Juneteenth celebrations, providing more than **600 attendees** with important health information and resources. These events were held in communities with a strong presence of MHS Health members, leading to positive interactions with members who expressed enthusiasm for the health plan.



- 200+** Event participants served in Appleton.
- 100+** Event participants served in La Crosse.
- 300+** Event participants served in Milwaukee.

Sojourner Family Peace Center

MHS Health teamed up with the Sojourner Family Peace Center, the largest nonprofit provider of interpersonal violence prevention and intervention services in the state, caring for nearly 8,000 clients annually. Just in time for the winter holidays, MHS Health stopped by the shelter to hand out **dozens of children’s books, coloring books, as well as winter coats and hats.**



Project Homeless Connect

In July 2023, MHS Health partnered with Couleecap, Inc. to support La Crosse residents who are unhoused or at risk of homelessness. The nearly **100 attendees** were offered free shuttle services, hot lunches, haircuts, clothing, supplies for outdoor living, and food to take home. As the sole MCO among 40 vendors, MHS Health distributed first-aid kits, toothbrushes, and provided information on health services and Medicaid eligibility renewal. In October, MHS Health extended its support by participating in a similar event in Milwaukee, **servicing an additional 100 individuals.**



Grievances and Appeals

Member Advocates serve as allies for MHS Health members, actively supporting them through the grievances and appeals processes. During the grievances process, Member Advocates engage with members to address concerns regarding quality of care and service delivery, helping to ensure their voices are heard and their issues are thoroughly investigated. During the appeals process, the A-Team offers guidance in navigating complex medical service decisions, preparing them for the appeal process, and providing representation on behalf of the member.



In 2023, the MHS Health Member Advocates supported **593 Grievances** and **188 Appeals**. These covered various topics such as provider billing, access to care, plan or provider services, and quality of care.

Supplemental Security Income Referral Program

The Member Advocates support Supplemental Security Income (SSI) referrals by assisting eligible members with shifting from BadgerCare Plus to SSI. In 2023, the Member Advocates referred **42 members** to Community Advocates, a partner organization who supports members through the transition process.



- 12 Member cases were eligible for SSI.
- 12 Cases were pending or in process (as of December 2023).
- 18 Cases were closed due to loss of contact or ineligibility to meet program criteria.

Community Advisory Committee

Spearheaded by the Member Advocates, MHS Health’s Community Advisory Committee (CAC) serves to obtain input from the community to enhance health plan services. Through the feedback and recommendations provided by the committee, the CAC offers a comprehensive and informed perspective on MHS Health programs that may impact specific community groups and potential service improvements. The CAC consists of community stakeholders, including church leaders, local business leaders, hospital representatives, and representatives from community-based organizations (CBOs), and advocacy groups. By identifying key issues and areas of growth, the CAC shapes MHS Health’s programs to better serve its members, helping to ensure that MHS Health’s services are comprehensive and effective.

In 2023, MHS Health presented for CAC feedback its annual Health Equity Strategic Plan, Cultural Competence Plan, Cultural and Linguistic Appropriate Services (CLAS) Plan, along with other important member materials to the CAC, all of which were approved by the committee. These documents are integral to driving the health plan’s health equity initiatives.

Member Advisory Council

MHS Health has a unique opportunity to receive direct member feedback through its Member Advisory Council (MAC). The MAC is comprised of health plan members, parents, guardians, member advocacy groups, and MHS Health employees, who collectively review and report on a variety of quality and service issues within the health plan and its provider network.

During MAC meetings, MHS Health Member Advocates solicit health plan member input regarding the approach and effectiveness of the health plan programs, services, and policies. This collaborative effort aims to improve the service delivery system in local communities and optimize clinical outcomes. Throughout 2023, MHS Health Member Advocates held **three MAC meetings**.



Advancing Partnerships

MHS Health utilizes an integrated approach to support the health and well-being of the broader community by forming strategic partnerships with community-based organizations, resulting in powerful collaborations that address whole-person care.

Community Partnerships

Throughout 2023, MHS Health demonstrated ongoing commitment and support to Wisconsin by providing services and sponsorships to the organizations listed below.

African Heritage, Inc.	Hmong American Friendship Association
Advocate Aurora Health	iHeart Media - Sista Strut
BeLeaf Survivors	Kinship Community Food Center
Betty Brinn Children’s Museum	March of Dimes
Casa Hispania, Inc.	Milwaukee LGBT Community Center
City of Milwaukee	Milwaukee Health Services, Inc.
Children’s Wisconsin	National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Southeast Wisconsin
Delta Research and Educational Foundation	Northcott Neighborhood House
Ebenezer Child Care Centers	Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin
Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin	Procure Medical Group
Greater Lombardi Open Foundation	Versiti Blood Center of Wisconsin
Greater Milwaukee Committee	We All Rise: African American Resource Center, Inc.

Provider Health Equity Summit

The critical role of healthcare providers in attaining optimal health is undeniable. An opportunity exists to educate healthcare professionals through research-informed content that aims to enhance the skills, strategy, and performance of healthcare teams, elevate patient quality of care, and ultimately improve community health outcomes.

As a result of MHS Health’s October 2022 Health Equity Summit, a second one was held in February 2023, which saw a **30 percent increase in attendees** from the previous MHS Health summit in 2022. This summit provided education to **372 attendees** on topics such as drivers of health, Z-codes, and bias in healthcare.

At the closing of the summit, attendees were asked to complete a survey designed to learn more about how providers collect and use patient DoH data to improve patient care. The survey responses offered MHS Health valuable insights into the development of plans for building and maintaining provider-MCO engagement and cultural competency. This survey also indicated that providers were interested in a suicide prevention focused summit that was held in June 2023 (see page 31 for more information).



**Understanding Today,
Changing Tomorrow**



We commit to nourishing a culture of transformative change.

CULTURE

MHS Health is a true ally on our journey towards creating a safer, more inclusive space for every member of Wisconsin's LGBTQIA+ community. Their hands-on support makes a profound difference in the lives of those we proudly serve. Together, we've been able to foster a sense of belonging and provide essential services to those in need.

~ Ricardo Galaviz, Associate Director, Milwaukee LGBT Community Center

Cultural Transformation

In MHS Health’s ongoing efforts to advance health equity and dismantle barriers to optimal care, the health plan recognizes that embracing cultural diversity, implementing educational opportunities, and tackling the root causes of health inequities are not only imperative but also transformative.

Health Equity Improvement Committee

Given the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity of the U.S. population, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services requires the implementation of Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) among all healthcare organizations. The National CLAS Standards offer a framework to improve the provision of services and are intended to advance health equity, quality, and aid in the elimination of healthcare disparities by establishing a blueprint for health and healthcare organizations to follow. CLAS helps take into account factors such as cultural health beliefs, preferred languages, health literacy levels, and communication needs to ensure all services offered are respectful, understandable, effective, and equitable.¹⁸

The work conducted within MHS Health’s 2022 CLAS Committee provided the foundation for the pursuit of the health plan’s 2023 Health Equity Accreditation (*see page 12 for more information*) and forms the backbone of the Health Equity Improvement Committee. The committee convenes quarterly to provide support in areas that advance health equity, including initiatives related to CLAS, diversity, equity, and inclusion, drivers of health, and health disparity performance improvement projects.

Cultural Competence Self-Assessment

MHS Health completes an annual evaluation of cultural competence with all health plan team members. The evaluation is based on the *Cultural and Linguistic Competence Family Organization Assessment Instrument*.¹⁹ All answers are optional, anonymous, and self-reported. The results are used to plan for and incorporate culturally and linguistically sensitive trainings, policies, structures, and practices to enhance the quality of services and support delivered to members, while also promoting cultural and linguistic competence as an essential approach in the elimination of disparities. MHS Health’s 2023 Cultural Competence Self-Assessment earned a **94% completion rate** among all internal team members. Based on these results, the Health Equity team developed a robust training plan for 2024 to address four key areas of opportunity listed below.

1. Create support for team members to attend and/or participate in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council activities and events throughout the year.
2. Provide additional trainings and resources specifically on how to communicate with members about their culture and healthcare expectations and needs.
3. Build out more initiatives that focus on disparities related to ability and veteran status.
4. Create more opportunities for resourcing and resources.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Betty Brinn founded MHS Health to address gaps in healthcare access and to provide employment opportunities for women. Today, MHS Health continues Brinn’s mission of bringing a voice to the underserved and underrepresented, facilitated by a workforce that is as vibrant and diverse as the communities it serves. Through comprehensive diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) education and training, MHS Health ensures that its team delivers care that caters to the unique needs of each member. These efforts position DEI to be fundamental to the success of MHS Health and the overall health of its members.

Team members from various departments come together to form MHS Health’s DEI Council with the goal of enhancing cultural competency and inclusivity among colleagues, members, and the broader community.

By the end of 2023, the DEI Council expanded significantly, doubling its membership size and tripling its initiatives to offer more than 35 unique events and self-led activities. This growth was strategically driven, created through intentional thought-leadership from within the council.

In January 2023, the DEI Council conducted an analysis of current DEI efforts and identified areas of improvement, leading to the development of three strategic priorities.





The vision of the MHS Health Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council is to advance the global power of DEI by embracing cultural awareness, celebrating differences, empowering ourselves by being all inclusive, and by bringing our authentic selves to work to propel equitable, community-driven results.

To achieve its goals, the DEI Council implemented a range of strategies, including cultural competence training for team members, outreach efforts and in-person support to expand MHS Health’s network of community partners, increased focus on equitable recruitment and hiring practices, and involvement of MHS Health’s board of directors in DEI activities. By setting clear goals, monitoring progress, and soliciting feedback, MHS Health’s DEI Council strives to ensure its efforts are prudent, impactful, and responsive to the evolving needs of the health plan and community.

2023 MHS Health DEI Council Highlights include:

Educational Learning Circle series on *The Interplay Between Culture and Health*, a seven-part Robert Wood Johnson Foundation video documentary series that examines the role of drivers of health (DoH) in creating health inequities and how local communities are working to solve for them.

Collaborations with other Centene state health plans engaged 400+ team members across the enterprise:

- *LGBTQIA+ Pride Month Panel: Bias, Stigma, and Lived Experiences* co-hosted discussion with Arizona Complete Health.
- *Women’s History Month Fireside Chat* co-hosted panel discussion with Arizona Complete Health and Meridian Illinois.



External trainings:

- *LGBTQIA+ Inclusivity 101* training from the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center.
- *Hunger Relief* training with Wisconsin’s Hunger Task Force.
- Four-part DEI Town Hall series with Dr. Alonzo Kelly: *The Art of Asking Better Questions; How the Right Questions Lead to More Efficient and Effective Outcomes; Creating a Culture Where Everyone Feels They Belong; The Intersection of Lived and Learned Experiences on Civility in the Workplace; The Art of Leading Change (in the midst of change).*

Internal education and trainings:

- *Autism in Youth* training from Jenise Shin-Lee, Autism Clinical Care Specialist at Centene's Health Net Federal Services.
- *Interview with the Coquille Indian Tribe* for Native American Heritage Month featuring Molly Betts, Member Advocate at MHS Health, and her father, Bill Metcalf.
- *Hanan's Kitchen* cooking tutorial for Arab American Heritage Month featuring Hanan Merabi, Manager of Care Management at MHS Health.
- *French American Heritage in Wisconsin and French Language Learning* featuring Lillian Rizo-DuBois, Health Equity Coordinator at MHS Health.



In-person service and community work:

- Support and sponsorship of Milwaukee Wisconsin's 40th *Hmong New Year*.
- Support and sponsorship of the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center float in the *Milwaukee LGBTQIA+ Pride Parade*.
- Fundraising gala sponsorship with the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center.

Video spotlight opportunities for team members and their loved ones to share lived experiences:

- *Autism Isn't the Same for Everyone* for Autism Awareness Month.
- *Getting to Know Your MHS Health Team* for Women's History Month.
- *Veterans Appreciation* for Veterans Day.

Launch of internal newsletter, *Equity Echoes*, carefully crafted to feature monthly updates on both MHS Health and enterprise-related DEI news, education on upcoming DEI observances, and recommended self-led trainings.

Innovative education through virtual games:

- *KAHOOT! trivia* for Black History Month and for Period Equity.
- *Lotería (Bingo)* for Hispanic Heritage Month.
- *Food Security Quest* for Hunger and Homelessness Awareness.



LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Care Guide

MHS Health's *LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Care Guide* was created in 2023 to equip team members with the knowledge and readiness to provide respectful, inviting, and high-quality care to members who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and gender diverse (LGBTQIA+).

The LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Care Guide offers best practice education, strategies, and resources to support team members every step of the way when interacting with members and colleagues. From incorporating inclusive language in daily conversation, to prevalent health equity concerns and barriers to care for LGBTQIA+ communities, to fostering a culture of accountability, the care guide promotes that every interaction should reflect a commitment to dignity, respect, and equity.



In August 2023, the MHS Health DEI Council began crafting the next two editions of the LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Care Guide, specially tailored to MHS Health provider network partners and MHS Health members.

MHS Health's LGBTQIA+ Inclusive Care Guide was recognized by Centene as "DEI Program of the Year" for 2023.

LGBTQIA+ Advocacy with the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center

MHS Health maintains a steadfast partnership with the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center, a non-profit organization working to strengthen Wisconsin's LGBTQIA+ community.

This partnership embodies a shared commitment of fostering inclusivity and equity, and it provides MHS Health with the unique opportunity to show up in a space that historically lacks healthcare support.

During June 2023 Pride Month, MHS Health supported the LGBT Community Center by assisting with planning, funding, building, and physically driving their first Pride Parade float.



That fall, MHS Health sponsored the Milwaukee LGBT Community Center's annual fundraiser for the second consecutive year. As a primary contributor of the event, MHS Health's Vice President of Health Equity, Katherine Kasabuske, delivered an inspiring speech that emphasized the imperative of equitable healthcare access for all individuals, irrespective of gender identity and sexual orientation.

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