



# Aligning for Health

## 2022 Goals and Key Deliverables

### Overall Objectives for 2022

- Continue to grow the influence of Aligning for Health among policymakers in light of the elevated focus on social needs and health equity;
- Shape discussions in Washington around social determinants of health – serving as a conduit for meaningful bipartisan interactions on social determinants, helping ensure that national priorities and interests move toward meaningful, constructive action; and
- Advance policy ideas, including legislation and/or Administrative actions that empower organizations to advance health equity by addressing both health and social needs.

### 2022 Top Priorities

To achieve our 2022 Objectives, AFH will take action to achieve the following top priorities:

- Advocate for passage of the **Social Determinants Accelerator Act (SDAA)** (H.R. 2503/S. 3039) and the **Leveraging Integrated Networks in Communities to Address Social Needs (LINC to Address Social Needs) Act** (S. 509/H.R. 6072);
- Support the **introduction and passage of key bipartisan legislation** or the implementation of efforts by the Biden Administration to address topics such as:
  - Screening, Collecting, and Analyzing standardized Social Needs Data;
  - Collecting and Reporting standardized Race, Ethnicity, and Language (REL) Data;
  - Addressing maternal health disparities;
  - Streamlining and integrating eligibility and enrollment processes and data systems for low-income programs; or
  - Providing guidance and/or opportunities for blending and braiding of cross-sector programmatic funding.
- Work with CMS to develop **guidance/blueprints** or to outline **best practices** and **financing opportunities** for states, plans, providers to advance health equity by addressing social needs, and to **enhance waiver opportunities, Innovation Center models**, and other opportunities that incent proactive actions to address social needs;
- If SDAA or LINC are passed, work with the Administration on to influence implementation and conduct outreach to raise awareness of the new opportunities. Connect with grantees, including state and local governments and other stakeholders to understand implementation and other challenges;
- **Convene broad multi-sector stakeholder webinars and, potentially, in person forums** focused on timely or advocacy focused priorities on a quarterly basis; and
- Continue to **promote the work of Aligning for Health and our Members** through biweekly newsletters, thought leadership, and other communications.

## 2022 Deliverables and Activities

AFH will engage in several activities to fulfill our priorities, including through: 1) Congressional advocacy; 2) Administration advocacy; 3) policy development; 4) thought leadership and policy communications; and 5) strategic partnerships.

- **Congressional Advocacy**

- Continue to advocate for passage of SDAA (H.R. 2503/S. 3039) and the LINC to Address Social Needs Act (H.R. 6072/S. 509) in the House and Senate. These bills provide support for states and local governments to develop critical social determinants infrastructure.
  - AFH will continue to build stakeholder support, push for additional social determinants-focused hearings and markups to highlight and advance both bills, and identify vehicles for passage.
- Cultivate and leverage state and local leaders and other stakeholders as advocates for SDAA and LINC and continue to cultivate examples of ongoing challenges and areas of opportunity.
- Support the introduction and passage of key bipartisan legislation or the implementation of administrative efforts:
  - To support the improved screening, collection, and reporting of standardized social needs data and REL data.
  - To address maternal health disparities, such as the [Maternal Health Quality Improvement Act \(H.R. 4387\)](#) and the [Helping MOMs Act of 2021 \(H.R. 3345\)](#), or components of the [Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act of 2021](#).
- Ensure the success of the bipartisan *Social Determinants of Health Caucus*, which will facilitate dialogue between committees responsible for health and social programs, identify opportunities for Congress to act to help advance health equity by addressing health and social needs, and will share information about relevant legislation and initiatives.
- Monitor and engage on a wide range of social determinant legislation and provide analysis to members. Currently endorsed legislation includes:
  - Care That's Fair Act (H.R. 4554), CARING for Social Determinants of Health Act (H.R. 3894), Improving Social Determinants of Health Act (H.R. 379/S. 104), Social Determinants of Health Data Analysis Act (H.R. 4026), Social Determinants for MOMs Act (H.R. 943/S. 851), and the Addressing Social Determinants in Medicare Advantage Act (H.R. 4074).

- **Administration Advocacy**

- Encourage CMS and HHS to continue to issue additional **social determinants guidance or other forms of technical assistance, such as:**
  - Guidance to payers, providers and other stakeholders on social needs screening/data collection, and available resources to address social needs.

- National guidance or standards for social needs screening tools that align and can be integrated with the ongoing standards work being performed by ONC the Gravity Project, or other Standards Development Organizations.
    - Guidance to states and local governments on appropriate and allowable approaches to braiding and blending to support cross-sector initiatives.
    - Guidance to states that clarify allowable spending related to services addressing health-related social needs;
  - Track and report on CMS's actions and inclinations on the use of **social risk factors** in risk adjustment under Medicare and Medicaid, including for payment and for performance.
  - **Liaise with (1) CMS in influencing Innovation Center models** and other waivers and regulatory opportunities that incent proactive actions to address social needs across Medicare and Medicaid; and (2) **HHS as it continues to develop Department-wide social determinants and health disparities strategies**, improves collection and standards of social determinants data; and partners with other agencies on cross-sector programs to close gaps.
- **Policy Development**
  - Engage in policy development and advocacy around:
    - Screening for and collection of social needs data
    - Blending and braiding of funding, social impact models, or other innovative tools to finance interventions.
    - Reimbursement for and incorporation of Community Health Workers and other similar types of roles as part of health care support system
  - Derive new policy ideas and initiatives from engagement with a wide range of stakeholders and advocates
- **Thought Leadership and Policy Communications**
  - Organize periodic webinars or in-person convenings to (1) highlight key advocacy priorities, (2) around timely and high-interest social determinants and health disparities topics.
  - Convene multi-sector forums with individuals working on key initiatives and programs in the federal government, state government, health and human service programs, and community-based organizations. The roundtables would be themed and held biannually with goals of (1) sharing best practices and innovative ideas, and (2) elevating barriers and challenges to implementing social determinants strategies.
  - Continue to publish biweekly newsletters and participate in, and speak on panels at, events, conferences, and other activities focused on social determinants, health disparities, and Medicaid.
- **Strategic Partnerships**
  - Maintain and develop new partnerships with key stakeholder groups and regularly seek their input as we seek to advance legislation and our other key activities throughout 2022.

- Continue outreach to stakeholders in housing, food or energy assistance; consumer groups or minority groups; groups generally focused on poverty/empowerment; groups focused on pay for performance; health care stakeholders, and groups in Washington representing states and local governments. This will be accomplished in part through the Forums or other convenings.