



# Live Well Allegheny Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health Coalition

ENSURING FAIR AND JUST ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE  
AND HEALTHY CONDITIONS

Our health is shaped by many things, such as where we live, if we have access to nutritious food and safe outdoor spaces, and if we can go to the doctor when we need to. It is important to ensure that all of us in Allegheny County can get the health care and community services we need, in the ways we need them, no matter our race or ethnicity, what neighborhood we live in or what insurance we have.

## WHAT IS THE LIVE WELL ALLEGHENY RACIAL AND ETHNIC APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY HEALTH COALITION?

The Live Well Allegheny Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health Coalition, referred to as the LWA REACH Coalition, is a multi-sector partnership that works to reduce health disparities among specific racial and ethnic groups in communities with the highest rates of chronic disease. It is an important way that Allegheny County is advancing fairness and health in our region. The LWA REACH Coalition connects Black residents of Allegheny County with the resources needed to prevent and treat chronic disease, and with clinics and community organizations that specialize in supporting health and wellness.

## HOW DOES THE LWA REACH COALITION WORK?

The LWA REACH Coalition is a partnership of government agencies, health care providers, non-profit service providers, and Black-led and grass-roots organizations. It was formed to address the underlying issues that drive high rates of diseases like diabetes, heart disease, and cancer in the Black community.

The Coalition developed a community plan to ensure Black residents of Allegheny County have what they need to be their healthiest, including access to health care, community services, healthy food, and safe outdoor spaces for walking, biking, and playing. Because the Coalition is made up of community-based partners, it knows where opportunities and challenges lie. They use that knowledge to guide health care systems, community organizations, and municipal agencies to make adjustments that make sense.



### TRANSFORMING SYSTEMS

Improving community health and preventing chronic disease



### FILLING GAPS

Connecting residents to community resources for healthy food, breastfeeding support



### CHANGING POLICIES

Working with cities and schools to build healthier environments

*The LWA REACH Coalition promotes health care and healthy conditions that value every person as an individual and provide all people with a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.*

## WHY DOES ALLEGHENY COUNTY NEED THE LWA REACH COALITION?

Black communities in Allegheny County are less likely to have stores with fresh, affordable food and spaces that enable everyday physical activity. These factors help explain why rates of chronic disease, such as heart disease and diabetes, are higher among Black residents in Allegheny County.<sup>1</sup>

Good health also requires good health care. Although the county offers services and resources that can help residents prevent and manage health issues, residents don't always know about these services, have trouble accessing them, or don't feel like they are offered in ways that are culturally familiar. To connect Black residents with the right supports to prevent and treat chronic disease, the LWA REACH Coalition helps them get screened to identify risk, find resources they feel comfortable with, and navigate eligibility questions and follow-up tasks.

## HOW HAS THE LWA REACH COALITION MADE A DIFFERENCE SO FAR?

Between 2018 and 2022, LWA REACH's focus on ensuring access to healthy food, safe outdoor spaces, and health care has produced some remarkable results:

- **Safer, healthier conditions.** Through LWA REACH's municipal partnerships, traffic calming and safety solutions are being put in place to make it safer and easier for people to walk or bike to their everyday destinations. School lunch guidelines are being evaluated to make meals healthier and more connected to local farms.
- **Nutrition support starting at birth.** Breastfeeding offers health benefits for babies and moms. Partnerships with the Pittsburgh Black Breastfeeding Circles, Healthy Start's breastfeeding 101 class, and 24-hour-on-call Latch Line helps more Black families start and continue nursing.
- **Increase in healthy behaviors.** The Coalition has helped Black residents get screened, keep their doctor's appointments, and eat healthier foods to reach goals of achieving healthier weights, improving blood pressure, and lowering blood sugar.

# The LWA REACH Coalition Improves Community Health

35

Miles of roadway identified for pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements

2,936+

People impacted by the implementation of the nutrition standards at 14 pediatric community sites

27

New or enhanced places providing increased geographic or financial access to healthier foods

81

Formal partnerships formed between clinics and the LWA REACH Coalition

2,591

Patients referred to primary care, chronic disease programs, or food assistance programs

341

Black residents received direct breastfeeding support

## HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

We're helping Allegheny County have the right conditions for all residents to be healthy. Learn more about the LWA REACH Coalition to be a part of this journey! [www.livewellallegheny.com/REACH/](http://www.livewellallegheny.com/REACH/)

70 municipalities in Allegheny County have committed to improving health and quality of life in their communities. Connect your community to the LWA REACH Coalition— work with us! [www.livewellallegheny.com/join-us/partner/](http://www.livewellallegheny.com/join-us/partner/)

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