


# SIM PROJECT SUMMARY: Rhode Island Health Equity Zones (HEZ)

Project Summary			
<p><b>Project Description</b></p> <p>The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) staff working on the HEZ initiative will provide support to the State Innovation Model (SIM), SIM vendors/partners, and local HEZ collaborative members to foster a culture of collaboration that results in measurable progress towards the integration and alignment of mutually beneficial efforts. This work aims to address SIM’s theory of change by addressing the socioeconomic and environmental determinants of health within Rhode Island’s transition from volume-based health to a value-based health system.</p>		<p><b>Project Goals and Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Further facilitate systems change on the local level that complements the work of Accountable Care Organizations, Accountable Entities, and Accountable Health Communities.</li> <li>➤ Improved community-clinical connections addressing system-wide factors that affect health outcomes across SIM (and other) health focus areas.</li> </ul>	
Vendor Information:	State Contact:	Total Funds Leveraged:	Target Populations:
<p>Christopher Ausura, RIDOH  <a href="mailto:Christopher.Ausura@health.ri.gov">Christopher.Ausura@health.ri.gov</a>                      401-222-1383</p>	<p>James Rajotte, SIM  <a href="mailto:James.Rajotte@health.ri.gov">James.Rajotte@health.ri.gov</a>                      401-222-5142</p>	<p>SIM: \$500,000                      RIDOH: \$                      RIF: \$</p>	
Major Accomplishments		Key Metrics and Evaluation Insights	
<p><b>Impacts on Healthcare Workforce Transformation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ SIM and HEZ teams continue to conduct joint presentations to increase awareness of healthcare transformation and community-clinical linkages. The SIM team has presented at 2 HEZ Learning Community events to increase understanding of healthcare transformation within community partnerships, and HEZ and SIM partnered to present on community-clinical linkages at the RI Health Equity Summit.</li> </ul> <p><b>Impacts on Patient Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ RIDOH and SIM leadership have partnered on 3 community site visits to help state agency directors better understand how agency programming can be leveraged to improve community-clinical linkages necessary to realize healthcare transformation goals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Impacts on Data Capability and Expertise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ SIM and HEZ collaborated on the development of RI’s Statewide Health Equity Indicators to develop a baseline for measuring the social, economic, and environmental determinants of health through the Community Health Assessment Group, that complements and aligns with the statewide integrated population health goals in place for RI.</li> </ul> <p><b>Impacts on Population Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ RIDOH Director was elected president of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, and is using HEZ as a platform for her President’s Challenge: Building Healthy and Resilient Communities.</li> </ul>		<p><b>Outcomes Achieved</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ 44% ↓ in childhood lead poisoning (Pawtucket)</li> <li>❖ 24% ↓ in teen pregnancy (Central Falls)</li> <li>❖ 13% ↓ in feelings of loneliness (West End, Elmwood, &amp; Southside Providence)</li> <li>❖ 5-7% ↓ in body weight for 20% of Diabetes Prevention Program participants (Statewide)</li> <li>❖ 40% ↑ in redemption of SNAP farmers’ market incentives (West Warwick)</li> <li>❖ 36% ↑ in access to fruits and vegetables (Olneyville)</li> <li>❖ 250% ↑ in community engagement (Statewide)</li> <li>❖ 46 opioid users diverted from the criminal justice system (West Warwick)</li> <li>❖ &gt;1000 graduates of evidence-based chronic disease self-management workshops (Statewide)</li> </ul> <p><b>Lessons Learned and Evaluation Insights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HEZ Communities need infrastructure funding that is not tied to programmatic outcomes to ensure that the model is successfully implemented in line with the core public health values: through a collaborative, community-led process, each Health Equity Zone conducts a needs assessment, then implements and evaluates a data-driven plan of action to address the conditions that are preventing people from being as healthy as possible.</li> <li>• Changes to federal funding have driven some staffing and infrastructure changes.</li> </ul>	

- Impacts:
- Patients
  - Specialists
  - Hospital & Long-Term Care Staff
  - PCPs
  - State Government
  - Community Based Organizations
  - Payers
  - Community Mental Health Center Staff

## Sustainability Efforts

HEZ is RIDOH's primary approach for developing the community-led public health infrastructure needed to move upstream and address the social, environmental and economic determinants of health while strengthen the voice of residents and partners at the local level. Sustainable funding for this model is essential. To continue to support the development of resources needed to implement HEZ RIDOH is:

- Continuing to pursue and secure state and federal funds to braid together to support the needs identified by the HEZ.
- Engaging local, State, and national philanthropic organizations, government agencies, and partners to identify opportunities for coordinated investments at the community level through aligned investments.
- Requiring healthcare systems to invest in their surrounding community through HEZs via current policy/regulatory levers.
- Aligning community evaluations, assessments and investment strategies with the HEZ using collective impact methodology.
- Actively engaging with funded partners to identify opportunities for collaboration.
- Collaborating with philanthropic funders both in RI and across the nation, such as the Rhode Island Foundation (RIF) who recently established the Fund for a Healthy RI to support projects that builds on the SIM/HEZ culture of alignment and collaboration and is intended to create more effective community/clinical linkages. RIF funded six collaborations; all six were connected to HEZs in RI.

## Project Website and Informational Handouts

### Brochures

[2018 Health Equity Zones \(2018\)](#)

### Factsheets

[2018 Rhode Island's Health Equity Zones: A Model for Building Healthy, Resilient Communities\(2018\)](#)

### Guides

[Health Equity Zone Project Leads and Evaluators](#)

## Communications Material and Media Highlights

### Articles

[Rhode Island Health Equity Zones: Addressing Local Problems with Local Solutions](#)

[Equity in All Policies Webinar](#)

[In Rhode Island, a Model for Upending Health Inequity](#)

[2016 Introducing Rhode Islands Health Equity Zones](#)

[Nicole Alexander-Scott: Health Equity Zones help R.I.](#)

[Rhode Island Targets Social Factors to Achieve Health Equity](#)

[South County health equity zone takes holistic view](#)

[Using Collective Impact To Address MCH Priorities](#)

## Toolkits and Online Training

## Evaluation Reports and Presentations

### Presentations

[2016 Health Equity Summit Resources](#)

## Disclaimer

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