



POPULATION HEALTH INNOVATION LAB

A Program of the PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE

2022 ANNUAL REPORT





The Population Health Innovation Lab (PHIL), a program of the Public Health Institute (PHI), designs, catalyzes, and accelerates innovative approaches that advance health, well-being, and equity.

PHIL brings startup thinking to community health. We leverage the assets PHI has amassed over its more than 55 years at the forefront of public health—nationally ranked researchers, diverse and proven programs, strong infrastructure, and a wide network of partners—to improve health, well-being, and equity in a community.

We see innovation as a process: move fast, try new things, measure results, and find what works. Repeat. Share. Scale. Since 2015, we have partnered with funders, community-based organizations, government stakeholders, or directly with communities themselves to co-create solutions that move beyond symptoms to address root-cause issues. We bring the science, you bring local expertise, and together we use a proven system of change theories to get results.

2022 was a year of substantial growth for PHIL. The team more than doubled in size; released several publications and toolkits; and worked on projects with local, state, and national funders. This annual report reviews some of our successes and impacts over the last year.

Learn more about our work, services, and team at pophealthinnovationlab.org.

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[PHIL has] folks that are not just academic researchers but can be more applied...they have sort of the research chops but also understanding how to work with the people that are really doing this work out in the field. That is a distinguishing factor for them.

- PHIL Collaborator

IMPACT AREAS

Preventing & Responding to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

PHIL has extensive experience bringing together multisector collaboratives to find evidence-based ways of preventing and responding to ACEs. Our work through [PRACTICE: Preventing and Responding to ACE-Associated Health Conditions and Toxic Stress in Clinics through Community Engagement](#) awards \$19.5 million to **25 teams, from 15 California counties**, to strengthen partnerships, develop new and sustainable evidence-based services, and expand the workforce to fill identified gaps and **address toxic stress and ACE-associated health conditions in their communities**.

Working with stakeholders from six northern California counties, PHIL supported the establishment of the [Northern ACEs Collaborative](#), a multisector collaborative to identify and address opportunities for policy and systems change that mitigate issues of ACEs, trauma, and domestic violence. NAC has **assembled data and evidence** that highlight the unique needs of the region and focus on data related to ACEs and its long-term impacts on ACE-associated health conditions for partners to utilize in their work.

Supporting Accountable Communities of/for Health (ACH)

PHIL is a leader in the ACH movement and has provided strategic support in launching ACHs in multiple states. Through the [Aligning Systems for Health](#) project, PHIL partnered with ACHs across Washington and California to learn which aligning approaches work when, where, for whom, and why. PHIL's research contributed to the evidence base that was used by local and state-level leaders to successfully advocate for the ACH model in Washington and California. In Washington, **research contributed to successfully advocating for a Medicaid Transformation Project extension that provides continued financial support to ACHs**. In California, research contributed to **successfully advocating for a new \$15 million dollar budget line item to support the 13 existing ACHs serving California communities** and further expand the ACH model across the state.

PHIL has supported the [California Accountable Communities for Health Initiative](#) (CACHI), bringing together clinical providers with public health departments, schools, social service agencies, community organizations, and others to improve health and promote health equity in targeted California communities. Throughout this work, PHIL has designed and facilitated a learning lab and curated an ACH Resource Center with unique materials, methodologies, curriculum, and other resources to support the ACH model.

Bringing Together Multisector Collaboratives (MSCs)

PHIL brings together MSCs to collaborate and network with one another. Our team has supported MSCs like the [Northern ACEs Collaborative](#) and Leveraging Collaboration for Domestic Violence. As part of the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) 6|18 Initiative](#), PHIL created a change package of resources needed to assist groups to organize and engage in MSCs that increase the engagement of employers, health plans, and providers in efforts to expand the coverage and delivery of key heart health strategies and other preventive services.

PHIL staff at the 2022 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting



(top to bottom, left to right) Kendra Piper, Peter Forberg, Max Chavez, Esmeralda Salas, Stephanie Bultema, Beverly Bruno, Seun Aluko

STAFF

*Indicates joined PHIL in 2022

**Indicates joined PHIL in 2023

^Indicates left PHIL

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Esmeralda Salas, BS, Research Associate II

Jessica Sanchez, BS, Project Coordinator**

Rebecca Williams, AA, BAS, Program Administrator I*

DIVISIONS

In 2022, the Population Health Innovation Lab (PHIL) team continued to grow and refine its internal structure. The organization formally divided its staff into three divisions: Operations; Learning and Action; and MERLIN: Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning Innovations.

The Leadership Team is comprised of PHIL's Director, Sue Grinnell, MPH; Director of MERLIN, Stephanie Bultema, PhD; and Director of Learning and Action, Kathryn Stewart, MPP.

PROJECTS

PHIL supports communities to advance health, well-being, and equity. PHIL weaves collaborative networks anchored in the communities they serve and innovates tools to address community health issues. This is a look at some of PHIL's 2022 projects. This is not a comprehensive list.

Preventing and Responding to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)-Associated Health Conditions and Toxic Stress in Clinics through Community Engagement (PRACTICE)

In September 2022, the California Department of Health Care Services announced \$19.5 million in ACEs Aware funding to 25 teams across California. The awarding of funds was done in partnership with the Office of the California Surgeon General, UCLA-UCSF ACEs Aware Family Resilience Network, and PHIL.

The goal of this third round of ACEs Aware grant funding, called Preventing and Responding to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)-Associated Health Conditions and Toxic Stress in Clinics through Community Engagement (PRACTICE), is to increase the workforce and services needed for primary care clinics to expand and sustain screening and response to ACEs and toxic stress in local communities.



The funding is awarded to teams that will be led by clinics and will include community-based organizations and Medi-Cal managed care plans. Teams identify gaps in their communities in care and services and, through a statewide learning collaborative, leverage existing and new sources of state funding to build sustainable capacity to fill these gaps.

The 25 grantee teams, from 15 California counties, serve a wide range of diverse patient populations. The learning collaborative offers technical assistance, training, tailored web discussions, access to subject-matter experts, resources, and peer-to-peer learning to support the teams in achieving their goals.

>> Project Impacts

\$19.5 million have been awarded to 25 teams, from 15 California counties, to strengthen partnerships, develop new and sustainable evidence-based services, and expand the workforce to fill identified gaps and address toxic stress and ACE-associated health conditions in their communities.

[Learn more online.](#)

Aligning Systems for Health

Aligning Systems for Health, led by the Georgia Health Policy Center with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, focused on identifying, testing, and sharing what works to align health care, public health, and social services to better address the goals and needs of the people and communities they serve. The project aimed to:

- Synthesize existing research learnings and disseminate findings
- Support original research and evaluation
- Build relationships with those already working in the field

PHIL partnered with Accountable Communities of/for Health (ACHs) across Washington and California to learn which aligning approaches are working when, where, for whom, and why. PHIL's Aligning Systems for Health research explored how aligning across health care, public health, and social service sectors—in partnership with community residents and tribal nations—leads to outcomes in ACHs.

>> Project Impacts

PHIL's research contributed to the evidence base that was used by local and state-level leaders to successfully advocate for the ACH model in Washington and California. In Washington, **research contributed to successfully advocating for a [Medicaid Transformation Project extension](#) that provides continued financial support to ACHs.** In California, research contributed to **successfully advocating for a new [\\$15 million dollar budget line item](#) to support the 13 existing ACHs serving California communities** and further expand the ACH model across the state.

In the summer of 2022, PHIL hosted a learning experience for ACHs based on research findings called "Trust, Community Voices, & Equity: A 3-Part Workshop for Building a Better ACH." **Seventeen individuals representing nine ACHs across Washington and California participated in the workshop.**

[Learn more online.](#)

Northern Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Collaborative (NAC)

Many Northern California Counties are disproportionately affected by high ACE scores relative to other regions in California. Domestic violence is an indicator in the ACE spectrum along with other Social Determinants of Health, which play a critical role in healthy families. A group of partners from six northern California counties —Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Shasta, Tehama, and Trinity—have come together to form a multisector collaborative to identify and address opportunities for systems change that mitigate issues of trauma and domestic violence using the Life-Course Model.



With funding from Blue Shield Foundation of California as part of Leveraging Collaboration to End Domestic Violence (LCDV), PHIL supported the formation of a Northern California collaborative and acts as the backbone, to support and enhance current activities in the six counties. Given the similar demographic nature of the participating rural counties and acknowledging the fluidity of the population, we proposed a regional approach that built on existing long-standing partnerships to address trauma and domestic violence in the region.

>> Project Impacts

One of the key impacts has been the establishment of a shared language and understanding of ACEs and domestic violence across partners and across sectors. This common ground has **strengthened partnerships across the six counties**.

NAC has **assembled data and evidence** for the six-county region that highlight the unique needs of the region and focus on data related to ACEs and its long-term impacts on ACE-associated health conditions in the region. Partners utilize this data in their work.

NAC is a trusted curator and disseminator of regionally relevant resources (information, trainings, events, funding opportunities) to partners and their networks. Partners report that resources shared by NAC are credible and of value for NAC partners.

[Learn more online.](#)

Community Engagement in Biomedical Research

In 2022, PHIL conducted a study of community engagement in basic biomedical research to address the following questions:

- What work is currently being done to build meaningful relationships between researchers and the communities they serve?
- Who are the key players involved in building meaningful researcher–community relationships?
- What are the expectations of researchers and community members when partnering?

From this work, PHIL published a [Landscape of Community Engagement in the Biomedical Field](#) report, a full report on [Community Engagement in Biomedical and Health Sciences Research Study](#), and a [two–page summary](#) of this research.

This study provides a deeper understanding of the motivations, facilitators, and barriers behind conducting and/or funding biomedical and health sciences research that directly engages underrepresented communities of color. Research results lend insight into the current community engagement landscape by showing the various approaches employed to engage communities in research, how funders support community engagement, and how both researchers and funders operationalize community engagement. From this knowledge, funding organizations can gain an extensive understanding of community engagement and how to support researchers in community–engaged research, especially those who work with underrepresented communities of color.

>> Project Impacts

PHIL’s research contributed to a **major biomedical research funder’s decision to launch a Community Engagement Community of Practice** for its grantees to support their efforts to meaningfully engage community members in their research.

[Learn more online.](#)

Providing Access and Transforming Health (PATH) Collaborative Planning and Implementation

Providing Access and Transforming Health (PATH) is a five-year initiative through the California Department of Health Care Services to build up the capacity and infrastructure of on-the-ground partners, such as community-based organizations, public hospitals, county agencies, tribes, and others, to successfully participate in the Medi-Cal delivery system as California widely implements Enhanced Care Management and Community Supports and Justice Involved services under CalAIM.

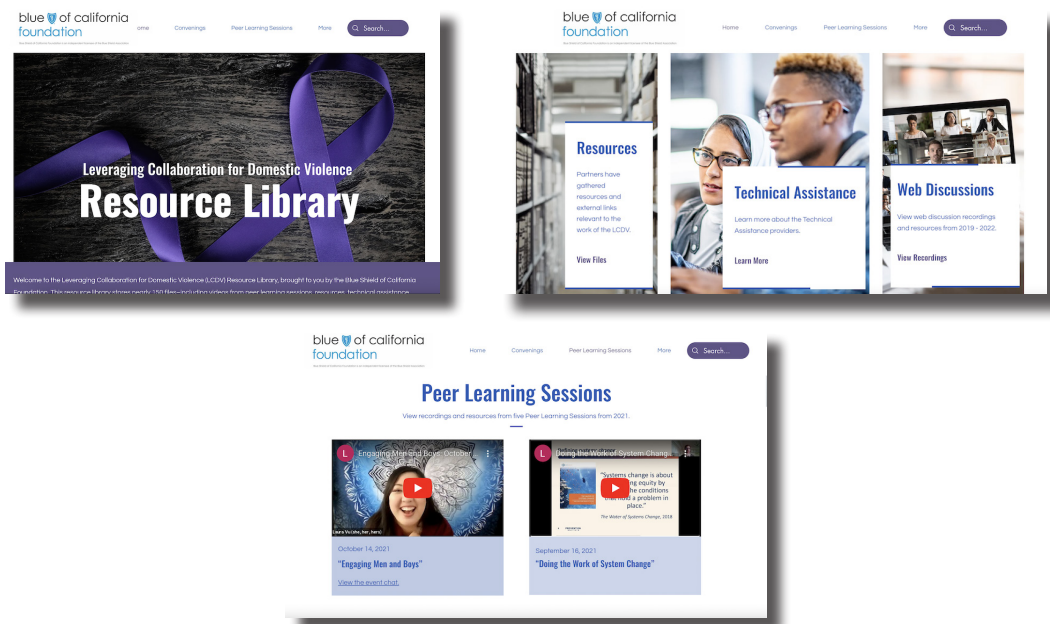
Under PATH is the Collaborative Planning and Implementation (CPI) initiative that provides funding for county and regional collaborative planning efforts to support the implementation of ECM and Community Supports. The CPI collaboratives will be comprised of stakeholders in a region who come together to identify, discuss, and resolve implementation issues and determine how PATH and other CalAIM funding initiatives—including the CalAIM Incentive Payment Program—may be used to address program implementation gaps and improve outcomes.

PHIL supports the Northwest and Southwest regions in Northern California. The Northwest region counties are Humboldt and Del Norte, and the Southwest region counties are Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, and Sonoma.

[Learn more online.](#)

Leveraging Collaboration for Domestic Violence Resource Library

PHIL’s communication team developed a digital resource library for the Leveraging Collaboration for Domestic Violence (LCDV) with funds provided by the Blue Shield of California Foundation. This password-protected resource library stores nearly 150 files—including videos from peer learning sessions, resources, technical assistance materials, and presentations from past web discussions—to help stakeholders learn more about the work and history of the LCDV.



APHA PRESENTATIONS

Several members of the PHIL team attended and presented at the 2022 American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting in November in Boston, Massachusetts sharing research and expertise. Presentations from the PHIL team included:

Panel Discussion: “Accountable Communities of/for Health: Growing evidence for multisector collaboratives as vehicles for advancing equity and improving community health”

Speakers: Peter Forberg, MA and Stephanie Bultema, PhD

Nearly a decade ago, the first Accountable Communities of/for Health (ACHs) were designed to help communities implement population health strategies; they are neutral conveners connecting the health care delivery system and local communities. This panel, co-moderated in part by the Population Health Innovation Lab, will explore these issues through the experiences of ACHs in Washington and California; learnings from a systems change evaluation of California ACHs and a cross-state research project that explores what makes for a successful ACH; and the perspective of a national funder of systems change and multisector partnerships.



Peter Forberg (left) with panelists

Panel Discussion: “Advancing equity in communities through multisector collaboratives: The role of local context and power dynamics”

Speakers: Peter Forberg, MA; Stephanie Bultema, PhD; Emily Christopher, MPH; Christina Olson, MPH; Sue Grinnell, MP; and Esmeralda Salas, BS

This presentation focuses on how multisector health collaboratives are shaped by local contexts and power dynamics, understanding how these two forces shape their mission towards improving health equity.



Esmeralda Salas

Poster Session: “Evaluation of a county-integrated contact tracing support project in California” – Community Health Planning and Policy Development Poster Session

Speakers: Esmeralda Salas, BS; Stephanie Bultema, PhD; Peter Forberg, MA; Sue Grinnell, MPH; Max Chavez, BA; Beverly Bruno, BS; Emily Christopher, MPH; Danielle Theberge; Nicole Lordi; Becky Garrow, MPH

This evaluation provides valuable learnings to ongoing and future cross-sector collaborative efforts to support pandemic response and offers guidance on project implementation.

Panel Discussion: “Drivers of systems change through partnerships” – Partnerships for Improving Healthcare Services, Delivery, and Outcomes

Speakers: Stephanie Bultema, PhD and Sue Grinnell, MPH

The presentation explores how cross-boundary partnerships can generate systems change.

PUBLICATIONS

Advancing Equity: Adapting to Local Context and Confronting Power Dynamics. Lessons Learned from Accountable Communities of/for Health

In 2021, PHIL's MERLIN (Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning Innovations) team conducted a study with six Accountable Communities of/for Health (ACH) in Washington and California that sought in-depth answers to the question: "How do local context and power dynamics influence an ACH's ability to make progress toward improved equity?" Findings from this study are available in a report released in 2022.

Community Engagement in Biomedical and Health Sciences Research Study

This study provides a deeper understanding of the motivations, facilitators, and barriers behind conducting and/or funding biomedical and health sciences research that directly engages underrepresented communities of color. Research results lend insight into the current community engagement landscape by showing the various approaches employed to engage communities in research, how funders support community engagement, and how both researchers and funders operationalize community engagement. From this knowledge, funding organizations can gain an extensive understanding of community engagement and how to support researchers in community-engaged research, especially those who work with underrepresented communities of color. A [two-page summary](#) and [full report](#) are available.

Landscape of Community Engagement in the Biomedical Field

The Landscape of Community Engagement in the Biomedical Field report identified and described community engagement practices, research, and actors with a focus on single-cell biology and neurodegeneration, imaging, computational biology, and open science. Evidence was gathered from multiple sources, including academic and professional literature and public websites to learn about the numerous barriers that exist to engaging community members in biomedical research and effective strategies for engaging ethnic and racial minorities and vulnerable populations in research. Findings suggest that biomedical researchers can take advantage of existing resources and lessons-learned as they strive to implement short- and long-term solutions that will meaningfully engage the communities in which they work.

Survey of Tracing Health's Multi-State, County-Integrated Programming

This survey was conducted to better understand the strengths, barriers, achievements, and recommendations of Tracing Health's COVID-19 response efforts across California, Oregon, and Washington states. The survey collected 112 responses (36% response rate) from May – June 2022, which were analyzed using regression analysis, analysis of variance (ANOVA), paired t-tests, and classical content analysis. This report details key survey findings highlighting the program's overall program impact, including findings related to staff diversity, training, workforce, local public health capacity, and factors influencing outcomes. Overall, survey respondents reported a high level of satisfaction with their experience working or partnering with Tracing Health.

Evaluation of Tracing Health’s California Contact Tracing Support Initiative – San Bernardino County Integrated Project

This evaluation provides insight into successes and challenges with project design and implementation of Tracing Health’s operations in one California county, San Bernardino. This report investigates project accountability, future project improvement strategies, and knowledge generation and transfer opportunities. Evaluation data include 25 interviews, 439 documents, and one focus group, which were analyzed using framework analysis. Evaluation findings demonstrate how agile and effective support can be provided through multisector partnerships, even in the constantly evolving context of the COVID-19 pandemic. This evaluation provides valuable learnings for ongoing and future multisector collaborative efforts and project implementation.

Toolbox for Measuring Cross-Sector Alignment

The “Toolbox for Measuring Cross-Sector Alignment” includes resources developed by PHIL and others for measuring aligning across sectors. The toolbox can be used by:

- Researchers to study aligning across sectors
- Funders to inform funding priorities and reporting requests
- Evaluators to assess aligning efforts in cross-sector collaboratives
- Practitioners looking for process measures of aligning to integrate into performance management

To find measures that can be integrated into your aligning practice today, check out the [Measurement Overview Documents](#) and [Data Collection Instrument](#) sections. If you need support in measuring success in your aligning efforts, or just aren’t sure where to start, these resources may be able to help.

WEB DISCUSSIONS

PHIL hosted four public web discussions in 2022. All web discussions were recorded and are available to view on the [PHIL website](#). PHIL facilitates learning opportunities and monitors the field to capture webinars, meetings, conferences, and other events relevant to fostering multisector collaboratives that address health, well-being, and equity.

January 13, 2022: “Our Polluted Media Landscape: Sensemaking for Misinformation Management in Community Health”

Event Description: PHIL held a web discussion, “Our Polluted Media Landscape: Sensemaking for Misinformation Management in Community Health,” on Thursday, January 13, 2022 from 12:00 – 1:30 PM, led by Josh Gryniewicz, Founder/Chief Narrative Strategist for Odd Duck. Josh is an author and health communicator, who founded a storytelling for social change consultancy program. This web discussion addressed how communities, Accountable Communities of/for Health (ACH) leaders, multisector organizations, and health professionals can achieve their goal of health outcomes while managing the dual crises of an ‘infodemic’ and a pandemic. Learn how multisector community health organizations are successfully crafting community forward responses for misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories using the five (5) keys for management.

[Watch the recording](#)

February 10, 2022: “Measuring Aligning Across Sectors”

Event Description: PHIL held a web discussion with Daniel Lanford, Senior Research Associate at the Georgia Health Policy Center on Thursday, February 10, 2022, entitled “Measuring Aligning Across Sectors.” Multisector collaboratives need practical tools and metrics to assess the success of their aligning efforts. They need to know what to measure, how to measure it, how to collect and analyze reliable evidence, and share their findings in a timely and useful manner. This web discussion describes findings from PHIL’s recent study assessing the reliability, validity, feasibility, and utility of core aligning measures. Presenters discussed key learnings such as new concepts that emerged through this research and relationships discovered between components of the Framework for Aligning Sectors. Attendees previewed PHIL’s Toolbox for Measuring Cross-Sector Alignment and discussed how their collaborative(s) might engage with this exciting resource.

[Watch the recording](#)

“One of the things that I really like about working with [PHIL] is they do kind of hold the eagle-eye view of what is happening and also the eagle-eye view where it is closer to the ground as well. – PHIL funder”

February 17, 2022: “Network, Partner, and Relationship Mapping: How Kumu Can Help Multisector Collaboratives Tackle Complexity”

Event Description: PHIL held a web discussion with Jeff Mohr, Co-Founder and CEO of Kumu, on Thursday, February 17, entitled “Network, Partner, and Relationship Mapping: How Kumu Can Help Multisector Collaboratives Tackle Complexity.” There are many different purposes for mapping a network – enabling new collaborations, identifying gaps, building relationships, and more – but knowing the best approach and which tools to use can be a challenge. This web discussion will feature Kumu, a network and system mapping platform, and show how this type of tool makes it easy to organize complex data into relationship maps that are beautiful to look at and tell compelling stories. In addition, they recently launched Sticky Studio, a real-time collaborative whiteboard; and, Weavr; a gathering place for your community to connect, collaborate, and grow. Learn how using Kumu’s visualization and social network analysis technology can ensure collaboratives focus on the relationships that matter and the work they enable.

[Watch the recording](#)

June 2, 2022: “Advancing Equity: Adapting to Local Context and Confronting Power Dynamics. Lessons learned from Accountable Communities of/for Health”

Event Description: PHIL’s MERLIN (Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning Innovations) team was joined by representatives from Accountable Communities of/for Health (ACHs) in Washington and California on Thursday, June 2 for a special web discussion entitled “Advancing Equity: Adapting to Local Context and Confronting Power Dynamics. Lessons learned from Accountable Communities of/for Health.” This discussion featured recent research findings which answer the question, “How do local context and power dynamics influence an ACH’s ability to make progress toward improved equity?” It is intended for those interested in learning more about PHIL’s Aligning Systems for Health research, as well as on-the-ground practitioners interested in learning about new strategies for advancing equity. Key findings show the role local context and power dynamics play when ACHs specifically – and multisector collaboratives broadly – seek to improve equity. This event featured a panel of experts from diverse ACHs across Washington and California who shared examples of how they are adapting to local context, confronting power dynamics, and using concrete strategies to advance equity in their communities.

[Watch the recording](#)

[PHIL is] not convening for the point of strategy... [they are] helping people identify solutions. – PHIL Collaborator



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