

Collaboration Between Leading Health Organizations Aims to Improve Health Outcomes in Communities of Color

Bank of America Convenes the American Heart Association®, American Diabetes Association®, American Cancer Society and the University of Michigan School of Public Health for an Innovative Initiative to Improve Health and Health Care Across the U.S.

CHARLOTTE, May 6, 2022 – Bank of America, along with leading public health organizations – the American Heart Association, the American Diabetes Association, the American Cancer Society and the University of Michigan School of Public Health – have announced the launch of a signature initiative to advance health outcomes for Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian American and Native American communities. This \$25 million, four-year initiative will initially launch in 11 cities: Albuquerque, N.M.; Atlanta; Charlotte, N.C.; Chicago; Denver; Detroit; Memphis, Tenn.; Philadelphia; San Antonio; St. Louis; and Washington, D.C.

As part of this effort, the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society and the American Diabetes Association will focus on three key areas in each community: education and capacity building for health systems, partners and patients; increasing access to health screenings and preventive care; and advocating for policies that ensure fair opportunities and resources with state and local leaders.

This initiative will specifically focus on the leading causes of death in communities of color – heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes – and improving health outcomes more broadly, including in maternal health, mental wellness, and nutrition.

The work will be uniquely tailored in each of the 11 cities to meet each community's needs based on collected data:

- Nine of the 11 launch cities have a higher prevalence of high blood pressure compared to the national average of 26.6%.¹ Detroit (24.6 per 1,000) and Philadelphia (20.2 per 1,000) are nearly double the national average of hypertension hospitalization rates of Medicare beneficiaries (12.3 per 1,000).¹
- In San Antonio (11.3%), Philadelphia (11.8%), Memphis (11%), and Detroit (10.7%), the prevalence of people diagnosed with diabetes is higher than the national average of 8.3%.² Across all cities, diabetes prevalence is highest in areas with less racial diversity and/or more income inequality.³
- Cancer death rates across all cancers is highest for Black Americans in all 11 markets.⁴ Detroit (73.1%, 66.2%) and Memphis (73%, 62%) are lower than the national average for mammography (78.1%) and colorectal (69.5%) cancer screening.⁵

"While overall death rates from heart disease and stroke generally declined over the past two decades until the pandemic, these gains were not equitably shared, especially among Black communities," said **Eduardo Sanchez, M.D., M.P.H., FAHA, FAAFP, the American Heart Association's chief medical officer for prevention**. "That inequity and the disparities in the prevalence and treatment of hypertension, diabetes, and cancer by race and ethnicity should be a call to action. Everyone deserves an optimal and just opportunity to be healthy, giving special attention to the needs of those at greatest risk of poor health. No one should be disadvantaged from achieving their potential because of social position or any other socially defined circumstance."

"You can't talk about health care in the United States without talking about the health inequities that have plagued this country for the last 400 years," said **Charles D. Henderson, American Diabetes Association chief development officer**. "Having access to healthcare should be a human right no matter one's race, income, zip code, age, education or gender. Health inequity is obvious and widespread, it contributes to worse outcomes and higher risk for diabetes and many other diseases. The time to act is now and there are no better health organizations than the American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association and American Cancer Society to move the needle and drive change."

"Data tells us that the same factors that align with health equity directly connect with economic mobility. Structural racism, quality education opportunities, affordable housing and transportation and secure employment with fair pay and sick leave directly impact access to the preventive resources and quality health care needed to improve outcomes in these communities," said **Tawana Thomas-Johnson, senior vice president and chief diversity officer at the American Cancer Society**. "It's a moral imperative that we work together with communities to address these health needs and improve public policy to ensure no one is disadvantaged based on who they are or where they live."

To scale this work further, the University of Michigan School of Public Health will measure progress and impact on health outcomes through robust evaluation as part of the initiative.

"Health equity is at the heart of everything we do in public health," said **DuBois Bowman, dean of the University of Michigan School of Public Health**. "It is critical that we work in partnership with communities to disseminate health-focused programs. In doing so, we must be able to determine measures of success, evaluate if we are hitting those markers, and adjust our approaches as needed to achieve our ultimate goals of improving health and equity. We must also document what we learn, both successes and challenges, to support wide-spread adoption. We are excited to work alongside Bank of America and the nation's leading health agencies to help identify ways to make a lasting impact on the health of communities across the country."

This innovative collaboration is part of Bank of America's [commitment](#) to advance racial equality and economic opportunity, and builds on the company's longstanding work to invest in the communities it serves.

"Lack of access, education and advocacy for communities of color have only been exacerbated by the pandemic," said **D. Steve Boland, chief administrative officer at Bank of America**. "Addressing barriers to health care is a critical step in helping communities move forward and realize true economic mobility."

Since 2021, Bank of America has invested more than \$66 million to address needs related to health in the communities it serves. This includes local giving across its 93 markets, an expanded partnership with CVS Health to deliver free flu vaccine vouchers to underserved communities, continuing work with Feeding America nationally and locally to address barriers to healthy eating and supporting mental health initiatives for young people of color.

About the American Heart Association

The American Heart Association is a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives. We are dedicated to ensuring equitable health in all communities. Through collaboration with numerous organizations, and powered by millions of volunteers, we fund innovative research, advocate for the public's health and share lifesaving resources. The Dallas-based organization has been a leading source of health information for nearly a century. Connect with us on [heart.org](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or by calling 1-800-AHA-USA1.

About the American Diabetes Association

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) is the nation's leading voluntary health organization fighting to bend the curve on the diabetes epidemic and help people living with diabetes thrive. For 81 years the ADA has driven discovery and research to treat, manage, and prevent diabetes while working relentlessly for a cure. Through advocacy, program development, and education we aim to improve the quality of life for the over 133 million Americans living with diabetes or prediabetes. Diabetes has brought us together. What we do next will make us Connected for Life. To learn more or to get involved, visit us at [diabetes.org](#) or call 1-800-DIABETES (1-800-342-2383). Join the fight with us on Facebook ([American Diabetes Association](#)), Spanish Facebook ([Asociación Americana de la Diabetes](#)), Twitter ([@AmDiabetesAssn](#)), and Instagram ([@AmDiabetesAssn](#)).

About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society is on a mission to free the world from cancer. We invest in lifesaving research, provide 24/7 information and support, and work to ensure that individuals in every community have access to cancer prevention, detection, and treatment. For more information, visit [cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org).

About the University of Michigan School of Public Health

The University of Michigan School of Public Health has been promoting health and preventing disease since 1941, and is consistently ranked among the top schools in the country. More than 140 faculty and researchers and 1,200 students in the school's 8 academic departments and programs and dozens of collaborative centers and institutes are forging new solutions to complex health challenges, including infectious and chronic disease, health care quality and finance, climate change and environmental factors, socioeconomic inequalities and their impact on health, community-based health interventions, nutritional impacts, and the globalization of health. We also offer myriad opportunities for students to experience public health in the real world through public health practice, internships, entrepreneurial training, and more. Whether making new discoveries in the lab or researching and educating in the field, our faculty, students, and alumni are pursuing a healthier, more equitable world for all. Learn more at publichealth.umich.edu or follow us on social media at [@umichsph](https://twitter.com/umichsph).

About Bank of America

At Bank of America, we're guided by a common purpose to help make financial lives better, through the power of every connection. We're delivering on this through responsible growth with a focus on our environmental, social and governance (ESG) leadership. ESG is embedded across our eight lines of business and reflects how we help fuel the global economy, build trust and credibility, and represent a company that people want to work for, invest in and do business with. It's demonstrated in the inclusive and supportive workplace we create for our employees, the responsible products and services we offer our clients, and the impact we make around the world in helping local economies thrive. An important part of this work is forming strong partnerships with nonprofits and advocacy groups, such as community, consumer, and environmental organizations, to bring together our collective networks and expertise to achieve greater impact. Learn more at about.bankofamerica.com, and connect with us on Twitter ([@BofA_News](https://twitter.com/BofA_News)).

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Reporters may contact:

Vanessa Cook, Bank of America
Phone: 1.980.683.2247
vanessa.a.cook@bofa.com

Tracie Bertaut, APR, American Heart Association
Phone: 1.504.722.1695
Tracie.Bertaut@heart.org

Sabrina Pringle, American Diabetes Association
Phone: 1.703.549.1500 ext. 1637
press@diabetes.org

Michele Money-Carson, American Cancer Society
Phone: 1.813.240.0954
Michele.Money-Carson@cancer.org

Andrea LaFerle, University of Michigan School of Public Health
Phone: 1.248.250.2264
alaferle@umich.edu

¹ Interactive Atlas of Heart Disease and Stroke. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Accessed February 2022. <https://nccd.cdc.gov/DHDSPAtlas/?state=County>

² Diagnosed Diabetes, Total, Adults Aged 18+ Years, Age-Adjusted Percentage, National. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2019). Accessed February 2022. <https://gis.cdc.gov/grasp/diabetes/DiabetesAtlas.html>

³ Department of Population Health, NYU Langone Health. City Health Dashboard. <https://www.cityhealthdashboard.com/>. Accessed February 2022

⁴ National Cancer Institute. State Cancer Profiles. <https://statecancerprofiles.cancer.gov/incidencrates/index.php?stateFIPS=35&areatype=county&cancer=066&race=00&sex=1&age=001&stage=999&year=0&type=incd&sortVariableName=rate&sortOrder=default&output=0#results>

⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. United States Cancer Statistics: Data Visualizations. <https://gis.cdc.gov/Cancer/USCS/#/ATAGlance/> Accessed [February 2022]
