Learning and Action in Policy and Partnerships (LAPP)
Award Opportunity - Request for Proposals

SUMMARY

With support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), Data Across Sectors for Health (DASH) in partnership with the Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS), is pleased to launch the *Learning and Action in Policy and Partnerships* (LAPP) program. LAPP will provide award opportunities to community organizations who are partnered with their state government to advance community-led programs focused on data-sharing efforts to improve health, equity and well-being.

The objective of LAPP is to facilitate aligned efforts among multi-sector community and state partners that will build a foundation for sustainable policy and systems change. The purpose of LAPP is to offer awardees targeted funds and direct technical assistance to build the capacity of their community's data ecosystem to initiate, strengthen, and leverage relationships with the state government to improve health, well-being, and equity outcomes. This award will provide access to funding and support to advance an existing, clearly defined project that aims to improve health, well-being, and equity with a policy or systems-change lens for sustainable impact.

Five awardees will receive $100,000 each to: (a) engage partners to advance existing data-sharing or data-integration efforts; (b) systematically share data across sectors (e.g., social services, public health, and health care); and (c) build relationships among community and state partners to inform decision-making and strengthen systems that support community goals for improved health, well-being and equity.

BACKGROUND

For five years, Data Across Sectors for Health (DASH) has worked with communities throughout the country to build local capacity for multi-sector data-sharing, while simultaneously building the evidence base to inform a national movement. These three strategies — building the capacity, building the movement, building the evidence base — work in tandem for organizations in a range of sectors including housing, health care, education, public safety, economic development, behavioral health, and more.

DASH supports collaborations that work together to improve the health of their communities, promote health equity, and contribute to a Culture of Health by strengthening information-sharing systems, engaging additional sectors and community members, and building sustainable capacity to work collaboratively toward community goals. Funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the DASH Program Office (PO), led by the Illinois Public Health Institute (IPHI) in partnership with the Michigan Public Health Institute (MPHI) shares lessons learned from awardees to create a body of knowledge and advance this emerging field of

sharing data and information across and beyond traditional health sectors, and leverages peer-to-peer connection opportunities to spread innovative approaches that address the root causes of inequity and poor health. The home for this network of dissemination is All In: Data for Community Health.

The DASH program office has directly funded over 130 community collaborations to advance their capacity to share multi-sector community data. Over that period, these communities have succeeded to varying degrees in their intended projects and interventions, and learned important lessons about the significant barriers they face in making these collaborations work. As the evidence base for this work has grown, one of the most critical insights to emerge is that while community partners can achieve meaningful progress together, they are often hampered by the existence or lack of policy and systems factors beyond their control. To fully realize the benefits of local collaborations, action is often needed at the state level (for example, to adapt policy, establish standards, or align incentives).

Meanwhile, as state Medicaid and public health agencies have become increasingly focused on addressing social determinants of health, it has become more and more apparent that effective community engagement is key to achieving state-level aims. And, as the imperative to address health equity has increased dramatically in the context of COVID-19 and broader calls for racial justice, states need community partners more than ever to help identify disparities and implement targeted strategies to address them.

These two parallel and mutually reinforcing realizations provide the impetus for the Learning and Action in Policy and Partnerships (LAPP) Program. Our experience and engagement with community, state and national thought leaders suggests that leveraging the power and influence of state agencies is a key opportunity to support and amplify existing community relationships and data-sharing initiatives, while simultaneously helping states achieve their goals related to improving population health and health equity. With the LAPP Program, DASH hopes to continue its core support of multi-sector collaboration and data sharing efforts and leverage these lessons to identify powerful policy and system change opportunities.

In recognition of the value of collaboration and to deepen the subject matter expertise for community and state awardees, DASH is partnering with the Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS) to design and execute the LAPP program. CHCS is a nonprofit policy center dedicated to improving the health of low-income Americans. CHCS works with state and federal agencies, health plans, providers, and community-based organizations to advance innovative and cost-effective models for organizing, financing, and delivering health care services.

CHCS' work focuses on:
1. Advancing delivery system and payment reform;
2. Integrating services for people with complex needs; and
3. Building Medicaid and cross-sector leadership capacity to support high-quality, cost-effective care.

A theme across much of CHCS' work is the value of maximizing opportunities for cross-sector collaboration, both across state agencies, as well as with external partners. Throughout its work, CHCS has honed a critical set of capabilities for bringing state agencies and localities together with federal and community partners to address common challenges and pursue innovations in Medicaid program design and policy.

Together, CHCS and DASH are designing and executing the LAPP program design, Request for Proposals, selection process and learning collaborative.

PURPOSE

The aim of this effort is to enable communities to develop community-state partnerships to better inform inclusive policy and systems alignment at both the community and state level.

Increasingly, communities are testing new ways to improve health, well-being, and equity by sharing data among public health, health care, and social services systems. In addition to leading data-sharing efforts at a local level, community partners can also connect with state policymakers that have various tools and "levers" at their disposal to support these efforts to improve health, especially within communities most at risk of inequities. For example, these levers include:

- Data access: community-level data can drive integration and inform state policy, and states may have data that is needed by communities
- Policy and legal clarity: states can clarify and amend as warranted the regulations that govern how and what data can be shared
- Shared services and systems: states may develop or purchase systems that can be made available to communities (e.g., health information exchanges, social services referral platforms)
- Interoperability rules: communities and states may play a role in developing standards or guidance to ensure data can be linked across sectors
- Financing: states can change how services are paid for and what metrics need to be captured to align incentives and accountability; and support communities' sustainable infrastructure development
- MCO contracting: states can integrate language into Managed Care Organization (MCO) contracts that encourage collaboration with communities (e.g., social services referrals)

Sharing data across sectors and building relationships among community and state partners can inform decision making to improve community health and wellbeing, strengthen systems of care, and break down silos that perpetuate disparities and poor health.

CONTEXT

The LAPP Program is being launched in a particularly challenging time for communities and states. The impact of the events in 2020, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic recession, social uprisings and the demand for racial justice, provide critical context for a community collaborative approach to improve their use of data and relationships with state

government in efforts to improve health, equity and well-being as part of the LAPP. In a series of interviews to update the design of the LAPP, community, state and national practitioners indicated that current community-level and state priorities remain focused on persistent challenges impacting health, equity and well-being, and highlighted the critical role of community organizations in improving access to health related community needs (SDOH) to provide services and support.

These thought leaders identified the types of external supports that may advance community-state collaborations. These supports were noted as critical enablers to communities and states when shifting the focus from barriers to new approaches informing equitable outcomes through data sharing. Interviewees also emphasized the importance of prioritizing the involvement of community members with lived experience at the center of this project. A non-exhaustive list of key elements that support community-state collaborations to share data for health, wellbeing and equity includes:

- Peer learning and information-sharing opportunities
- state and community systems mapping
- Strategies for authentic community engagement and centering community voices in state decision making
- Legal supports and clarity from states on consent and on the conditions under which data can be shared
- Technology procurement and technology mapping expertise
- Considerations for sustainable staffing, such as project facilitators; community and state-liaison/coordinator roles
- Access to privacy and security subject matter expertise
- Data Use Agreements templates
- Examples of clear and equitable data governance structures
- Model legislation and sample sets of data definitions and standards
- Emphasis on alleviating the potential burden of award-reporting and deliverables (e.g., aligning with other award deliverables versus competing or overlapping requirements)
- Guidance on opportunities to leverage partnerships among Medicaid and Medicaid managed care plans to require standard measures or to integrate social needs partnerships and related metrics into value-based payment requirements
- Guidance on how states' Health Information Exchanges and Community Information Exchanges can be accessed by community organizations (e.g., local homeless shelters and food banks) to enable partners to view actionable information on the individuals they are serving, and connect with resource platforms for closed-loop referrals

AWARDS

Total awards

Awards will be made to up to five awardees for $100,000 each. In the second year of the LAPP Program, additional funding and support may become available, based on successful completion of program objectives and deliverables.

Use of Funding

Awardees are expected to use award funding for efforts that enable communities to strengthen and leverage state partnerships in support of data-sharing efforts to improve health, well-being, and equity. This targeted support is intended to:

- Advance an existing, clearly defined project that aims to improve health, well-being, and equity through community-state partnership(s) across health, health care, and social services sectors with a policy or systems-change lens for sustainable impact.
- Build skills and capacity at the community or regional level to:
    - engage partners from multiple sectors in support of data-sharing or data integration efforts (e.g., invest in state and community systems mapping efforts project facilitators; or efforts to center communities' voices in state decision making)
    - systematically share data across sectors, and/or engage subject matter experts (e.g., engage legal supports; technology procurement and technology mapping expertise, etc.)
    - design or implement evidence-based interventions that support community goals for improved health and equity based on shared multi-sector data. This may be approached with support from privacy and security subject matter expertise or by leveraging model data use agreements or existing staff training (e.g., on privacy and security topics)
- Build the foundation for opportunities to identify and test statewide policy and systems change that drive sustainable outcomes aimed at directly improving the lives of those in community.

Awarded activities should be clearly defined and completed in the period of the award. One or two specific products or deliverables are expected by the end of the award period. Activities that build on existing work or lay a foundation for embedding systems are preferred.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of activities that the award and technical assistance could support, including:
- Advance the functionality, accessibility, transparency, or analytic capability of an existing multi-sector data system or adding a data source from a new sector
- Create a shared governance model between community and states to ensure equitable information-sharing policies
- Cultivate opportunities to align state funding opportunities with community investment in data sharing, systems design and technology development
- Establish shared participation and accountability for joint state and community program designs focused on social determinants and the partners who have been historically disenfranchised
- Developing, testing, and implementing a collaborative multi-sector data governance or group decision-making model
- Engaging community members, individual consultants, or other collaborative experts to address a problem or leverage an opportunity related to multi-sector data-sharing (e.g., addressing legal, collaboration, or governance challenges, etc.)

- Convening meetings among: (a) organizations from two or more different sectors who are new or ongoing collaborators for connecting, sharing or using data; and/or (b) individuals from different communities to learn, overcome barriers, or provide peer support
- Creating internal or external communications or educational materials to share with others, such as a use case example, process, or solution to a problem
- Training others to analyze or use the data or multi-sector data system
- Documenting or codifying processes associated with shared or multi-sector data systems
- Leveraging additional and complementary funds leading to a greater but still specific outcome that can be achieved in the award period

Other concrete proposals that reflect the overall purposes are encouraged. See also the list of enablers under "Context" above.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicant organizations must be:
- ❏ either public entities or nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and must not be private foundations
- ❏ based in the United states or its territories

Applications must include:
- ❏ A focus on building the capacity of community collaborations to access, use, and integrate multi-sector data to improve health, well-being, and equity outcomes
- ❏ A clearly defined opportunity or problem that requires state-community partnerships to address effectively
- ❏ An existing multi-sector data-sharing project (e.g. in the development or implementation phase of sharing data or using connected information systems)
- ❏ A community collaboration that includes participation of health care, public health, and at least one community-based social services sector
- ❏ A specific community engagement process for involving persons with lived experience and/or community residents as a part of the planning, execution and evaluation of the use case or intervention

These criteria are more fully developed below.

SELECTION CRITERIA

LAPP applications will demonstrate and be scored based on the following:
- Principles
    - o A demonstrated commitment to the principles of alignment among public health, health care, and social services systems
    - o A willingness to explore the policy and systems change opportunities identified or evident in the proposed project

- o Familiarity with the principles and values of health equity and the importance of the social determinants of health
- Relationships
  - o A demonstrated relationship between community collaborations members and state government
  - o Clearly defined roles and demonstrated support, including corresponding Letter[s] of Support for both state, community partners and persons with lived experience from the community
  - o A history of partnering with members of the community who share lived and learned experience within the systems and supports this collaboration seeks to improve
- Urgency and Efficacy
  - o Evidence that the proposed efforts respond to community needs and/or leverages community assets and opportunities
  - o Rationale for how the work outlined will advance its goals of improving health, equity and well-being in a sustainable way to drive policy and systems change
  - o Thoughtful consideration of the proposed activities' impact on health, equity and well-being with special consideration given to collaborations that meaningfully impact systemic injustices, support inclusive equality, and engage community members and persons with lived experience
- Ability to execute a complex project
  - o Capacity of the awardee organization to implement the proposed project and manage the award funds, including prohibitions against lobbying and political activities
  - o Evidence of documented achievements in engaging stakeholders from state government and/or health care, public health, socials services, and other sectors
  - o A well-defined and articulated project plan and timeline, with benchmarks for achieving proposed goals and one or two project outcomes or deliverables
  - o A project budget and budget narrative
- Outcomes
  - o How completing the award will contribute to progress of a broader collaborative plan for shared data and improved health
  - o How the project will create or contribute to infrastructure, skills, and/or processes that can be sustained
  - o Description of benefits or increased capacity for associated community organizations and sectors as a result of the award
- Commitment to participate in group learning activities, and contribute lessons and appropriate deliverables to the public domain through the *All In* network

LAPP PROGRAM SUPPORT AND LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

DASH and CHCS will facilitate a learning collaborative for the cohort of five awardees comprising community and state partners committed to advancing data-sharing efforts to improve health, well-being, and equity. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss, share,

and learn from one another about innovative and effective approaches to bolster state and community relationships in support of communities' access, use, and integration of data to improve health.

Over 12 months, participants will have access to:

- **Group learning opportunities** such as discussions, webinars, or affinity groups with LAPP participants and subject matter experts focused on relationship-building, overcoming common data-sharing barriers, and highlighting innovative program or policy opportunities
- **Targeted support** through one-on-one calls to address challenges specific to participants' projects, track progress, and document learnings to share broadly
- **Resources** to share and leverage, including relevant articles, materials, tools, and learnings through the *All In Network*

Awardees will be expected to:
- create or update their profile on the *All In* online community platform upon start of the award, complete the *All In* Capacity Assessment, and participate on the platform related to their funded project
- participate in short recurring check-in calls with DASH Program Office (PO) staff.
- share their learnings and work with peers either during or after the award through online webinars and/or in a sharable format
- host an in-person or virtual meeting with NPO staff.
- submit a concluding report, documenting lessons learned and challenges overcome or not overcome that others could benefit from.
- participate in an exit interview to discuss their successes and challenges

HOW TO APPLY

Application Due Date: **December 16, 2020 at 3:30 EST**.

Applications must be submitted via the **RWJF online system**

Informational Webinar: **October 26, 2020 at 12:00 EST**

Register for the webinar here.

Questions/ Inquiries for the LAPP project can be sent to info@dashconnect.org with the subject "LAPP Project."

All LAPP Project information including FAQs, FAQ responses, full LAPP project brochure/summary, and recorded webinars can be found on the **LAPP homepage**.

TIMELINE

- October 19, 2020 at 10:00 AM EST Release Date
- October 26th, 2020 at 12:00 PM EST - Informational webinar ([register here](#))
- **December 16th, 2020, 3:30 PM EST - Application deadline**
- January, 2021 - Awardees notified
- January-February, 2021 - Awards initiated
- February, 2022 - Awards end
- March, 2022 - Final reports and deliverables due

OUR EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITMENT

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is committed to building a Culture of Health that provides everyone in America a fair and just opportunity for health and well-being. Achieving this goal requires focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion. To that end, we are committed to fostering diverse perspectives. We recognize that individuals' perspectives are shaped by a host of factors, such as their race, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, age, socioeconomic status, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, familial status, education, religion, legal status, military service, political affiliation, geography, and other personal and professional experiences.

We know that the presence of diverse perspectives alone is not sufficient. Therefore, we also are committed to creating inclusive environments where all individuals are encouraged to share their perspectives and experiences. We believe that only through valuing our differences and similarities, and remaining vigilant in advancing equity, will we be able to maintain an equitable workplace and actively pursue equity in all aspects of our work. We commit to being continuous learners and working alongside others to cultivate equity, diversity, and inclusion.