



## Summary Report of

# Let's Talk Health

## A Community Dialogue



*The emerging changes within health care and our economy makes it increasingly important for our community to harness the power of collaboration. The Let's Talk Health Initiative began as a partnership between Seeds of Promise and the Michigan Blues. Our focus was to seek community input on how we could better collaborate to meet community health care needs and plan a course of action around expressed concerns, experiences and ideas for change.*

### Purpose of Let's Talk Health

The purpose of the LTH Community Conversation was to engage, listen and understand the diverse perspectives of community members — to talk about what more collaboration would look like and how we can all do more to address health disparities in the African American community.

### Participants of the Community Conversation

Attendees at the September 15 Community Conversation at the Salvation Army Ray and Joan Kroc Corps Community Center included healthcare professionals, pastors, elected officials, concerned citizens, human services workers and business leaders. It was important to have a wide variety of input from different viewpoints, and to identify similarities in what we all feel should and can improve — with more collaboration. Above all, everyone agreed that having a shared vision is essential for moving forward.

### The process

The LTH initiative included interviews, focus groups and community dialogue around teamwork and improving health. All parties agreed that the following could help facilitate more collaboration:

- Mutual meeting places
- Church involvement
- Grass roots efforts
- Incentives specific to each individual
- Increased opportunities for education and self-improvement

### Next steps

Based on community input, recommended next steps include the following items:

- Community asset mapping that outlines current efforts to decrease health disparities and address the social determinants of health
- Multiple focus groups with consumers, pastors, healthcare administrators and professionals
- Identification of additional partners and intentional collaborative relationships
- Completion of congregational health assessments for churches interested in becoming part of the network
- Investigation of additional corporate and foundation partners concerned with addressing health disparities

Based on an open exchange of ideas, these recommendations embody opportunities for community participation to build a collaborative network. We will keep the community updated on the progress of the project.

**Please call 616-389-2574 or email [cjackson@bcbsm.com](mailto:cjackson@bcbsm.com) for additional information.**



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