



Health Care Happenings

August 2020

Improving access and health outcomes for the uninsured and underinsured across the St. Louis region



Saint Louis
Regional Health Commission
Newsletter

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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

In 2001, the St. Louis Regional Health Commission (RHC) was created to ensure access to health care for the uninsured and underinsured in St. Louis City and County. For the past 10 years, we have met our mission by providing health care coverage for nearly 64,000 uninsured adults in the St. Louis region, in partnership with our local community health centers, hospitals and medical schools, through a program called [Gateway to Better Health](#) (Gateway). Since the implementation of the Gateway to Better Health program in 2012, the program has provided:

- Access to coverage for more than 63,779 otherwise uninsured St. Louis area residents;
- More than 288,500 primary care and dental visits;
- Over 1.3 million medications to manage chronic conditions and other diseases;
- Nearly 57,000 specialty care visits;
- More than 316,800 diagnostic tests, procedures and ancillary services; and
- More than 31,200 urgent care visits.

Gateway was designed to be a temporary bridge for uninsured adults until better coverage options became available through Medicaid expansion or transformation.

After years of waiting, on August 4, 2020, the residents of Missouri rose to the challenge to become the change we seek and passed Medicaid expansion in Missouri. Medicaid expansion will provide access to health care for an additional 230,000 hardworking Missourians, keep hospitals open, create jobs and promote economic growth. This change also brings us one step closer to health equity as we continue to battle COVID-19 and racism. Although this vote foreshadows the end of Gateway, we are happy to see long-term, sustainable health care options for our communities. While our work may shift, our commitment to increasing healthcare access and improving health outcomes, while reducing health disparities among St. Louis City and County residents, remains unwavering. We look forward to your continued partnership as the RHC charts a new course for the work ahead. Stay tuned!

Angela Brown

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person, or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.” — Barack Obama

LAST CHANCE FOR RESPONSES TO THE 2020 CENSUS

The Census count is officially ending on September 30, 2020, a month earlier than planned. While we continue to navigate dual pandemics - COVID-19 and systemic racism - it is imperative, now more than ever, that every individual is accounted for in our community, to make sure our hard-earned tax dollars make their way back to our region and ensure we are fully represented in Congress.

Ending the Census count early could potentially cause substantial undercounting of groups such as people of color, immigrants, renters and rural residents throughout Missouri and the U.S. If you haven't already, respond to the Census today at www.my2020census.gov, toll-free at 844-330-2020 or by mail.



WE NEED TO VOTE AS IF OUR LIVES DEPEND UPON IT, BECAUSE THEY DO

Are you registered to vote in Missouri?

- no**: Register by October 7th: www.bit.ly/2B7VkvVo
- yes**: Confirm your info is correct: www.bit.ly/32ulyjg

Would you like to vote in person?

- no**: Request an absentee or mail-in ballot by October 21st: www.bit.ly/2Fy3Fkh. Find your local election authority: www.bit.ly/3972mXd.
- yes**: Confirm your polling place here: www.bit.ly/2Oxl6nQ

Be prepared. Registered to vote today!

Nov 3rd Election

On August 4, 2020, Missourians demanded change in our State – change in the direction of health equity and justice. Over 670,000 people voted to expand Medicaid, securing access to health care for an additional 230,000 Missourians. In coalition with the Yes on 2 campaign, the St. Louis Regional Health Commission (RHC) celebrates this momentous victory. And we thank you for doing your part! Thank you for talking to friends, posting on social media, writing op-eds, and most importantly, for voting.

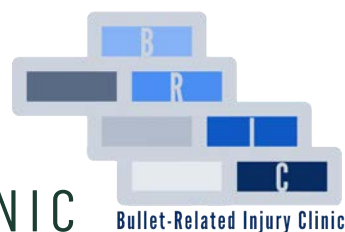
While our spirits are still high celebrating Medicaid expansion, another election is fast approaching. Let's make sure our community is prepared for the November election. Are you registered to vote? Are your friends and family registered to vote? How about your neighbors and your social media network? Now is the time to spread the word!

[Register to vote](#) by October 7th. Check out the infographic with information on how to [request a mail-in or absentee ballot](#) by October 21st.

If we want representation to reflect our interests and promote the health of our community, we need to vote. We need to vote as if our lives depend upon it, because they do.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

A PATH FOR HEALING: BULLET RELATED INJURY CLINIC



In the St. Louis region, hundreds of people with bullet-related injuries are treated on an outpatient basis and directly released from the Emergency Department each year. Without a determined need for additional inpatient follow-up, people are left to manage their injuries and pain alone. The result is wounded and traumatized people reentering their communities, lacking the support and treatment required to move forward.

Dr. LJ Punch, who runs [The T](#), is passionate about reaching this vulnerable population with trauma-informed services to initiate healing. Over the past several months, the St. Louis Regional Health Commission has been collaborating with Dr. Punch to turn their idea of a virtual clinic into a reality for the region. Later this summer, Dr. Punch will launch the Bullet Related Injury Clinic (BRIC), consisting of a six-week virtual clinic, to initiate people on the path of healing following a non-fatal, bullet-related injury. The series will address both physical and mental healing, covering guidance on wound care, nutrition, sleep, stress, trauma and pain management.

The Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) process outlined by the [St. Louis Partnership for a Healthy Community \(STLPHC\)](#) prioritizes violence prevention and support for victims. The [St. Louis Area Violence Prevention Commission](#) also identifies the BRIC's potential role to fill an existing gap in violence prevention work in the St. Louis region. As a healthcare system and as a region, investing in additional treatment and support for victims of violence that are suffering from physical injury, pain and trauma is vital to the success of our community and the patients we serve.

Stay tuned for our next newsletter to learn more about the BRIC's launch and email Amanda Harris (AHarris@stlrhc.org) or Emily Vandas (EVandas@stlrhc.org) with any questions.



PREPARESTL RECEIVES ADDITIONAL \$1 MILLION GRANT TO SUPPORT CONTINUED PUBLIC HEALTH OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

In June, the RHC was awarded a \$1 million grant from Missouri Foundation for Health for the second phase of the PrepareSTL campaign. Launched in April 2020 in partnership with the City of St. Louis Department of Health, the St. Louis County Department of Public Health, St. Louis Integrated Health Network, Alive and Well Communities, St. Louis MHB, Vector Communications and Emerging Wisdom, the first phase of PrepareSTL included a unified communications and outreach campaign, which provided vital information and resources to disproportionately impacted community members (specifically low-to-moderate income African Americans and people of color living in St. Louis City and County) to help them stop the spread of the coronavirus and survive its adverse social and economic impacts.

“Strong, collaborative leadership has contributed to the success of PrepareSTL,” said Angela Fleming Brown, CEO of the RHC. “Black women have played a major role in developing and implementing this campaign, and we will continue to cultivate and celebrate the leadership of Black women and all community leaders involved with the campaign.”

During the first phase of PrepareSTL, the campaign partnered with The T (community trauma center founded by trauma surgeon and community activist Dr. LJ Punch) to assemble and distribute more than 50,000 PrepareSTL personal protective equipment (PPE) kits. Through the leadership of the PrepareSTL canvassing team, including both public health departments, nearly 200 volunteers were activated for a large-scale canvassing effort to distribute the PPE kits and information to more than 1,000 public places across the City and County. Focused on our Black neighborhoods, immigrant communities and senior population, PrepareSTL volunteers have been and will continue to listen and respond to the needs of our most vulnerable community members

“PrepareSTL has created an incredible infrastructure for communications, community outreach and economic development, which has all been rooted in racial and health equity,” said Courtney Stewart, Vice President of Strategic Communications at Missouri Foundation for Health. “We saw an opportunity to build on the outstanding work of our partners, and we didn’t want to lose momentum during a time when accurate, culturally-focused information is crucial to those experiencing this pandemic and the challenges it presents for Black and foreign-born St. Louisans in their communities. We are thrilled to have this impactful work continue.”

Brown noted the approach to the second phase of work is as critical as the work itself, both with the goal of elevating community resilience through a restorative, equity-centered lens. The partnering organizations of PrepareSTL expect this approach will continue to adapt based on community input and leadership.

“Addressing systemic intergenerational trauma while working amidst public health crises is essential and worthy work,” said Bethany Johnson-Javois, CEO of St. Louis Integrated Health Network. “But the intensity over time without adequate supports and infrastructure will over tap and exhaust our community advocates, whose commitment and effectiveness are often tied to their direct experience of overcoming community traumas. As proven in the early stages of the success of PrepareSTL, we know that community health worker and community organizing leadership are critical for successful public health education and action. Caring for the sustained health and well-being of these front-line workers is a fundamental component of this effort.”

(Story continued on page 6)



PREPARESTL STORY CONT.

Serena Muhammad, Director of Strategic Initiatives for the Saint Louis MHB, added, “Through the outreach and engagement efforts, we are creating a structure for people to heal together – healers for the healers.”

PrepareSTL continues to acknowledge that a tailored public health message, delivered by trusted messengers, is critical to reach at-risk communities.

“While our PrepareSTL canvassers have public health information to impart to residents, they remain committed to observing, understanding and responding to community needs,” said Rebeccah Bennett, founder and principal of Emerging Wisdom and InPower Institute and lead for PrepareSTL outreach efforts. “Through meaningful community input and engagement, community residents will shape the communications strategy and action planning for PrepareSTL.”

Laurna Godwin, Owner of Vector Communications and lead for PrepareSTL’s communications efforts, described the value of this community-driven outreach strategy. “PrepareSTL demonstrates the importance of combining person-to-person strategies with advertising and media relations, because it often requires that people be exposed to a message multiple times and in different ways before they will take action.”

CLOTH MASK CAMPAIGN

In June, the RHC received a \$250,000 grant from the [COVID-19 Regional Response Fund](#) for PrepareSTL’s purchase and distribution of 210,000 adult and child cloth masks and filters. PrepareSTL’s community outreach and organizing team has developed a multi-pronged cloth mask distribution strategy including additional outreach efforts in East St. Louis, giveaway events, and mobile canvassing to public housing facilities and senior housing complexes.

The community mask giveaway events, hosted by PrepareSTL and various community partners, are providing PPE kits, school supplies, voter registration and engagement, census participation support, and COVID-19 testing at area grocery stores. See page 7 for additional details.



CONNECT ONLINE

Visit [PrepareSTL.com](https://www.preparestl.com) to learn more about the campaign and to connect to resources. Information is available in English, Spanish, Bosnian, Chinese, Vietnamese and French. Stay up-to-date by “liking” [@PrepareSTL on Facebook](#) and following the [PrepareSTL channel on YouTube](#).



PARTNERS

PrepareSTL is a [collaborative campaign](#) powered by the [Missouri Foundation for Health](#) and led by the St. Louis Regional Health Commission and the St. Louis [City & County](#) Health Departments, in partnership with the [St. Louis Integrated Health Network](#), St. Louis Community Health Worker Coalition, [Alive and Well Communities](#) and the [St. Louis MHB](#).



BE PREPARED WITH A MASK AND MORE!

Stop by an upcoming PrepareSTL Mask Giveaway event. Get free cloth masks, school supplies and more! COVID-19 testing at select locations. [Visit PrepareSTL for more information.](#)

Mask Giveaway Dates & Locations

(Click to download the flyer for each event.)

[Saturday, August 29 from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.](#)

Schnucks South City

3430 South Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63118

*No COVID-19 testing

[Saturday, September 5 from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.](#)

Schnucks Ferguson

49 N Florissant Rd., Ferguson, MO 63135

[Saturday, October 10 from 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.](#)

Save-A-Lot

8960 Riverview Blvd, St. Louis, MO 63147

*No school supplies



BE PREPARED WITH A MASK AND MORE!



FREE CLOTH MASKS
COVID-19 TESTING
SCHOOL SUPPLIES
AND MORE!

WIN A \$50
SCHNUCKS GIFT CARD!

STOP BY ONE OF THESE MASK GIVEAWAYS!

SATURDAY, AUGUST 8, 2020
9:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.
SCHNUCKS CITY PLAZA
3431 Union Blvd. (at Natural Bridge)
St. Louis, MO 63115



SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, 2020
9:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.
SCHNUCKS SOUTH CITY
3430 S. Grand Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63118
(NO TESTING AT THIS EVENT)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2020
9:30 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.
SCHNUCKS WESTFALL PLAZA
8037 W. Florissant Avenue
Jennings, MO 63136

Powered by Missouri Foundation for Health



WE ARE FIGHTING FOR OUR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



BLACK LIVES MATTER

RACISM AND COVID-19 ARE BOTH PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES!

THANK YOU!



TO THE COURAGEOUS PEOPLE who have stepped forward, amid a pandemic, to use your voice as a way to speak out against racial inequities.

TO THE PEOPLE who show up to work for us everyday and the invaluable service you continue to provide.

WE HONOR YOUR SACRIFICE!

JOIN US FOR ONE OF OUR COMMUNITY DREAMWEAVING SESSIONS!

JUST AS WE NEED TO FIGHT INJUSTICE, WE ALSO NEED TO DREAM AND DESIGN HEALED FUTURES FOR OUR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES.

Come share with us the future you want to see and help craft a collective vision for our communities.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2020
(for St. Louis City residents)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2020
(for St. Louis County residents)

10:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.
[REGISTER @PREPARESTL.COM](#)

JOIN PREPARESTL FOR A COMMUNITY DREAMWEAVING SESSION!

Just as we need to fight injustice, we also need to dream and design healed futures for our families and communities. Come share with us the future you want to see and help craft a collective vision for our communities. [Visit PrepareSTL for more information and to register.](#)

St. Louis City Residents Session

Saturday, September 19 at 11:00 a.m.

[Please register in advance for this meeting.](#)

St. Louis County Residents Session

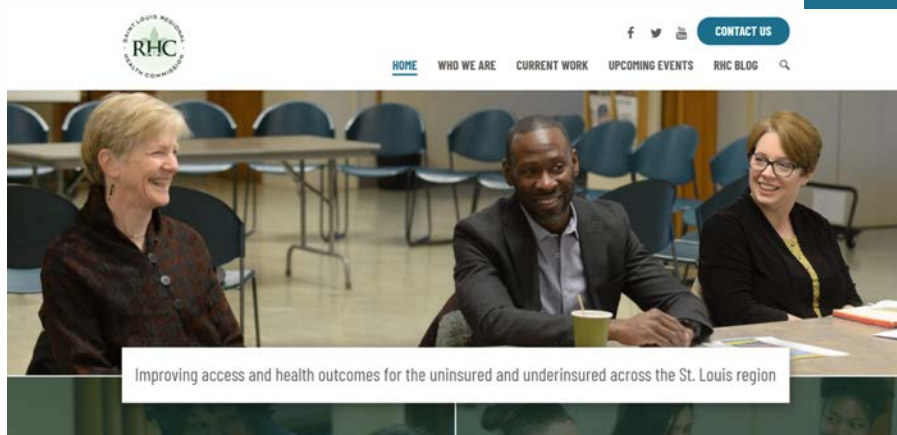
Saturday, September 26 at 11:00 a.m.

[Please register in advance for this meeting.](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Both sessions have a maximum limit of 300 participants.

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE!



RHC IN THE MEDIA

Visit our new website for [recent media coverage](#) and read what we have been up to on our [blog](#)!

RHC BLOG

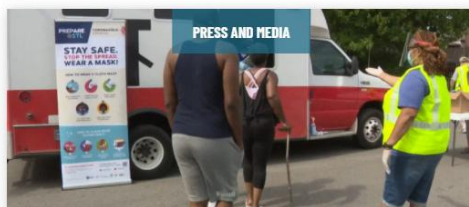


[Affinia Healthcare, Prepare STL and Schnucks perform free COVID-19 tests Saturday](#)

August 8, 2020

ST. LOUIS, August 8, 2020 – Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Prepare STL and Affinia Healthcare have partnered to perform free COVID-19 tests and hand out thousands of PPE. Saturday was no different as the group made a stop in the parking lot of a Schnucks in north St. Louis. Health officials say they have a responsibility to ensure the safety of residents. Affina Healthcare, Prepare STL,...

[READ MORE](#)



[Cloth mask giveaway in North St. Louis](#)

August 8, 2020

ST. LOUIS, August 8, 2020 – And it is all about the cloth face masks at this site in North St. Louis. The giveaway was hosted by PrepareSTL. Click here for the KSDK story.

[READ MORE](#)

[CHECK OUT MORE BLOG POSTS](#)

ABOUT

The [St. Louis Regional Health Commission](#) is a collaborative effort of St. Louis City, St. Louis County, the state of Missouri, health providers, and community members to improve the health of uninsured and underinsured citizens in St. Louis City and County.

Upcoming Events

Join us for an [upcoming meeting](#)! All RHC meetings are open to the public, and we invite you to get involved. Have questions? Contact Rikki Takeyama Menn by emailing RMenn@strhcc.org.



[Provider Services Advisory Board Meeting \(virtual\)](#)



[Community Advisory Board Meeting \(virtual\)](#)



[Commission Monthly Board Meeting \(virtual\)](#)



[Patient Advisory Board Meeting \(virtual\)](#)



[Provider Services Advisory Board Meeting \(virtual\)](#)

[VIEW MORE MEETINGS](#)

GET IN TOUCH

[Contact us online](#) or by calling our team at 314.446.6454.

By Mail:

1113 Mississippi Avenue, Suite 113
St. Louis, MO 63104



www.strhcc.org