



Health Care Happenings

November 2021

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 November, I am trying to make more time for gratefulness. As 2021, comes to a close, I want to celebrate all of our partners who help make the RHC a success.

We are grateful to all our partners who joined us to educate our black and brown communities about Covid-19 through a collective impact initiative called PrepareSTL. PrepareSTL recruited 193 canvassers to successfully post flyers and posters on safety precautions for Covid-19 in 688 locations across 20 target zip codes in the St. Louis region. Through partnerships with over 160 community organizations, PrepareSTL:

- Held 5 mask giveaway events with more than 900 people in attendance
- Assembled and distributed 100,000 personal protection equipment (PPE) kits
- Held 54 mobile outreach giveaway events for public and senior housing developments
- Distributed 400,000 cloth and disposable masks and supplies
- Held a summit to address community healing after the Covid-19 pandemic

The RHC thanks every organization, advocate and individual that worked to make Medicaid expansion a reality for the State of Missouri. For the past ten years, [Gateway to Better Health](#) has provided a safety-net for our uninsured St. Louis residents until we could have a better, more sustainable option in our community. Thanks to our partners at our local hospitals and community health centers who have helped Gateway provide:

- Access to coverage for more than 65,000 otherwise uninsured St. Louis area residents
- More than 300,000 primary care and dental visits
- Over 1.5 million medications to manage chronic conditions and other diseases
- Nearly 60,000 specialty care visits
- More than 320,000 diagnostic tests, procedures and ancillary services
- More than 32,000 urgent care visits

I would like to thank our governing board, advisory boards and community partners who provided their voice and input into the new strategic framework for the St. Louis Regional Health Commission. As we continue to transition the Gateway program, we are looking forward to 2022 to release our new branding and vision that centers equity, relationships and accountability.

Lastly, I would like to thank the RHC staff team. Without them, none of this would be possible.

Gratefulness is one of my favorite tools for self-care. After taking a moment to reflect on some of the things we have been able to accomplish this year, I am re-energized for the work ahead. Hopefully, you can take some time this holiday season to care for yourself by practicing gratitude. Happy Holidays!

Angela Brown

MEDICAID EXPANSION

MISSOURI EXPANDED MEDICAID

The rules on who qualifies for Medicaid have changed!

Now that Medicaid has expanded, adults between the ages of 19 and 64 who qualify for help can apply for Medicaid. This means a single adult making up to \$1,481 a month, or a family of four making up to \$3,048 a month, may qualify. Missouri voters approved Medicaid expansion in August 2020, and MO HealthNet began enrolling the expansion population on October 1, 2021, with coverage from July 1.



All Gateway to Better Health (GBH) members are encouraged to apply for Medicaid today! They can do so using the following resources:

- Online: <https://cutt.ly/QRD7dOB>
- Phone: Call Family Support Division at 1-855-373-9994
- Print & Mail: <https://cutt.ly/NRDBwe6>
- In Person: Contact your GBH health center for assistance with the application. They have people available to help you!

MEDICAID EXPANSION HELPLINE



Now that more Missourians can get Medicaid, the St. Louis Regional Health Commission (RHC), Legal Services of Eastern Missouri (LSEM), and St. Louis University's Center for Health Law Studies, have developed a Medicaid Expansion Helpline to support residents of Saint Louis City and County. If Missourians have questions about Medicaid expansion, whether or not they qualify, or need help applying, there is help available!

With this helpline, trained volunteers can help answer questions regarding qualification, navigating the application, or any other questions about expansion.

Call the Medicaid Expansion Helpline at

888-686-1744



The helpline is brought to you by the RHC, Legal Services of Eastern Missouri, and St. Louis University's Center for Health Law Studies.

READ MORE ON THE [RHC BLOG](#).

ADDRESSING CHRONIC PAIN: INTEGRATING PHYSICAL FUNCTION SERVICES INTO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS

Chronic musculoskeletal (MSK) pain, which affects [one in five people](#), is a national and local public health crisis. Chronic pain is associated with a significant socioeconomic burden due to its exorbitant healthcare-related costs and the high prevalence of pain-related disability. This burden also contributes to health disparities seen here in the United States.

As part of the RHC's [Chronic Pain Initiative](#), [Gateway to Better Health](#) introduced the Physical Function Improvement Benefit, which integrates physical function services, such as chiropractic, occupational therapy, and physical therapy, into community health centers (CHCs).



Chronic pain affects 1 in 5 people

The RHC worked with diverse stakeholders, such as CHC leadership, educational institutions, and multidisciplinary providers, to build out this benefit package and plan for the integration of physical function services into the primary care home model. This integrated model provides increased access to evidence-based, non-pharmacological pain management, decreases the burden on primary care providers, and promotes health equity in chronic pain.

These integration efforts have been outlined in a recent white paper titled [Addressing Chronic Pain: Integrating Physical Function Services into Community Health Centers](#). The paper details the process undertaken by the RHC to implement chiropractic, occupational, and physical therapy services on-site. The RHC hopes that their efforts serve as an example of integrated multidisciplinary care for CHCs beyond the St. Louis Region.



Addressing Chronic Pain:
Integrating Physical Function Services
into Community Health Centers

October 2021

"This progressive initiative has greatly reduced health inequities in our region, providing access to safe, effective, evidence-based care for the treatment of chronic pain," stated Patrick Battaglia, DC, DACBR, who oversees the clinical integration efforts at several regional community health centers. "As a practitioner within this benefit, it has been rewarding to see patients improve their well-being, living with less pain and engaging more in valued daily activities. This program should serve as a model nationally for how to integrate non-pharmacologic therapies for pain management and functional restoration within the primary medical home."

READ MORE ON THE [RHC BLOG](#).

Find more chronic pain resources at www.beyondpainstl.com.

VACCINATE STL

INTERACTIVE VACCINE FINDER

[VaccinateSTL](#) has launched an interactive map that allows users to discover and learn about vaccination events and treatment locations across the St. Louis region. The map includes details about COVID-19 vaccination locations, flu vaccination locations, Monoclonal Antibody Treatment centers, and COVID-19 testing locations.

Users can also narrow their search by using filters at the top of the map. By clicking on the filters, listings are sorted by vaccine type, appointment requirements, cost to patient, and more.

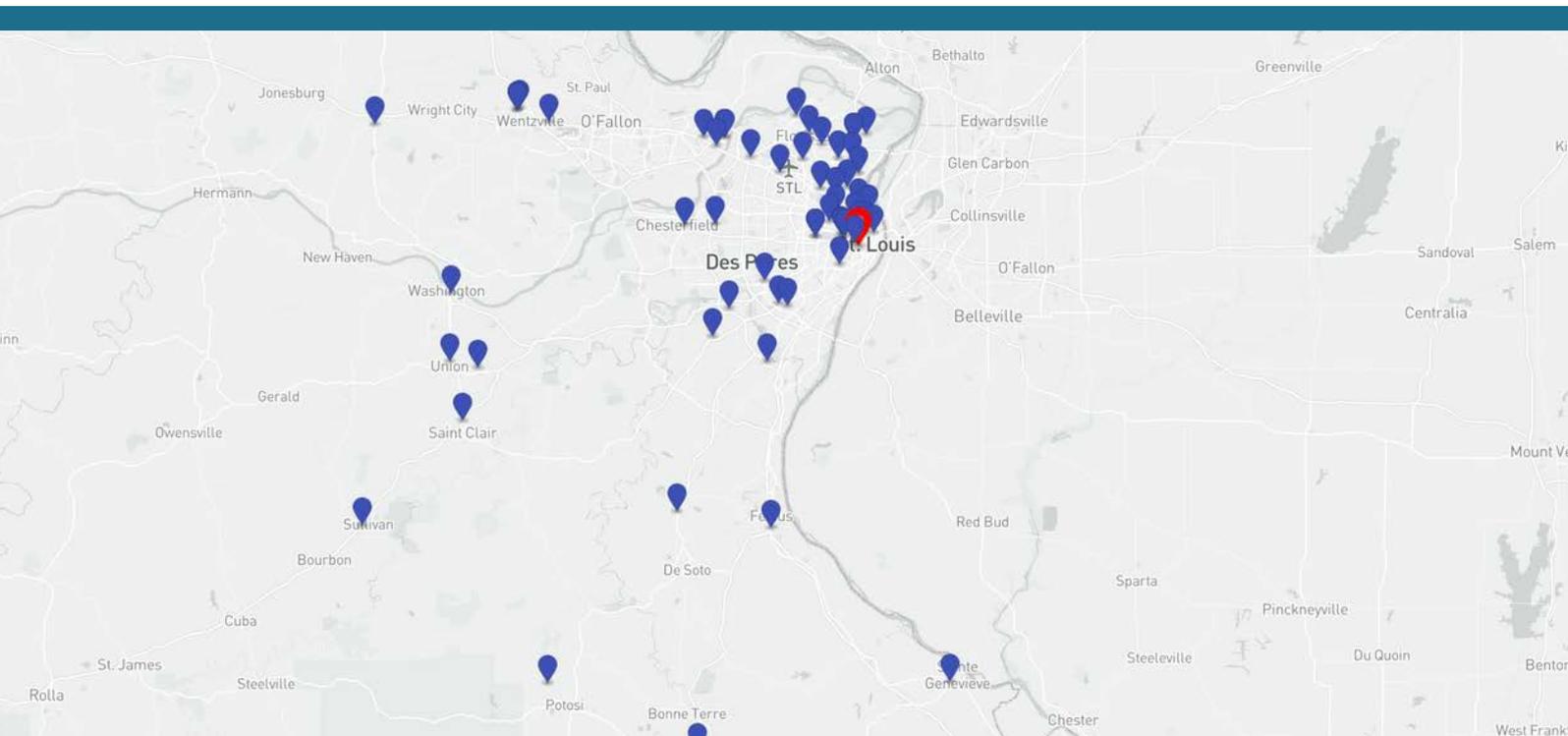
KEY REMINDERS ABOUT VACCINES

- Individuals ages 5+ are now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Only the Pfizer vaccine is authorized for ages 5-11.
- Seasonal flu vaccines are also being offered across the region.
- Monoclonal Antibody Treatment might be available for those who have recently tested positive for COVID-19.

READ MORE ON THE [RHC BLOG](#).

Vaccinate STL
Together, we can fight COVID-19

ST. LOUIS METROPOLITAN
PANDEMIC TASK FORCE



PREPARESTL RESEARCH FORUM

Systemic racism motivates a clear need for equity-focused public health campaigns, which is why [PrepareSTL](#) developed a new community-driven model for public health outreach.

["Lessons Learned from Community-Driven Responsiveness during Covid-19"](#), a study on PrepareSTL that was published in Saint Louis University's Journal of Health Law & Policy, identifies communication practices and management tactics that led to an equitable public health response. The findings, summarized below, can serve as a model to other organizations looking to implement and invest in equity-driven, community-centered work.

Join the PrepareSTL research team on Thursday, December 2, 5:30-7pm for a presentation and discussion on the research.

[REGISTER HERE.](#)

PREPARE STL

RESEARCH FORUM

RESEARCH THAT LIBERATES

"LESSONS LEARNED FROM COMMUNITY-DRIVEN RESPONSIVENESS"

PRESENTERS

Melinique Walls Castellanos
Brittini "Ree Belle" Gray
Amanda Harris
Clearra "CJ" Walker

Time:
December 2, 2021
5:30-7:00pm

Registration:
bit.ly/preparestresearch

FREE

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
WWW.PREPARESTL.COM



PREPARESTL COMMUNICATIONS MODEL

The success of the campaign was driven by several communication priorities:

1. Unequivocal focus to reach communities of color
2. Use of plain language and accessible content
3. Multifold, racially responsive communication strategies
4. Engagement of community champions as messengers

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT TACTICS

Through a combination of content and narrative analysis, the research team identified several key, unique strategies that led to the success of the campaign:

- Emphasis on community care, internally and externally focused
- Relational resourcing and radical collaboration
- Strong leadership from black women
- Community-driven leadership and highly sensitive feedback loop

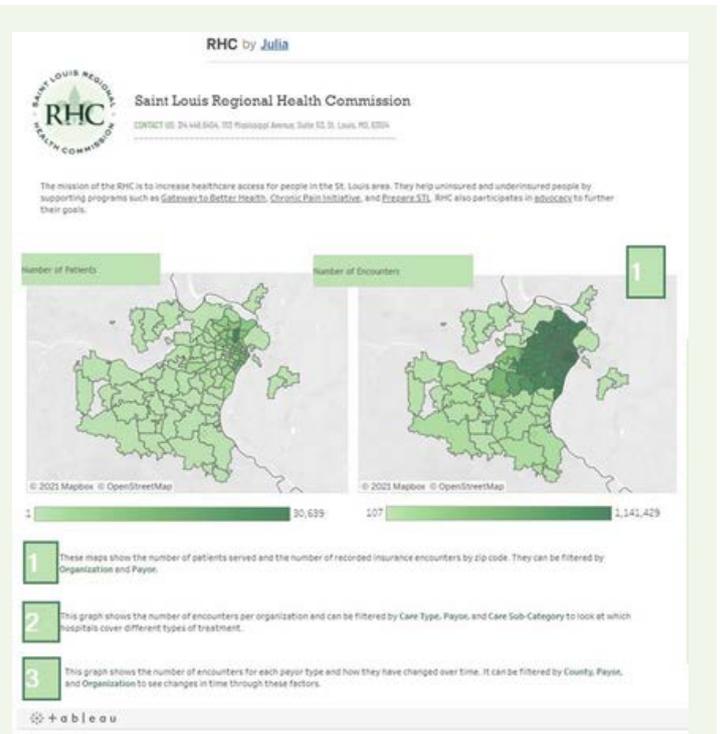
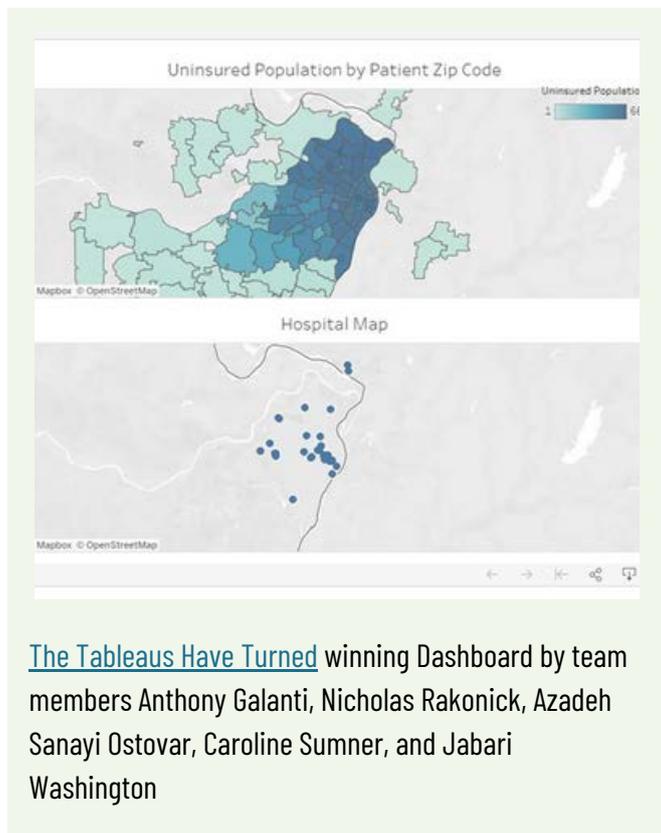


[READ MORE ON THE RHC BLOG.](#)

DATA VISUALIZATION HACKATHON

In partnership with the St. Louis Regional Health Commission (RHC), Reinsurance Group of America, Incorporated (RGA) has successfully completed their second annual Data Visualization Hackathon event. The Hackathon aims to produce information that is visually appealing and easily consumable to those who don't work as data practitioners. As a way to exercise their data skills and give back to the community, RGA interns competed in teams to transform the RHC's [Access to Care Data Book](#) into understandable infographics.

"We all have a vested interest in society being healthier, living longer and more productive lives. If we can leverage that, not only through the work we do at RGA, but partner with communities, we think that's a win-win for everybody" – Matthew Blakeley, Vice President, Corporate Responsibility & Sustainability, RGA.



[Knights of the Round](#) Tableau winning Dashboard by team members Julia Gladysz, Owen Malinauskas, Emma Mueller, Aastha Pokhrel, and Nathan Schuele

Congratulations to the two winning teams: The Tableaus Have Turned, who donated \$2,500 to Down Syndrome Association of Greater St. Louis, and Knights of the Round Tableau, who donated \$2,500 to the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

Thank you to RGA for donating \$5,000 to the RHC and special thanks to judges Guizhou Hu, Vice President, Head of Risk Analytics, RGA, Rosemary Cruz, Senior Data Scientist, RGA, Maryam Shapland, Vice President, Medical Director, RGA, and Rosetta Keeton, Consultant, RHC, for bringing their own data science and research experiences and diverse backgrounds to the event.

READ MORE ON [THE RHC BLOG.](#)

[Click on the maps to visit the online dashboards.](#)

FOLLOW US ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIAS!

For #MytustingMondays, RHC Advisory Board and staff spotlights, health advocacy updates and more, check us out on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#)!



CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE



RHC IN THE MEDIA

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



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 Emily Vandas by emailing evandas@stlrhc.org.



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



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



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



[Patient 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.stlrhc.org