



Health Equity in Action

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



GLHA
GREATER LOWELL HEALTH ALLIANCE

Letter from the Board Chair

It is an exciting and pivotal time for the Greater Lowell Health Alliance. Over the past year, we have embarked on a critically important strategic planning process to ensure the Alliance's growth, relevance, and success well into the future.

This strategic plan focuses largely on creating sustainable funding for community health grants—through which we address unmet healthcare needs and deliver vital funding to frontline organizations—as well as defining a path for the future to meet the evolving needs of this organization and the community.

As part of that strategic planning, we adopted a new mission statement: “Greater Lowell Health Alliance empowers a strategic coalition of stakeholders to promote and ensure well-being for all.” This mission statement genuinely reflects the work we do every day at the Alliance. We also formalized the core values on which this organization was founded: We are community driven, inclusive, and believe in collaboration. We advocate for everyone to have the right to quality healthcare. We are accountable for creating demonstrable impact. We are committed with pride to be part of this hardworking team.

This strategic process underscored and validated the work we do here. Through in-depth conversations with stakeholders and community members, we affirmed the growing public need and demand for our services and the confidence and collaboration of our community partners.

Our success over the past 17 years truly is a result of that community collaboration. We can accomplish what we do only through the dedication and commitment of our Board of Directors, hard-working GLHA task forces, amazing community partners, and outstanding GLHA team,

Working together, we will continue to grow stronger and continue to fulfill our critical mission to improve the overall health of Greater Lowell's communities and pursue health equity for all.

Sincerely,



Susan West Levine, Board Chair



Greater Lowell Health Alliance empowers a strategic coalition of stakeholders to promote and ensure well-being for all.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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VP Patient Care Services and Chief Nursing Executive
Tufts Medicine Lowell General Hospital

LIAM SKINNER

Interim Superintendent, Lowell Public Schools

We express our deepest gratitude and appreciation to Susan M. Rosa, BSN, RN, CHO for her many years of dedicated service as a GLHA board member. Sue's vision, leadership, and compassion has helped guide our success and make the GLHA what it is today.

Letter from the Executive Director

We are pleased to share with you the Greater Lowell Health Alliance 2022/2023 annual report, celebrating the many achievements of the past year and looking ahead with excitement and confidence to a strong future.

It has been another challenging and rewarding year, as we collaborated with Tufts Medicine Lowell General Hospital and our community partners to develop the 2023 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), which will serve as a roadmap for GLHA and our partners. (Read more on page 7.)

As the severity of the global pandemic eased, we continued in our leadership role to ensure equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and the distribution of personal protection equipment (PPE) to local organizations, as well as forging ahead with our day-to-day business of distributing annual community health grants, hosting community events, and providing support to our GLHA Task Forces.

We took on an important new role this past year, developing an ambitious community outreach program to assist community members with their most urgent needs. The GLHA team oversaw the engagement of thirty outreach workers into the community, culminating in nearly 500 hours of outreach and more than 17,000 face-to-face interactions with community members. (Read more on page 6.)

As we continue to grow strategically, so do our challenges and opportunities. During a comprehensive strategic planning process this past year, we identified the opportunity to expand and strengthen our grant-writing efforts as a key component to build a strong and sustainable fiscal foundation for the future. We are pleased to share that we are already seeing the results of those efforts.

This is an exciting and pivotal time for this great organization, and none of it would be possible without the leadership of Board Chair Susan West Levine, our amazing Board of Directors, steering committee, task force leaders and members, GLHA staff Amanda Clermont and Hannah Tello, and our incredible community partners. Thank you for all you do to make a difference in people's lives every day.

In good health,



Kerrie D'Entremont, Executive Director



STEERING COMMITTEE

MATTHEW PAGE-SHELTON
The Front-Line Initiative

MIRANDA ALLAN
Greater Lawrence Community
Action Council

MERCY ANAMPIU
Lowell Community Health Center

KARRI GREENHALGE
YMCA of Greater Lowell

MICHAEL HALL
Casa Esperanza Inc.

DANIELA JOHNSON
Vinfen

JEN MELANSON
Town of Chelmsford

BRITTANY NASH
North West Public Health Coalition

SARAH SEGUIN
WIC

LISA TAYLOR-MONTMINY
Tufts Medicine Lowell General Hospital

**We thank the following for their
years of service:**
NANDI MUNSON, MARIA RUGGERIO,
AMY PESSIA, AINAT KOREN,
DEBBIE HELMS

GLHA STAFF AND INTERNS

KERRIE D'ENTREMONT
Executive Director

AMANDA CLERMONT
Director, Community Engagement
and Education

HANNAH TELLO, PhD
Director, Special Projects & Evaluation

INTERNS

Masters – ASHLEIGH BROGNA,
OLIVIA BRIGGS, MARBELLA LEAL,
INEZ-LEE VERDIER

Undergraduate – ABIGAIL FRANCIS,
LAURIE FREDERICO, CHLOE TARLIN,
PETER OU



Clockwise from top left: GLHA staff: Kerrie D'Entremont, Amanda Clermont, and Hannah Tello; GLHA Steering Committee members Michael Hall, Sarah Seguin, Lisa Taylor-Montminy, Brittany Nash, Karri Greenhalge, Kerrie D'Entremont, and Mercy Anampiu; Kerrie D'Entremont with members of the Board of Directors: Damian Folch, MD; Susan West Levine; Sue Rosa, and Nicole Champagne; Executive Director Kerrie D'Entremont and Hannah Tello, Director of Special Projects & Evaluation, participate in a session on coalition building at the 2023 Women's Leadership Conference with Mercy Anampiu, Adriana Giraldo, and Lisa Taylor-Montminy.

Who We Are

The Greater Lowell Health Alliance (GLHA) of the Community Health Network Area 10 brings together healthcare providers, business leaders, educators, and civic and community leaders with a common goal to improve the overall health of our communities.

The GLHA serves as a catalyst in identifying and addressing unmet healthcare needs, raising awareness, and providing resources for community partners to take actions that will lead to significant change for all.

Founded in 2006, the Alliance serves as an advocate for non-profits and community organizations, securing funding and sharing resources with the outstanding front-line agencies addressing the region's health priorities. Working collaboratively, the GLHA helps break down barriers that threaten our most vulnerable populations, linking them to available services and resources to address their needs.

GLHA IMPACT THROUGH THE YEARS



108 grants
awarded to date



79/9 student interns
and preceptees mentored



33 local and state
policy actions resulting
from GLHA advocacy

480 total hours
of supervision



1,068 task
force meetings hosted

277 average hours
annually serving on community
boards and committees

Promoting Health Equity and Access: COVID-19 Response

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Greater Lowell Health Alliance has provided a leadership role in coordinating community resources and access for those highest at risk, fulfilling our mission to serve as a catalyst for action and solutions to address and improve health equity.

Collaborative Equitable Vaccine Distribution

The GLHA led a coalition to coordinate community resources to work toward reducing the disproportionate effects of the virus for people of color, decreasing health disparities, and achieving population immunity through a vaccine. Partnering with Lowell Community Health Center, we co-hosted ongoing meetings with medical experts and community leaders from 50 organizations, providing updates on vaccine distribution, highlighting equity data, and engaging our community partners in the development of COVID-19 education materials specific for the cultures and languages of the populations they serve. We also collaborated with our many community partners to identify locations and plan culturally concordant vaccine clinics.

COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic – Community Outreach Partners

In response to our COVID vaccine equity efforts, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and Lowell Community Health Center—through an Expanding COVID-19 Vaccination (ECV) grant from the Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA)—provided funding to support a Community Outreach Partner collaboration, enabling the GLHA to hire Community Outreach Workers and an outreach education supervisor to assist organizations in their COVID outreach and education efforts. GLHA received additional funding from Health Resources in Action (HIRA) to address inequities and increase vaccine distribution in Greater Lowell, particularly within the LatinX population, collaborating with multiple agencies on local vaccine efforts.

Distribution of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

Throughout COVID, GLHA has stepped up to become a clearinghouse for hundreds of thousands of PPE supplies—masks, hand sanitizer, soap, wipes, thermometers, etc.—that we received as donations or purchased through grants and then distributed to nearly 50 local community nonprofit organizations, schools, local businesses, churches, and temples.



COVID by the Numbers

5,760
Vaccines distributed
at GLHA-supported
events

24,940
PPE items distributed

4,924
Hygiene kits and
backpacks distributed

80
Community
vaccine clinics



Left: Community Outreach Worker Kowith Kret at a vaccine clinic at the Glory Buddhist Temple in Lowell. Right: Community COVID-19 vaccine clinic, organized by the GLHA, at the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association.

Community Outreach: Health Equity in Motion

A major focus of the Greater Lowell Health Alliance last year was expanding community outreach to at-risk and vulnerable populations in Lowell—including those who are housing insecure, in hot spots for COVID-19, and speak a language other than English—seeking to address and improve health equity, specifically around the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine.

With funding from Health Resources in Action (HRIA), Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), and Health Care for All (HCFA), the Alliance recruited, trained, and dispatched 30 outreach workers into the community to engage in meaningful conversations with residents, both one on one and through clinics and neighborhood gatherings, earning their trust and building connections.

With health equity and infectious disease identified as major areas of need by the 2023 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), the outreach workers focused on helping to eliminate the spread of COVID in these at-risk populations. They provided residents with facts and myths about the COVID and the vaccine, including information on how to access the vaccine and protect themselves and others if they contracted the virus.

The community outreach teams hosted numerous vaccine clinics in familiar locations easily accessible to residents, as well as attending other vaccine clinics and community events to provide educational materials and support as needed. The outreach workers also provided educational materials and support to local organizations, including Merrimack Valley Food Bank, Dwelling House of Hope, and Life Connections.

As a result of the community outreach efforts to address health equity in vaccine distribution, the Greater Lowell Health Alliance was asked to present on the outreach efforts at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Annual Ounce of Prevention Conference in May 2023 and was awarded a "Best Practice" recognition.



Community Outreach by the Numbers

483
Hours of outreach

17,351
Face-to-face interactions with community members in 2022/2023

18,978
Items of clothing and shoes distributed

290
Narcotics kits distributed

323
Fentanyl test strips distributed

1,516
Toys and baby items distributed



Top: Kerrie D'Entremont with members of the Community Outreach Team.

Bottom left: Resource table at the Community Baby Shower event in August 2023.

Bottom Right: Provision Ministry generously supplies thousands of health and personal items for distribution through the GLHA Community Outreach program.

Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

With the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment as a foundation, the Greater Lowell Health Alliance and our partners this past year developed the 2023 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), which serves as a road map for GLHA and our partners, helping us turn data into action and ultimately improve health outcomes.

A community-driven process

The CHIP is a community-driven initiative, bringing together community members, leaders, agencies, and businesses to help create objectives and develop strategies. In collaboration with Tufts Medicine Lowell General Hospital, we hosted listening sessions to engage our community partners and set our course for the future. Over several months we held 28 listening sessions and spoke to more than 200 people, producing specific data reports from each of our eight communities and encompassing those populations often marginalized or at risk, including LGBTQ+, seniors, and refugees and immigrants.

Identifying a new need

Through this process, our community identified a new area of focus: Service Navigation, which encompasses access, digital equity, care quality and experiences, and the mutual safety of patients and providers. This area will be incorporated into the GLHA’s six health-focused task forces—Health Equity, Wellness & Chronic Disease, Maternal Child Health, Behavioral Health, Housing and the Built Environment, and Substance Use and Prevention—which have adopted the CHIP as the driving force behind their efforts, setting goals and objectives to target areas of need identified in the CHIP process.

Turning data into action

The CHIP plans will turn into action through two key routes: GLHA task forces (see pages 8-9) and GLHA grant funding (see pages 10-11). As our task forces and community partners create action plans to address needs identified in the CHIP, we will be reporting back to the community on their goals, objectives, and progress in each focus area.



Priority Focus Areas for Greater Lowell

Through the needs assessment and CHIP process, hundreds of community members and organization helped identify the core priority focus areas for Greater Lowell (wheel) and actionable initiatives in each area (boxes).

Service Access, Care Quality and Experience, and Digital Equity	Vaccination and Infection Control, HIV and Hepatitis, and STIs
Depression and Anxiety, Suicide, and Perinatal Mental Health	Pregnancy Intention, Infant Feeding, and Maternal Mortality
Nutrition and Physical Activity, Cancer, and Heart and Lung Health	Housing Policy, Housing Security, and Transportation and Accessibility
Education and Prevention, Alcohol Misuse, and Opioids	Discrimination, Violent Crime, and Trafficking and Exploitation

GLHA Task Forces

The work of each of the GLHA's task forces, individually and collectively, is creating long-term improvements in specific health areas and the overall health of our community, with a focus on encouraging collaboration among member organizations. These task forces are made up entirely of community volunteers who take time from their full-time commitments to focus on the health of others. These pages include just a glimpse of the profound impact these task forces and their leaders are making in our region.

To learn more about the impact of these task forces and subcommittees, visit greaterlowellhealthalliance.org.

Among the dozens of CHIP-driven accomplishments by GLHA task forces over the past year:



Graduates of the Bridging the Gap Medical Interpreter Training



GLHA Networking Luncheon on digital equity, one of the topics being addressed by the Health Equity Task Force

HEALTH EQUITY

CO-CHAIRS: MERCY ANAMPIU, MIRANDA ALLAN

Highlight: The task force worked hard over the course of the last few years perfecting the Healthcare Navigation Video. It was a long process—from editing the script, hiring a videographer, and working with community partners to gather medical footage—but the outcome was worth it. This video is now available on the GLHA website, on YouTube, as well as digitally to local community organizations to use for their clients.

WELLNESS & CHRONIC DISEASE

CO-CHAIRS: KARRI GREENHALGE, JEN MELANSON

Highlight: The task force supported the Tufts Medicine Lowell General Hospital Mammogram Screening Event on May 6, 2023, providing educational materials, referrals to book mammograms for patients, and local supports including TeamWalk for Cancer Care resources.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

CO-CHAIRS: MATTHEW PAGE-SHELTON, DANIELA JOHNSON

Highlight: The Behavioral Health Task Force worked as a group to brainstorm the Greater Lowell Mental Health continuum for patients. Mapping out the continuum will help local providers better understand the needs in the community as well as the proper steps/referrals to be made to provide optimal care.

HOUSING & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

CHAIR: LISA TAYLOR-MONTMINY

Highlight: The Housing & The Built Environment hosted the WellConnected.net Networking Luncheon in September 2023. This presentation was for local community-based organizations (CBOs) and faith-based organizations (FBOs), to help them fully understand the capacities of the WellConnected.net platform, including resource sharing, resource searching, and internal referrals between providers.

MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH

CO-CHAIRS: SARAH SEGUIN, BRITTANY NASH

Highlight: The task force created a Breastfeeding Toolkit that was released to the public in the Summer of 2023. The purpose of the toolkit is to assist local organizations and businesses become more breastfeeding/pumping friendly, creating a welcoming and supportive environment for mothers returning to the workplace.

SUBSTANCE USE & PREVENTION

CHAIR: MICHAEL HALL

Highlight: This task force successfully ran a full year of Learning Collaboratives for the local providers within the Substance Use and Mental Health fields. Monthly, this group would welcome 20-60 individuals to hear a presentation from a local resource/provider, have lunch, and network with others. This program has been so successful that it will continue into 2024!

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Our newest Task Force!

Evolving from the COVID-19 vaccine equity group, the Infectious Disease Task Force is being created to expand beyond COVID to address infection-related issues identified by the 2023 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), including vaccine/infection control, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and HIV/Hepatitis. Working with community partners, including Lowell Community Health Center and local health departments, this task force will seek to increase awareness and direct resources to address infection-related needs in the community.



Left: Greater Lowell PRIDE 2023

Top Right: Toolkit for Creating Breastfeeding Friendly Communities document created by the Maternal Child Health Task Force

Bottom Right: Learning Collaborative networking event in April 2023, organized by the Substance Use and Prevention Task Force

GLHA Community Grants

The Greater Lowell Health Alliance offers grants to support programs and services to improve the overall health of the Greater Lowell community. To date, we have distributed more than \$2 million in grants to organizations on the front lines of addressing unmet health needs. Over a 16-year period, the GLHA is distributing nearly \$5 million allocated by Lowell General Hospital through the hospital's Determination of Need process for its 2010 campus expansion.

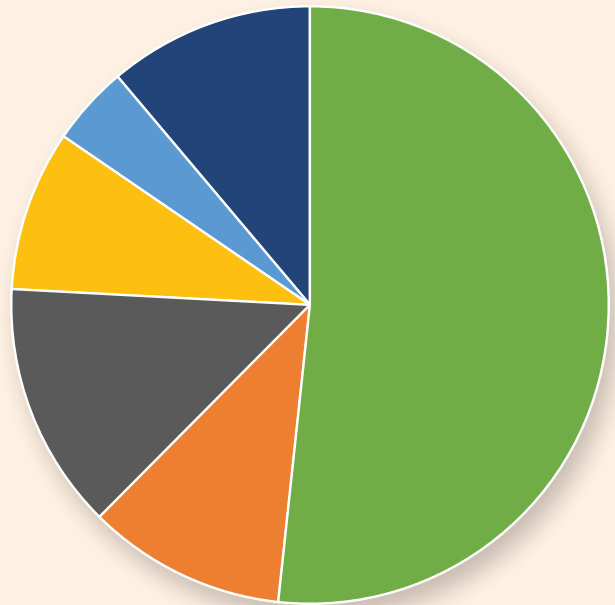
Grants are awarded around the health priorities and programs that meet specific areas of focus identified by the GLHA's 2023 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) process: Wellness and Chronic Disease, Infectious Disease, Health Equity, Maternal Child Health, Behavioral Health, Safety and Violence, Housing and the Built Environment, Substance Use and Prevention, and overarching Service Navigation.

2023/2024 Community Health Initiative Grants

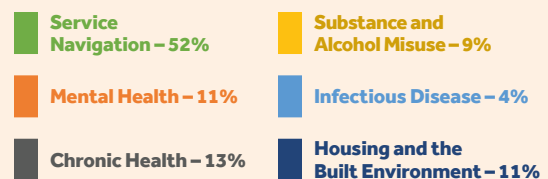
- » **Chelmsford Health Department – \$9,420**
Let's Talk about Mental Health Initiative
- » **Coalition for a Better Acre – \$22,870**
Let's Talk Lowell Podcast (Up to date, Accessible Community News and more)
- » **Eliot Presbyterian Church – \$31,500**
Eliot Day Center
- » **Habitat for Humanity – \$10,000**
Homeowner support to live safely at home
- » **International Institute of New England – \$40,000**
Equity in Healthcare Services and Access Initiative
- » **The Megan House Foundation, Inc. – \$12,850**
The Gifts of Recovery
- » **Merrimack Valley Food Bank – \$7,500**
Community Market
- » **Mill City Grows – \$12,100**
Healthy SNAX After School

In 2023 the Greater Lowell Health Alliance also awarded eight Community Health Initiative mini grants of \$2,000 each, addressing the needs identified by the 2023 CHIP. The mini grant recipients were Town of Billerica, Town of Chelmsford, Coalition for a Better Acre, Lowell Community Health Center, The Meghan House Foundation, Mill City Grows, Place of Promise, and Tufts Medicine Lowell General Hospital Cancer Center.

To learn about the impact of these grants in our region, visit greaterlowellhealthalliance.org

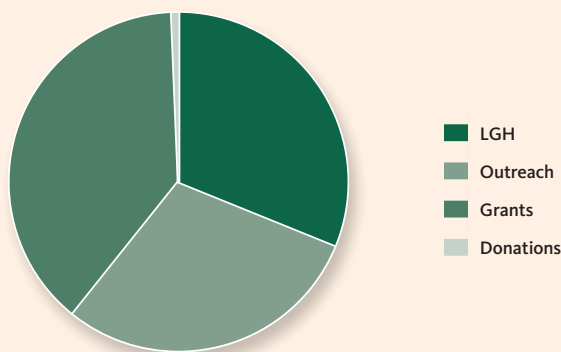


GLHA Community Health Initiative Grant Funding by Priority Area (2022/2023)



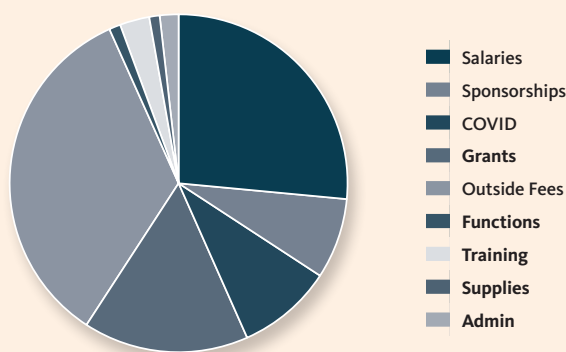
Celebrating our 2022/2023 Community Health Initiative Grant Recipients. Top: Board Chair Susan West Levine and Executive Director Kerrie D'Entremont with 2022/2023 grant recipients recognized at the 2022 Annual Meeting; Bottom left: Mill City Grows hosting a Lowell Food Policy Council meeting at Lowell Community Health Center; Right: Car kits distributed to nine communities by Chelmsford Senior Center as part of their Stay at Home project.

GLHA Financials



Revenue

Lowell General Hospital - Legacy DON	\$343,183
Community Outreach (DPH/AgeSpan)	326,446
Grant Revenue	425,889
Sponsorships/Donations	7,150
Total	\$1,102,668



Expenses

Salaries/Benefits/Taxes	\$251,041
Sponsorships/Donations/Minigrants	\$73,096
COVID Grant Expense	86,586
Grant Awards (DON)	\$150,000
Outside Professional Fees (Community Outreach)	\$323,181
Food/Functions	\$10,282
Community Education & Training	\$26,950
Office Supplies	\$9,402
Administrative/Other	\$17,000
Total	\$947,538

We are so grateful for the generous partners who supported our mission with grants in FY23.

» AgeSpan/DPH - Community COVID Outreach & Support \$311,851.96

To increase community outreach regarding COVID-19, including providing COVID education and hosting and providing information about community vaccine clinics.

» Health Resources in Action (HRIA) - Massachusetts COVID-19 Community Grants Program through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) \$60,000 for grant period January – June 2023 \$120,000 (\$90,000 received in FY23) for grant period July 2023 – June 2024

To mitigate the spread and address the adverse impacts of COVID-19 in Lowell, including reducing COVID-19 infections, morbidity, and mortality among Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) in our hardest-hit cities and towns; addressing vaccine equity; and providing community outreach, education, and messaging surrounding COVID-19.

» Health Care for All \$20,000 for grant period May – July 2023 \$25,300 for grant period September 2023 – March 2024

To deploy a community-based awareness campaign targeting MassHealth enrollees to ensure they understand how to renew and to be redetermined for eligibility for MassHealth coverage, with an added goal of ensuring individuals have up-to-date information on COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccinations.

» Women Working Wonders \$10,000 for grant period August 2023 – July 2024

To support It Takes A Village: The Breastfeeding-Friendly Communities Project, including a toolkit with a goal to reduce environmental barriers new parents face when choosing how to feed their babies, as well as supporting the well-being of young families during the perinatal period.

» Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA) via Lowell Community Health Center \$261,182.83 for grant period December 2022-May 2023

To mitigate the spread of and address the adverse impacts of COVID-19 in Lowell, including reducing COVID-19 infections, morbidity, and mortality among Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC); addressing vaccine equity; and providing community outreach, education, and messaging surrounding COVID-19.

*Non audited financials reflect FY23 (October 1, 2022 - September 30, 2023)

Building a Healthier Future

The GLHA Needs You

The success of the Greater Lowell Health Alliance relies on the collaboration and engagement of our communities. There are many ways you can become involved and support the GLHA.

Join a task force.

The GLHA is always looking for new community members to join task forces and to collaborate on addressing the issues our community faces. All task force meetings are open to the public and all are welcome.

Donate.

As the GLHA grows in both scope and impact, so does our need for resources. As a nonprofit 501(c)(3), we rely on donations from organizations and individuals to sustain our mission, grow our programs, and keep our events free and accessible to everyone. Please consider donating to the Greater Lowell Health Alliance at greaterlowellhealthalliance.org/donate.

For more information on other ways to get involved with the Greater Lowell Health Alliance, visit greaterlowellhealthalliance.org.



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