



JOHNS HOPKINS
BLOOMBERG SCHOOL
of PUBLIC HEALTH

Bloomberg American Health Initiative

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

5

FOCUS AREAS

Addiction &
Overdose

Adolescent
Health

Environmental
Challenges

Food Systems
for Health

Violence

Bloomberg American Health Initiative

Through education, research and practice, the Bloomberg American Health Initiative works to tackle five critical 21st-century challenges to health in the United States, with the goal of improving health outcomes and saving lives: Addiction and Overdose, Environmental Challenges, Adolescent Health, Food Systems for Health, and Violence.

Our cross-cutting themes are Equity, Evidence, and Policy. These concepts drive our efforts to develop and scale programs and policies with impact.

The Initiative was established in late 2016 with a \$300 million gift from Bloomberg Philanthropies in honor of the centennial of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

The year 2022 was a time of transition and growth for the Initiative. Among other significant strides, we launched five steering committees, established a program to send faculty to support the federal government, and concluded several new high-impact projects.

This annual report shares some of these highlights.

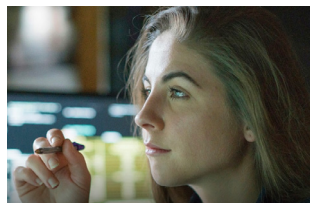
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CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Equity



Evidence



Policy





KEY 2022 DATA POINTS

TOTAL FELLOWS

269 total, including, **228** MPH students,
41 DrPH students, **96** alumni

PARTNERS AND COLLABORATING ORGANIZATIONS

483 organizations including **235** collaborating
organizations across **41** states, the District of
Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Mariana Islands.

COURSES

23 courses taken by **2,606** students to date.

ENDOWED FACULTY

As of December 2022, the Initiative has provided endowment support to **25** Bloomberg Professors of American Health and Bloomberg Centennial Professors.

FUNDED PROJECTS

Provided funding for **64** projects, including **26** community partnerships, two educational innovation projects, **10** policy translation projects, **12** evaluations, **11** research projects and three practice-based projects.

COMMUNICATIONS

More than **436,000** unique visitors and **over 1 million** page views since the December 2020 launch of the redesigned website. **3,361** Twitter followers. Initiative leadership, core and endowed faculty appeared in more than **200** notable media outlets.

EVENTS

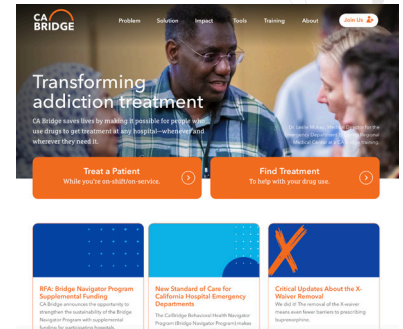
After two years of virtual summits, the 2022 Bloomberg American Health Summit was attended in person by **422** people and live streamed by **8,363** people. This is almost three times more from the year before. Additionally, the Initiative helped sponsor five speaker events and five conferences.

Addiction & Overdose

CONNECTION

IMPROVING ACCESS FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

Through our new Network of Practice Grants, Public Health Institute/ CA Bridge, a collaborating organization, facilitated partnerships between hospital emergency departments and organizations serving tribal, rural, and urban communities to improve access to treatment for opioid addiction and reduce high rates of overdose deaths among Native Americans.



RESEARCH

IMPACT OF STATE LAWS REGARDING DRUG USE IN PREGNANCY

Professor Beth McGinty, Assistant Professors Sachini Bandara, Alex McCourt and former postdoctoral fellow Esita Patel studied the impact of state laws regarding drug use during pregnancy. The researchers found that many states have enacted laws that may disincentivize treatment-seeking among pregnant people who use drugs and lead to family separation. They also found that states with laws designating prenatal drug use as child abuse or neglect had lower prevalence of screening.

POLICY

WORK WITH THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY

Through our new Intergovernmental Exchange Program, Bloomberg Assistant Professor of American Health Javier Cepeda worked as a Senior Policy Advisor with the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. His main priorities involved establishing the evidence base on low-threshold buprenorphine, specifically on outcomes achieved when integrated with syringe service programs, and informing a research agenda on police deflection programs and public health.



Fellow Spotlight



Bloomberg Fellow Lindsey Sizemore who is the Viral Hepatitis Program director at the Tennessee Department of Health, is spearheading the launch of Hepatitis C Virus Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes). The project aims to build capacity for hepatitis C treatment across the state.



Bloomberg Fellows Callie Kaplan, Zach Kosinski, Nicole Barnes and Erin Russell, under the guidance of Professor Susan G. Sherman, created a readiness toolkit to support agencies, community-based organizations, and advocacy groups to make informed decisions about the use of harm reduction vending machines in their communities.

Adolescent Health

RESEARCH

LISTENING TO ADOLESCENTS, PARENTS, AND ADVOCATES ABOUT FOOD INSECURITY

Professor of American Health Kristin Mmari and other researchers conducted in depth interviews of Baltimore adolescents, parents, and policy advocates about ways to reduce adolescent food insecurity. All agreed that providing greater benefits and easier access to the SNAP program to families would be helpful. Adolescents and parents, but not policy advocates, supported providing SNAP benefits directly to adolescents. Another common strategy supported particularly by parents and policy advocates was improving the quality of school lunches and expanding access to teaching about food and nutrition in schools. These findings were published in *Nutrients* journal.

CONNECTION

POLICY APPROACH TO IMPROVING IDAHO'S ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

The Initiative's new Network of Practice grant provided Idaho Voices for Children, the lead advocacy organization for children's health policy in the state, an opportunity to explore and identify systemic barriers facing Idaho's mental health system and develop recommendations to ensure Idaho children and teens have access to needed mental health care. Policy recommendations to address the identified challenges and barriers in Idaho's mental health system will be shared with key legislators and state agencies.



Fellow Spotlight



Bloomberg Fellow Aneri Pattani and Professor Holly Wilcox launched a free, online course to help educate journalists on how to write about suicide, including adolescent suicide. Through lectures, readings, and interactive exercises, the course explains how certain types of news stories can contribute to suicide deaths in the community, and how journalists can mitigate that risk by safely framing ideas, interviewing sources, and producing stories on the topic. Since it became available in May 2022, more than 600 students and classrooms from more than 30 different countries are enrolled in the course.

Environmental Challenges

PROGRAM

MASSACHUSETTS PEDIATRIC INJURY EQUITY REVIEW

The MassPIER project, led by Bloomberg Fellow Sadiqa Kendi and Professor Shannon Frattaroli, addresses inequities that exist among childhood injuries resulting in death or serious injury. The Injury Equity Framework is a new process for reviewing inequities in injuries and identifying recommendations with experts in injury surveillance, child fatality review and legislative advocacy to better understand how to address them systematically.



PROGRAM

PROMOTING USE OF SAFE DRINKING WATER

The Passamaquoddy Tribal Members in Maine, who use private well water for drinking water, may be at higher risk of exposure to natural occurring contaminants like arsenic and uranium that are not regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act. Through a Fellowship Collaboration Award, DrPH fellows David Harvey and Alfred May partnered with the Passamaquoddy Tribal Community at Pleasant Point to understand the tribe's current private well water supply sources and assess tribal community members' interest in recommended testing of their drinking water sources. David and Alfred will meet with tribal community members to discuss the results of the private well water testing and provide information on available federal resources to minimize exposures to drinking water contaminants identified from the testing samples.



Fellow Spotlight



Bloomberg Fellow Mae Hanzlik worked with her collaborating organization, Smart Growth America, to release the 2022 edition of *Dangerous by Design*, which highlights the preventable epidemic of people struck and killed while walking. More than 6,500 people per year die in this way in the United States, and incidents increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. The project examines federal data to track the national trend of pedestrian fatalities, creates rankings of the most dangerous metro areas to walk, analyzes who is at greater risk of being killed while walking (Black people, American Indian and Alaska Native people, older adults, and people walking in low-income areas), explains some of the causes, and explores what can be done to halt this accelerating trend.

Food Systems for Health

RESEARCH

REDUCING RESIDENTIAL FOOD WASTE

The City of Frisco recently committed to reduce wasted food from being generated and sent to the landfill. To support these efforts, MPH Fellow Alum Julianah Marie, with the help of the Initiative's Applied Experience award, piloted a program to educate community members on ways to reduce residential food waste. This program helped secure a larger grant that will bring composting programs to the city.

EDUCATION

NEW COURSE ON FOOD SYSTEMS PLANNING

The Initiative supported the creation of a new course, Planning for Food Systems and Public Health, taught by Assistant Professor Yeeli Mui in the Fall of 2022. The course introduces urban and regional planning as an integral part of addressing structural determinants of food disparities.

POLICY

THE NEED FOR CHILD NUTRITION WAIVERS

Associate Scientist Susan Gross and a dedicated team at the Center for a Livable Future and Maryland Hunger Solutions assessed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and pandemic-related waivers issued by the United States Department of Agriculture on Maryland Summer Food Service Program participation and operations during summer 2021. The work in this area contributes to a limited body of research focused on the Summer Food Service Program, and specifically, the impact of the pandemic and pandemic-related USDA waivers on the program. Results from their 2020 evaluation are summarized in a policy brief released in March 2022. Dr. Gross and additional organizations are using this data to push for meal waivers to become permanent.

Policy Brief | MARCH 2022

Make Child Nutrition Waivers Permanent: A crucial step toward feeding more children

Key Take Away

Program flexibilities provided by the nationwide COVID-19-related waivers reduced the administrative burden on SFSP sponsors and enabled them to overcome distribution models to better serve children during out-of-school times, such as during the pandemic.

2022 Legislative Opportunities

Keeping Schools Meals Flexible Act (H.R. 6613) would extend all in-person services through the upcoming school year until June 30, 2023. Without this extension, the current nationwide waivers will expire in June 2022 and reduce flexibilities, which may limit future meals distribution and participation.

The extension of the child nutrition program waivers through at least June 30, 2023, is essential from the remaining pending bill to move forward on all legislative priorities related to an economic recovery bill, the waivers and other child nutrition program provisions, including expanding community eligibility and creating a national Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (Summer EBT) program should be included in the next legislation that Congress takes up.

Our Study

During the COVID-19 pandemic, researchers from the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health collaborated with Maryland Hunger Solutions to investigate the impact of pandemic COVID-19-related waivers on sponsors of the Summer Food Service Program in SFSP. Sponsors were invited to complete an online survey and an in-depth interview to share about their experiences operating in 2020. This brief highlights qualitative findings from the in-depth interviews with SFSP sponsors.

Research Shows:

In response to COVID-19-related school closures in 2020, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued the following nationwide waivers to allow more flexibilities in Summer Food Service Program (SFSP):

1. Mealtime Flexibility Waiver—allows service of meals outside of the standard mealtime
2. Non-congregate Feeding Waiver—allows for meal pick-up (e.g. grab and go meals) and off-site meal consumption
3. Non-congregate Meal Pick-up Waiver—allows parents and guardians to pick up meals for participants
4. Area Eligibility Waiver—eliminates restrictions that limit service to areas where at least half of the children are in a low-income household

Between 2019 and 2020, Maryland SFSP meal participation increased by over 300%. Sponsors highlighted the importance of these four waivers in helping them dramatically increase the number of meals served from 2019 to 2020 (i.e., 3). Sponsors expressed the desire for the USDA to permanently implement these waivers (1). The waivers were extended through June 30, 2022; however, their status and the flexibilities afforded to the SFSP remain uncertain after this point.

Policy Recommendations:

Based on the findings from interviews with SFSP sponsors, we recommend permanently implementing all four USDA issued SFSP waivers.

The flexibilities afforded to the SFSP due to the waivers reduced longstanding barriers to summer meal operations for sponsors and participation for families during the pandemic. The non-congregate meals and mealtime flexibility waivers enabled sponsors to develop creative distribution models while adhering to COVID-19 physical distancing protocols, such as grab-and-go and multiple-day food boxes. The non-congregate meal pick-up waiver helped sponsors to address transportation and logistical barriers which historically limited families' ability to access summer meals because children needed to be physically present at the site. Finally, the area eligibility waiver allowed sponsors to expand their reach to more children in the areas they serve in, regardless of the income-eligibility status. The pandemic-related waivers ultimately supported sponsors' ability to increase the number of meals served to children in summer 2020 (3).

Fellow Spotlight



Bloomberg Fellow Regis Whaley is the Director of Advocacy & Research at Three Square Food Bank (Las Vegas, NV) and Chair of the Southern Nevada Food Council. His work focuses on utilizing research and data to inform advocacy efforts to reduce hunger and food insecurity in Southern Nevada. He facilitates a monthly webinar and affinity group of data analysts for Feeding America's member food banks nationwide.



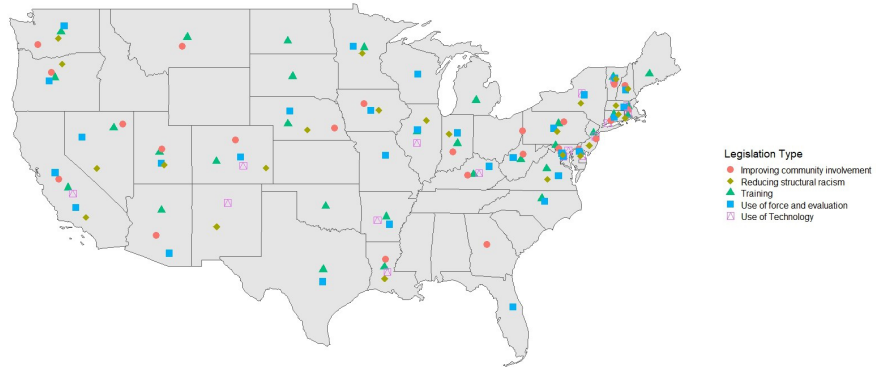
Bloomberg Fellow Nanya Chiejine Director for Well Connected Communities at National 4-H Council, is building the capacity of Cooperative Extension at 23 land grant universities to implement policy, systems and environment changes that reduce food insecurity across 50 communities, and establish equitable SNAP-Ed collaborations with state and community partners.

Violence

POLICY

POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY POLICIES

With funding from the Initiative, Assistant Scientist Hossein Zare found that place strongly impacts the number of fatal police shootings. Among all fatal shootings, 713 occurred in low-Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) counties, 1,660 in middle-SVI, and 3,152 in high-SVI counties. Race played a significant role as well; fatal shooting deaths increased by 2.3 times among White individuals, 9.6 times among Black individuals, and 15 times among Hispanic individuals between low- and high-SVI counties. Additionally, Zare and colleagues found that states passed some legislation to improve the police accountabilities, in five main areas: Training (34 states), Use of Technology (17 states), Improving Community Evolvment (26 states), Use of Force and Evaluation (32 states), and Reducing Structural Racism (25 states).



EDUCATION

NEW COURSE ON POLICING AND PUBLIC HEALTH

The Initiative supported the creation of a new course, Policing and Public Health, taught by Cass Crifasi in Spring 2022. The course provides students with an overview of the history and evolution of policing in the United States and an understanding of the intersections between policing and public health.



Fellow Spotlight

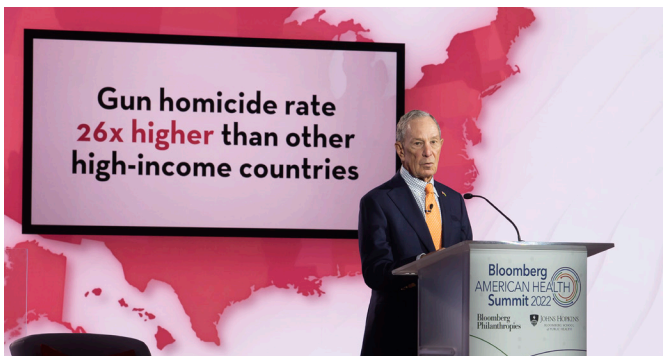
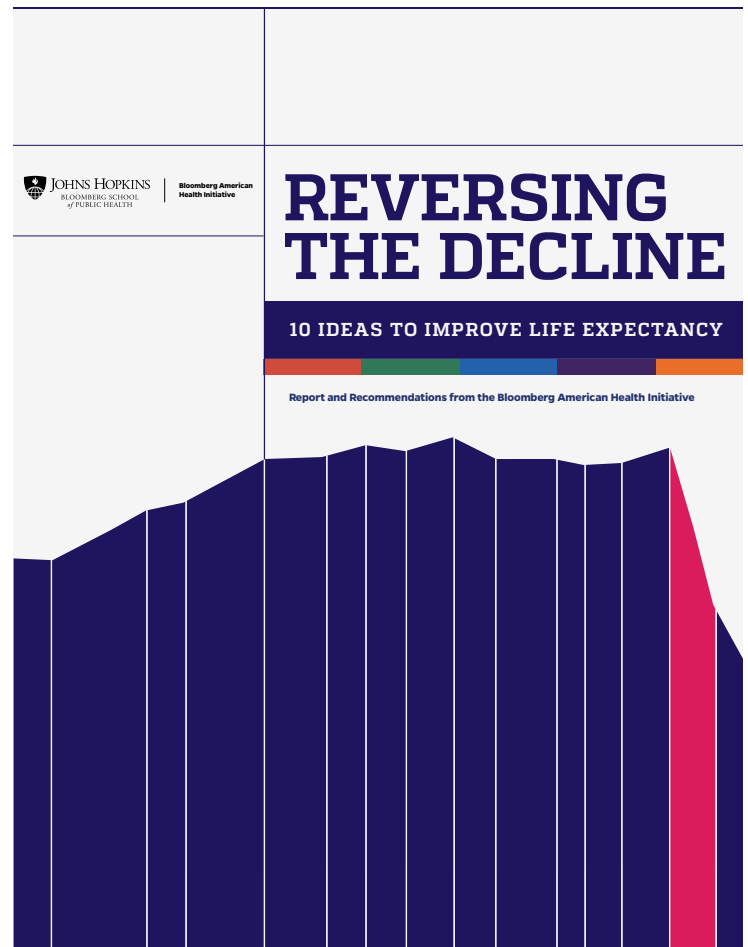


Bloomberg Fellow Cailin Crockett, senior advisor for the White House’s National Security Council’s Gender Policy Council, worked with teams from the White House, Australia, Denmark, the Republic of Korea, Sweden and the United Kingdom for the Global Partnership for Action on Gender-Based Online Harassment and Abuse. This effort is “to better prioritize, understand, prevent, and address the growing scourge of technology-facilitated gender-based violence.”

Reversing the Decline: 10 Ideas to Improve Life Expectancy

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported life expectancy in the United States in 2021 to be 76.1 years—down 2.8 years from its peak. This drop erased all life expectancy gains since 1996. U.S. life expectancy at birth increased steadily to a peak of 78.9 years in 2014, before plateauing from 2015 to 2019, and then falling precipitously during the pandemic.

At the annual summit in December 2022, the Bloomberg American Health Initiative at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health released a report setting out 10 practical steps to address major causes of this declining life expectancy. Those causes include COVID-19, overdose, gun-related homicide and suicide, teen suicide, motor vehicle crashes, and heart disease, stroke, and diabetes. The report – “Reversing the Decline: 10 Ideas to Improve Life Expectancy” – appeared in 184 media outlets, with 3 million broadcast impressions and 59 million digital impressions across 40 states.



Bloomberg American Health Summit

The fifth annual Bloomberg American Health Summit, held in Philadelphia December 5-7, 2022, brought together hundreds of practitioners, policymakers, and experts to highlight how local public health efforts are shaping national policies and solutions. The Summit, the first in-person gathering of the Initiative in two years, explored pressing issues such as the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, the overdose epidemic, adolescent mental health, and gun violence.



With the theme, “Public Health: On Location,” the Summit featured keynote remarks from Michael R. Bloomberg, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky, Pennsylvania Governor-elect Josh Shapiro and New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, and engaging conversations on critical topics ranging from preventing gun violence and harm reduction to how to engage Black youth in a movement to promote healthier eating. (Note: Gov. Shapiro was sworn into office on January 17, 2023.)





The 2022 Summit featured public health interventions happening in Philadelphia and other communities. Sessions included:

- Advancing Equity in Public Health
- Extreme Risk Protection Orders
- Effective Treatment for Substance Use Disorder in Jails and Prisons
- Innovations in Harm Reduction
- Youth Suicide Risk in Latinx Communities
- The Impact of Supreme Court Decisions on Public Health
- The Operation Good Food & Beverages Project
- Climate Change & Environmental Justice

The 2022 Bloomberg American Health Summit was attended in person by 422 people and live streamed by 8,363 people. This is almost three times more from the year before. Additionally, the Summit saw substantial media coverage, such as these notable highlighters:

- [Amid a Crisis in American Health, We Are Not Moving Fast Enough](#) (The Philadelphia Inquirer)
- [Here’s How to Reverse the Drop in US Life Expectancy](#) (Bloomberg, CityLab)
- [CDC Director Calls for Overhaul of Public Health Data Collection](#) (Bloomberg, CityLab)
- [Gun Violence and Public Health: Governor-Elect Shapiro Speaks at American Health Summit](#) (WHYY-FM, Philadelphia, PA)