

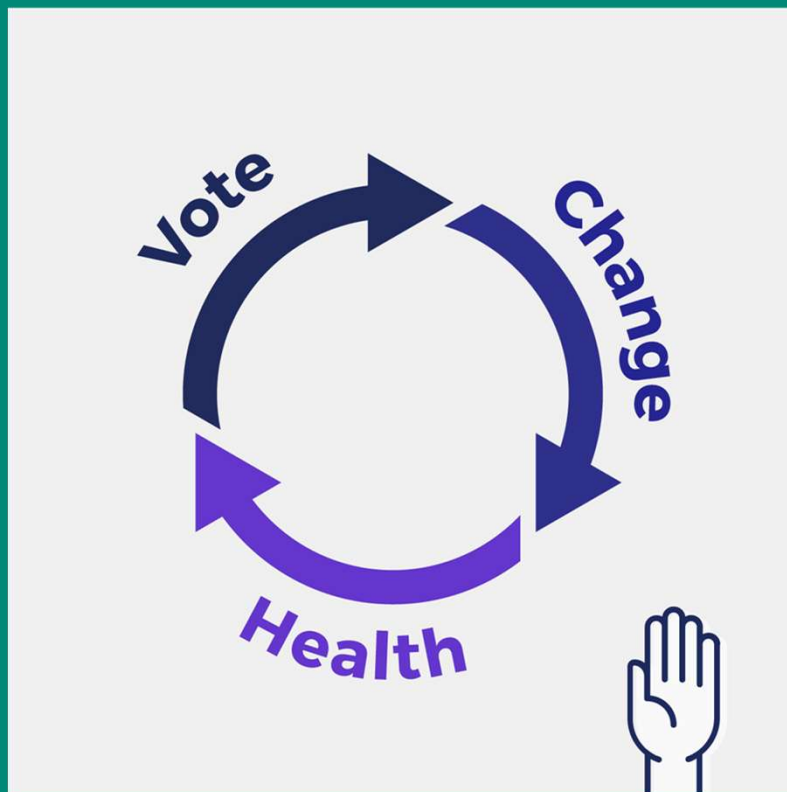
Health & Democracy: *Democratizing Community Health Assessments*

Our Panelists



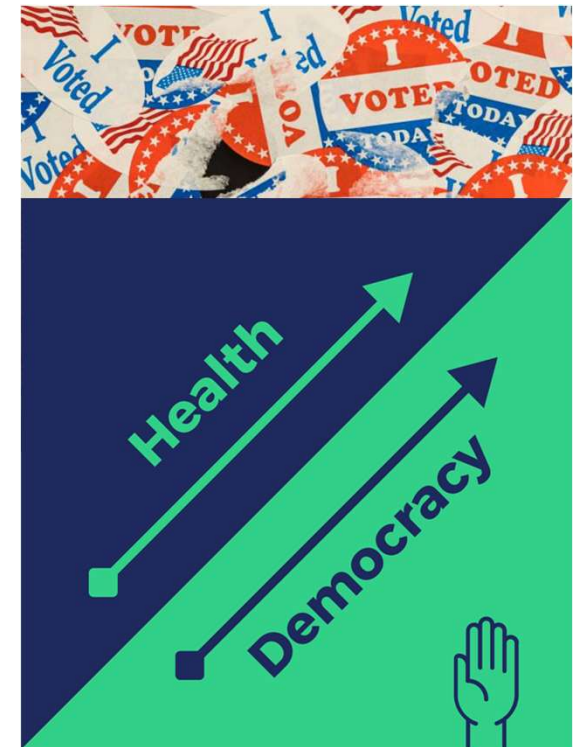
Objectives

- Describe the relationship between civic participation and health and racial equity.
- Demonstrate how the community health assessment and health improvement planning process can serve as an opportunity to strengthen democracy and prioritize action on upstream determinants of health.
- Share action steps for both public health and community partners to strengthen civic and voter participation and advance health equity.



Health is always on the ballot

- Public Safety & Violence prevention
- Health care access
- Early childhood investments
- Climate resiliency
- Pandemic & infectious disease prevention
- Maternal and Infant Health
- Reproductive Health
- Public Health Authority
- Housing, water, food, education, transportation, civil rights



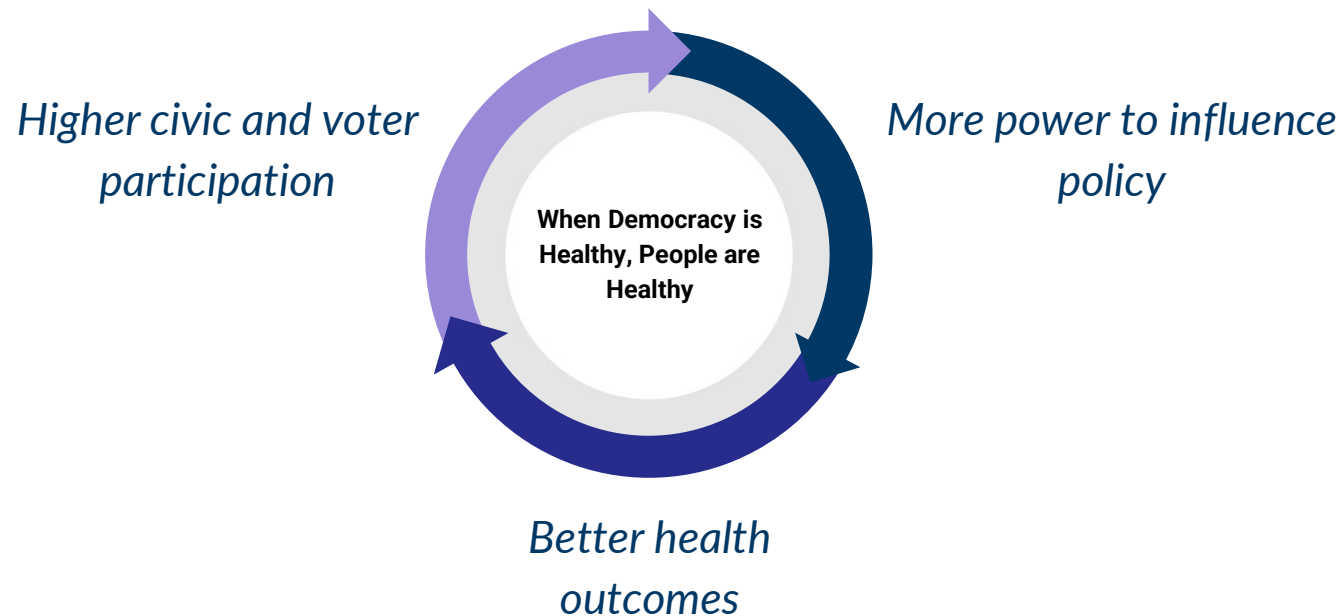
Public Health is...

"... Public Health is what we... do **collectively** to assure the conditions in which (all) people can be healthy"

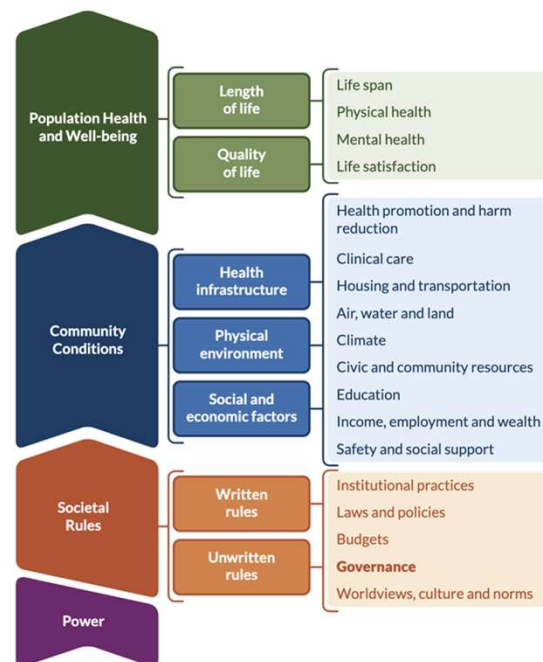
Institute of Medicine (1988), Future of Public Health



Health & Democracy Are Interdependent



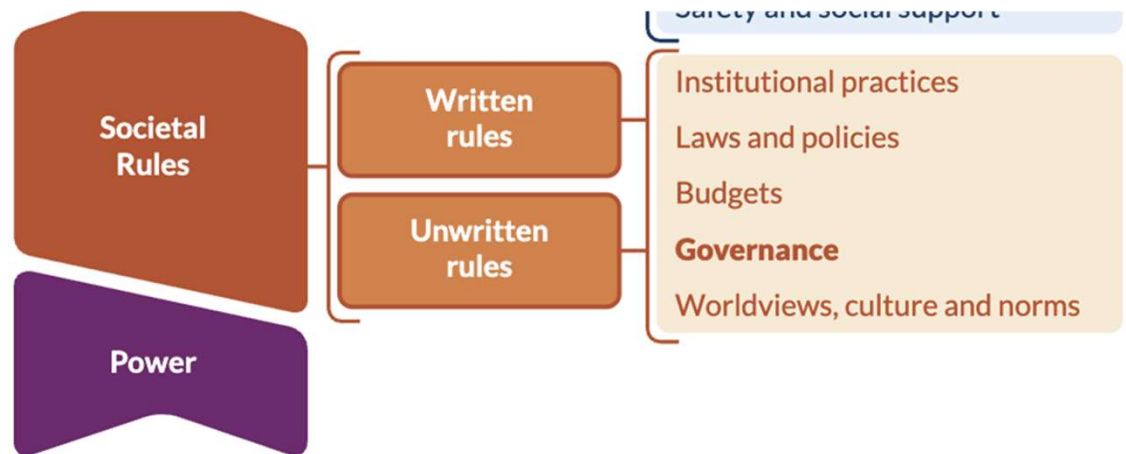
People and Places Thrive when Everyone can Participate



University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute Model of Health © 2025

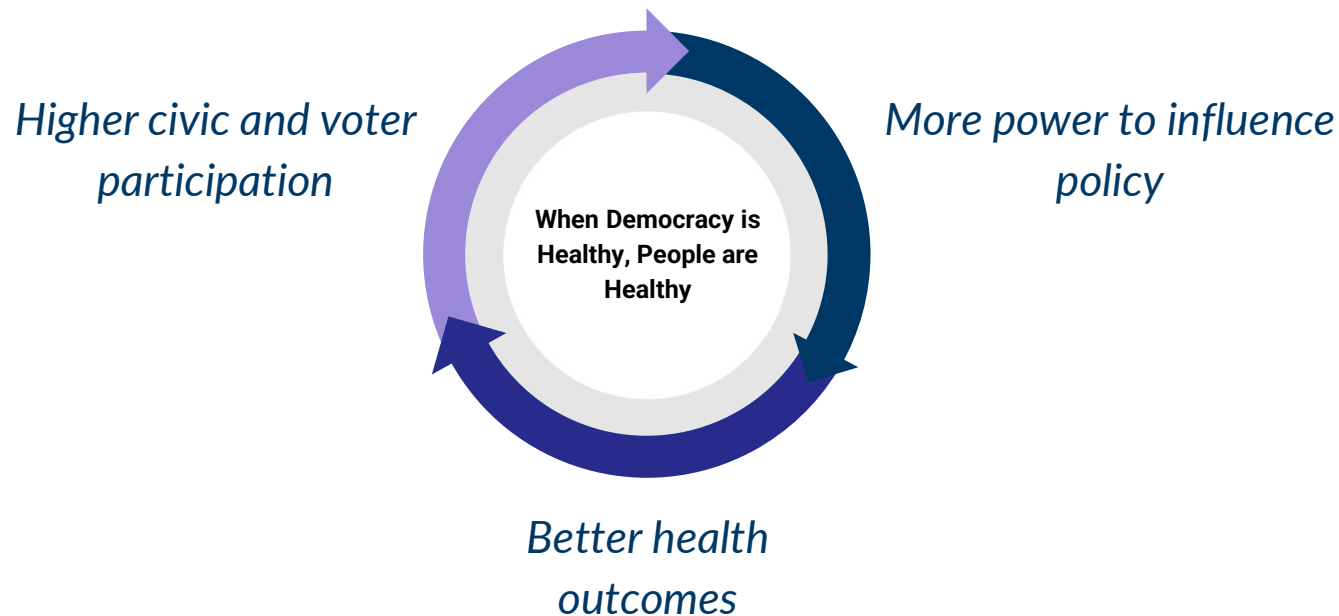
Health is a Political Choice

Politics - a set of activities associated with making decisions in groups, or other forms of power relations between individuals such as the distribution of resources or status.



University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute Model of Health © 2025

Health & Democracy Are Interdependent



History: Electoral Expansion Improves Health

Expansion of Voting Access	Health Improvement
Women's Suffrage	Child mortality rates declined
Civil Rights Movement	More inclusive policies in education, housing, economic opportunity, and health care including Medicare and Medicaid
Voting Rights Act of 1965	Reductions in Black infant deaths in Southern counties subject to preclearance

All steps forward were contested “continuous struggle for power...”

Health & Democracy Index

- Compares 12 public health indicators and voter turnout to the restrictiveness of voting policies in each state.
- States with more voting access and greater civic participation have better health outcomes



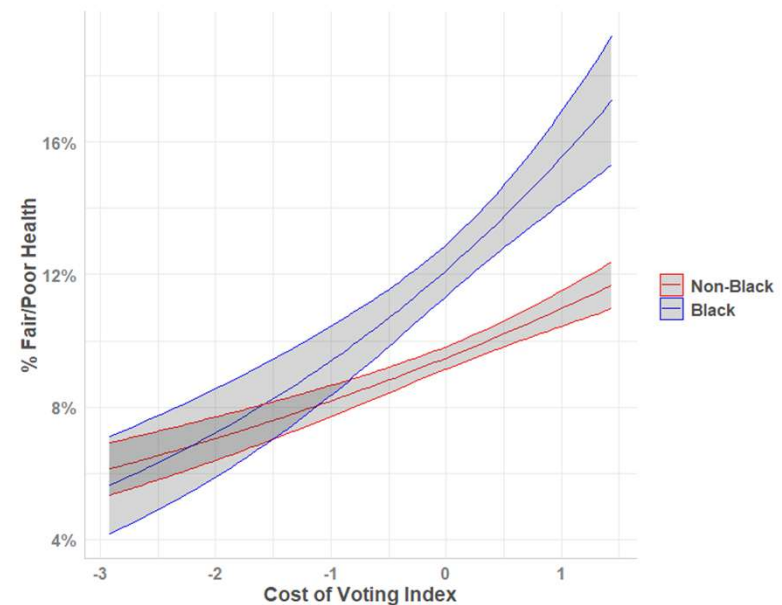
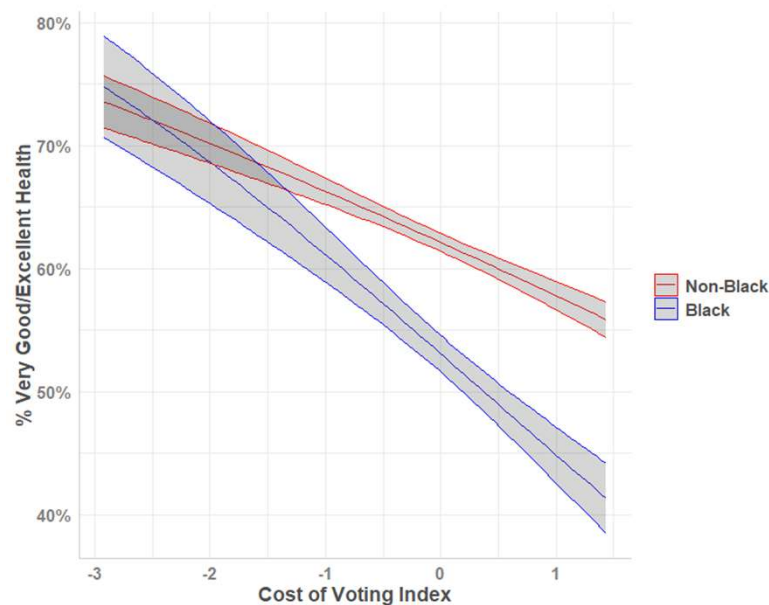
OVERALL FINDINGS:

More Voting Access, Better Health Outcomes

States with more inclusive voting policies and greater levels of civic participation are healthier.

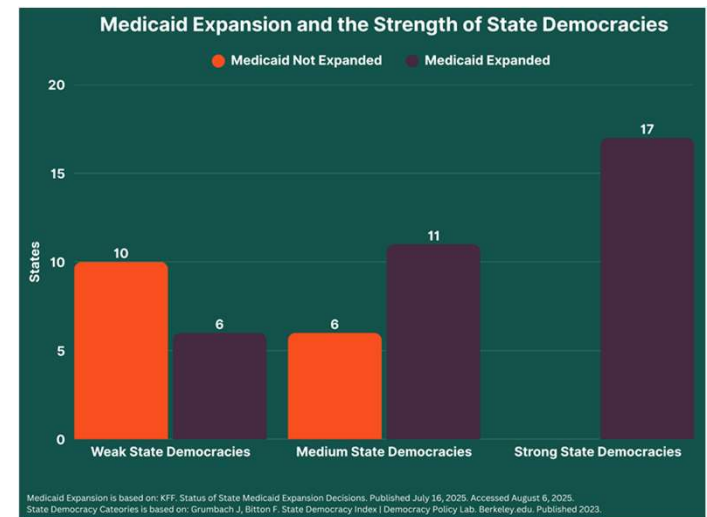


New Research: Restrictive Electoral Environments and the Health of Black Americans



Strong Democracies Support Key Health Reforms

States with stronger democracies were **3.72 times** more likely to have **expanded Medicaid eligibility by 2020**, regardless of state political environments, median household income, and educational attainment.



Read the full report!





Civic participation in Wisconsin SHA/SHIP process, products, and funding

- Center the contribution of the community, people's voices in everything we do.
- Engage deeply with partners, invest in building trust and alliances, and focus on structural causes.
- Understand and account for power dynamics.

One Example

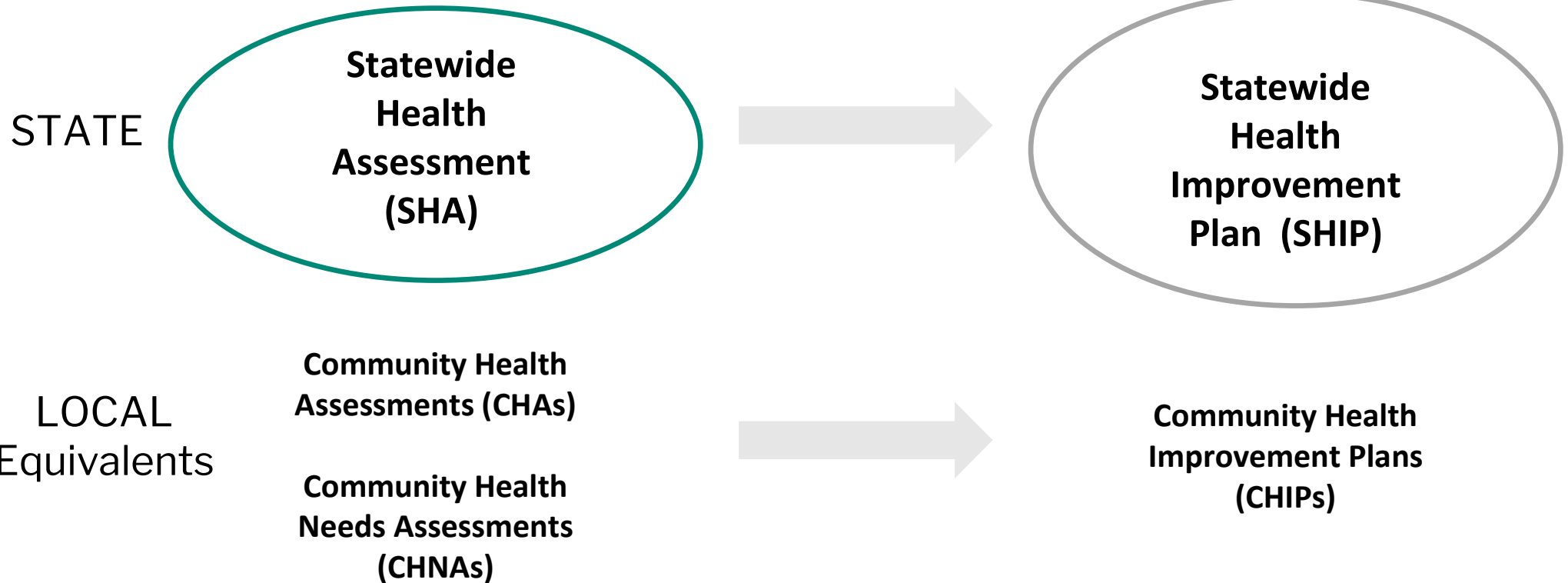
Statewide Health Assessment (SHA)

- Baseline, snapshot of data
- Overview of community conditions and the health of the people in the state
- Data that guides the selection of the priorities for the SHIP



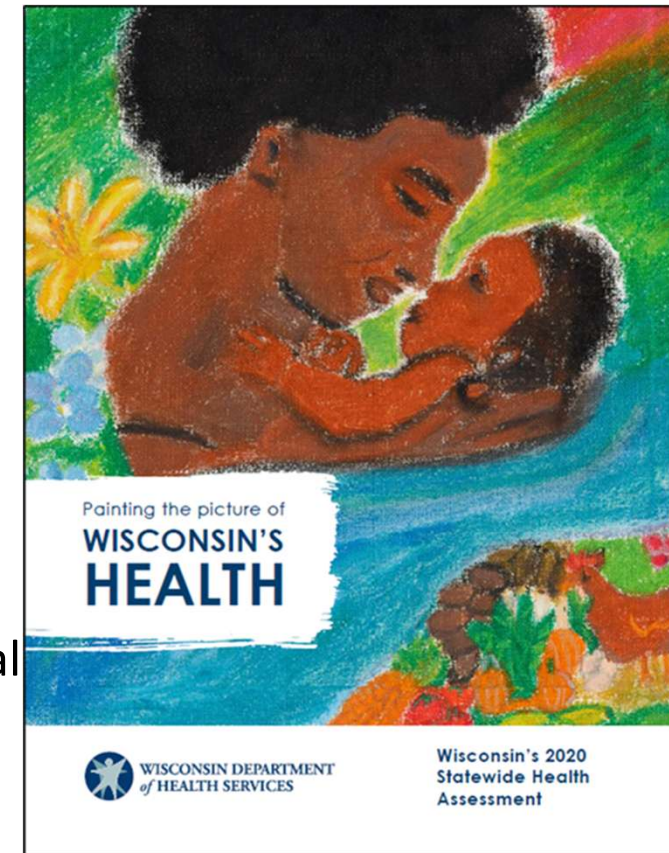
Statewide Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)

- Sets priorities and creates a plan for strategic activities
- Approach to advancing health equity that focuses on improving the conditions that create better health for all.

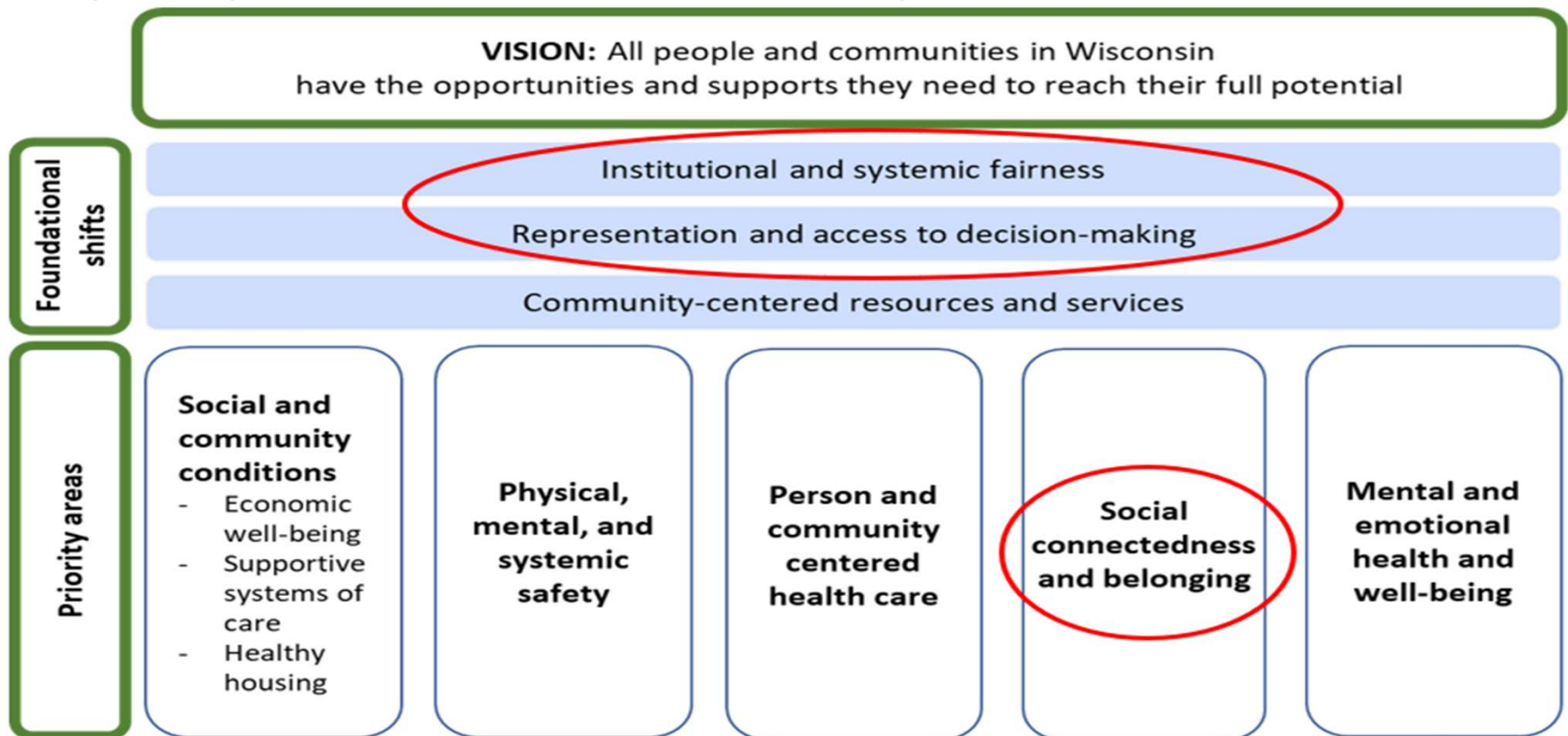


Civic participation in Wisconsin SHA/SHIP development process

- 2020 SHA - 74 community conversations facilitated by local partners.
- 2022 SHIP development - series of listening sessions, conversations with community based partners.
- 2023 final process - wrapped up with an “accountability stage,” validating priorities with community and institutional partners.

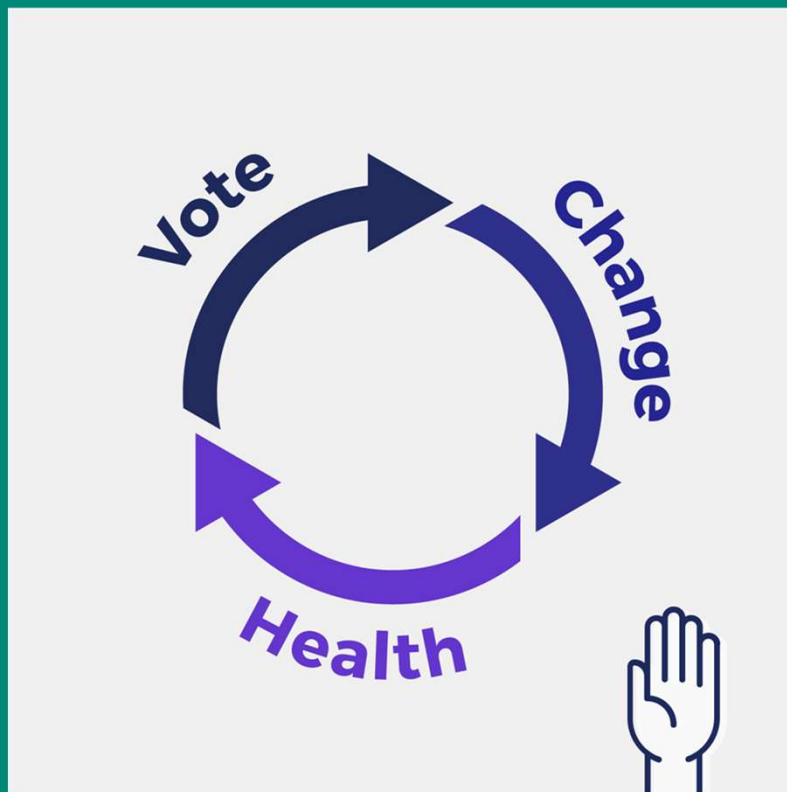


Civic participation in Wisconsin SHA/SHIP products



Civic participation in Wisconsin SHA/SHIP funding

- Mobilizing Communities for a Just Response Grant
 - Supports local priority action
 - Focuses on partner and community mobilization for policy change
- QualData Grant
 - Increases public health's capacity for qualitative data, community conversations and engagement locally
 - Builds trust and connections with underrepresented communities



The Example: SHA & SHIP



- Convening
- Data -The story the data tells
- Big “P” and small “p” policy change processes

Convening for *SHA/SHIPs* in Minnesota

Changing who is at the table and their
role and the agency's accountability
to these group processes

Sickle Cell Anemia



blausen



Data Priorities Communicate Values & Influence Policy



Health Assessments and Plans Influence the Opportunities for Collective Action

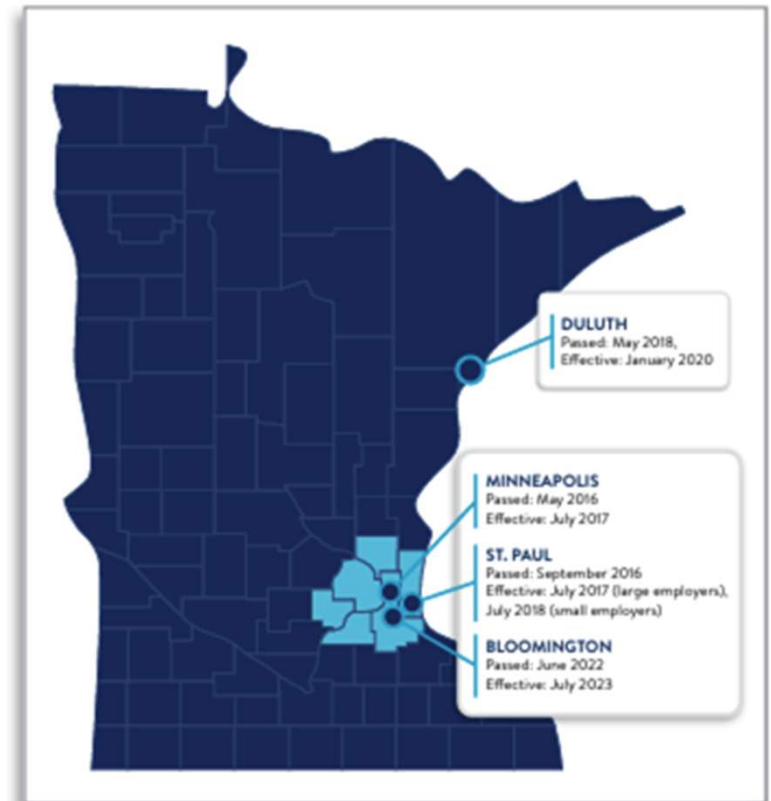
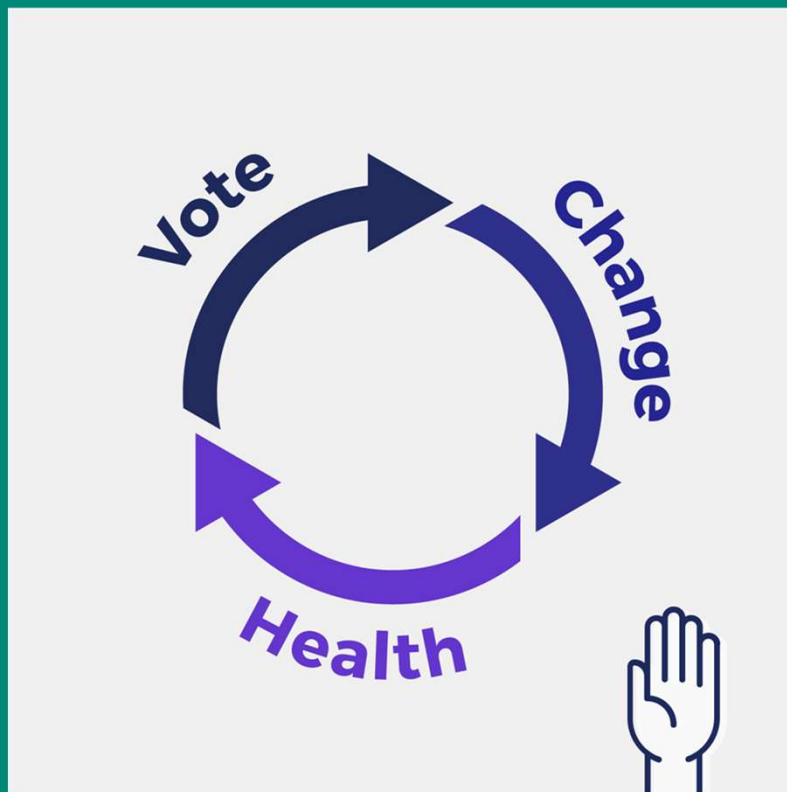


Figure 8: Safe and sick time effective dates, 2016-2023



"Start where you are,
use what you have,
do what you can"

- *Arthur Ashe*

Please take this survey to evaluate conference sessions.



THANK YOU