

We need YOU to

# Support HEZ Infrastructure Funding

Health Equity Zone (HEZ), an initiative of the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), serving Rhode Island's most vulnerable residents by utilizing a unique, community-driven approach to improving the overall health and resilience of communities throughout the state.

Rhode Island's 15 HEZs gained praise nationally in assisting historically underrepresented communities during the **COVID-19 pandemic** and developed a proven framework for responding effectively to future community emergencies. As Rhode Island does not have local health departments, the HEZ infrastructure helped the state to respond effectively to immediate needs and provided continuously updated health information to over half a million Rhode Islanders

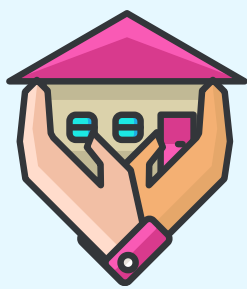
**840,000  
Meals**



  
**4 Million  
masks**

**328,115  
self-testing  
kits**

distributed by HEZs across the state



**HEZ Community Health  
Workers (CHWs) have  
served over**

**253,964**

Rhode Islanders

Per the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) CHWs yield a lifetime benefit of **\$12,348 per person served**, ASTHO also notes an ROI of \$2.28 for every \$1 spent, leading to **annual savings of \$95,941**. In Rhode Island, the work of HEZ CHWs has resulted in an estimated lifetime savings of up to **\$3.1 billion**

The HEZ's **nationally recognized model** engages and continuously convenes a wide array of stakeholders, including residents with lived experience of social, racial, financial, environmental and health inequities, to drive its interventions.

HEZs disrupt long standing societal disadvantages and systemic barriers by focusing on social determinants of health, leading to lasting improvements in health outcomes. Some of these social determinants include **lack of access to a thriving wage, healthy housing, green and open space, food access, transportation, healthcare, quality schools, and disproportionate exposure to environmental pollution.**



*These root causes will not be changed quickly. Addressing root causes requires a **commitment to sustained funding** to support organizations to hold and lead the work, and residents who are supported and mobilized to civically participate in their communities.*

## If HEZ's are not prioritized for funding, gaps will be felt:

**Gaps in Local Information useful to State Entities/Programs:** Health Equity Zones work with multiple state entities to provide nuanced communication strategies and programing. HEZs provide technical assistance to state departments and programs regarding outreach, program adjustments, and multilingual staff needs to be most effective.

**Gaps in Communication:** Health Equity Zones are a Hub of Information. Without that local Hub there would be miscommunication and more work required by both local entities and state departments to build partnerships and synergy.

**Gaps in Streamlined Systems:** Health Equity Zones provide coordination and connection across programs to avoid duplication and drive coordinated change. This work is connected to the state so resources can be aligned with local need.

**The HEZ is an integral part of our community's ability to support our most vulnerable residents, and ultimately create healthy, equitable communities. It is vital that the HEZ initiative is adequately funded to ensure sustainable continuation of their critical work.**



Scan me for more information!



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## Who is the South Providence Health Equity Zone (SPHEZ)?

The South Providence Health Equity Zone (SPHEZ) was founded in July 2021 to tackle health-related challenges affecting the lives of people residing and working in the 02905 zip code. The backbone agency for SPHEZ is Family Service of Rhode Island, and its collaborative members include community residents, AIDS Project RI, Lifespan Community Health Institute, Providence Community Health Center, Providence Housing Authority, Women & Infants Hospital, Rosa Parks Resource Center, South Providence Community Library, Washington Park Neighborhood Association, Providence Department of Housing & Human Services, Johnson & Wales University, RI Alzheimer Association, Iglesia Vision Evangelica and South Providence Neighborhood Association.

## What is the mission, vision and values of SPHEZ?

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**Mission:** *The South Providence HEZ promotes wellness, safety, and economic development for residents of 02905 through participation in and development of community-based initiatives.*

**Vision:** *In our pursuit of health equity, we envision a community where every individual, regardless of socioeconomic status, location, or background, has the opportunity to attain their highest level of health. We strive to create a community where barriers to healthcare access, and outcomes are eliminated, ensuring everyone enjoys the right to optimal well-being.*

**Values:** **Community, Inclusion, Empathy, Growth, Collaboration, and Service**

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## What has the SPHEZ accomplished?

Established  
Environmental  
Justice  
Subcommittee



Established  
Chronic Health  
Conditions  
Subcommittee



Established  
Improving  
Access to  
Healthcare  
Services  
Subcommittee



Hosted 34  
vaccination  
clinics with  
835 vaccines  
administered



Planted 20  
trees with  
Johnson and  
Wales  
University



Hosted 11 HEZ  
Connects events  
linking 532  
residents to social  
determinants of  
health resources

