



Staff Meeting

Facilitator Discussion Guide

Spring 2026

Companion Resource for Local Health Department
Staff Presentations





Together for Health is a statewide communication and engagement campaign designed to **turn Michigan's shared public health vision into coordinated, visible action**. We aim to build a **stronger, more connected public health system in Michigan** by equipping people, strengthening communications infrastructure, activating cross-sector partnerships, and creating a shared platform for engagement and learning.

Four Integrated Goals

1. Equip the Public Health Workforce

Ensure state and local public health staff at all levels understand and engage in Michigan's shared public health vision—becoming aligned implementers and trusted messengers.

2. Strengthen Communications Capacity

Provide shared access to modern tools, curated resources, and applied training to improve the **reach, consistency, and impact** of public health messaging statewide.

3. Activate Cross-Sector Engagement

Advance a coordinated communication and engagement plan that embeds public health into decisions across sectors—housing, transportation, education, business, health care, and local government.

4. Create a Digital Hub for Engagement

Launch an interactive space on the MALPH website where staff, partners, policymakers, and communities can **learn, engage, and act** on the shared vision.

Because of Public Health...

- ✓ Drinking water is safe
- ✓ Air is clean
- ✓ Sewage is contained
- ✓ Restaurants serve food that is safe and untainted
- ✓ Children and adults are vaccinated against disease
- ✓ Health care emergency response plans are in place for natural and human-made disasters
- ✓ Screening programs are available to identify possible health risks
- ✓ Communicable diseases are investigated to control the spread of infections
- ✓ All populations within the community have access

Join us!
togetherforhealthmi.org





Purpose of This Discussion Guide

This discussion guide is designed to help local health department leaders facilitate meaningful staff conversations around the themes presented in the **Together for Health** campaign presentation.

The workbook encourages:

- Reflection on the broader mission of public health
- Honest discussion about current organizational challenges
- Stronger understanding of community partnerships
- Shared ownership of public health storytelling
- Alignment around the Together for Health campaign

This resource may be used:

- During department-wide staff meetings
- In division or program meetings
- In leadership retreats
- As onboarding material for new employees
- For strategic planning discussions





Contents

Section 1	What Makes a Healthy Community?
Section 2	What is Our Biggest Challenge?
Section 3	The Public Understanding Challenge
Section 4	A New Vision for Public Health
Section 5	Public Health is a Community Effort
Section 6	Together for Health Campaign
Section 7	Localizing the Campaign
Section 8	Every Employee has a Role
Section 9	Measuring Success
Final Action Planning	
Closing Reflection	
Appendix – Vision Graphic	





SECTION 1 – WHAT MAKES A HEALTHY COMMUNITY?

Presentation Focus

This section invites staff to think beyond daily tasks and reconnect with the broader purpose of public health.

Discussion Questions

1. When you hear the phrase “healthy community,” what comes to mind first?
 2. What factors most influence health in our community?
 3. Which community strengths support good health outcomes?
 4. What barriers make it difficult for residents to live healthy lives?
 5. Which populations in our community face the greatest challenges?
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Reflection Prompt

As a group, list all the things that contribute to a healthy community.

Which of these factors does public health influence directly?

Which are influenced indirectly through partnerships?





SECTION 2 – WHAT IS OUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

Presentation Focus

This section acknowledges that public health departments face many interconnected challenges.

Common themes include:

- Staffing shortages
- Funding instability
- Burnout
- Organizational culture
- Political pressure
- Community misunderstanding
- Increasing service demands

Discussion Questions

1. What challenge most affects your daily work?
 2. Which challenge has the greatest impact on our department's long-term success?
 3. What challenges are unique to our community?
 4. What obstacles make it difficult for the public to understand our work?
 5. How do public misconceptions affect staff morale?
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Reflection Prompt

If You Could Change One Thing...

If you had the authority and resources to immediately improve one area of public health work, what would it be? Why?





SECTION 3 – THE PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING CHALLENGE

Presentation Focus

The presentation emphasizes that the biggest challenge facing public health is often public understanding and support.

Many residents only became aware of public health work during the pandemic, and those experiences shaped lasting perceptions.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think the public understands well about our department?
 2. What do people misunderstand most often?
 3. What services or successes are “invisible” to the community?
 4. How can we better explain our impact in relatable ways?
 5. What stories could help people connect emotionally with our work?
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Reflection Prompt

Instructions - Choose one program or service your team provides and complete the statements below: (1) We do... (2) This matters because... (3) The community benefit is... (4) A resident-friendly way to explain this is...





SECTION 4 – A NEW VISION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Presentation Focus

The presentation emphasizes a statewide vision for modern public health that was shaped collaboratively by public health leaders across Michigan. This vision focuses on:

- Prevention rather than reaction
- Community-centered systems
- Health in All Policies (HiAP)
- Cross-sector collaboration
- Building public trust and visibility
- Long-term community wellbeing

The presentation also highlights that health outcomes are shaped by daily conditions and policies — not only by healthcare services.

Discussion Questions

1. What does “Health in All Policies” mean in practical terms?
 2. What non-health sectors most influence health outcomes in our community?
 3. How can public health better participate in conversations about housing, transportation, education, or economic development?
 4. What does a “community-centered” public health system look like?
 5. How can our department help build trust and visibility in the community?
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Reflection Prompt

List three community systems or policies that strongly influence health outcomes locally. How could stronger collaboration with these sectors improve community health?





SECTION 5 – PUBLIC HEALTH IS A COMMUNITY EFFORT

Presentation Focus

Healthy communities are created through partnerships. Public health cannot achieve long-term outcomes alone. Partners may include:

- Schools
- Hospitals
- Law enforcement
- Housing organizations
- Transportation systems
- Employers
- Food systems
- Emergency management
- Faith organizations
- Civic groups

Discussion Questions

1. Which partnerships currently work well?
2. Which partnerships need strengthening?
3. Are there community groups we should engage more intentionally?
4. What organizations influence health but may not think of themselves as “public health partners”?
5. How can every employee help strengthen community relationships?

Reflection Prompt

Identify one new partner who could contribute to the health and wellbeing of your community. How might you engage them more effectively in your work?





SECTION 6 – TOGETHER FOR HEALTH CAMPAIGN

Presentation Focus

Together for Health is designed to strengthen:

- Public understanding
- Community trust
- Unified messaging
- Local partnerships
- Long-term support for public health

The public may not remember programs. They remember results:

- Longer lives
- Safer communities
- Healthier children
- Better quality of life

Every staff member contributes to public understanding and trust.

Discussion Questions

1. How can we connect our daily work to broader community outcomes?
2. What stories best demonstrate our impact?
3. How can staff help reinforce campaign messaging?
4. What opportunities exist to share public health success stories locally?



Key Message Pillars Activity

Review the campaign message pillars below and discuss:

- Which pillar feels most important to our local work?
- Which pillar is easiest to communicate to the public?
- Which pillar needs the most improvement locally?

Public Health Works – When the System Works

- Strong infrastructure matters
- Coordination prevents gaps
- Shared priorities improve impact

Funding People = Protecting Communities

- Workforce investment builds resilience
- Sustainable funding strengthens readiness

Health is Built Everywhere

- Housing, transportation, education, and economic conditions shape health
- Health outcomes are influenced across sectors

Visibility Builds Trust

- Communities support what they understand
- Transparency and communication build confidence

Every Community Deserves This

- Public health should reach every community
- Everyone has a role in prevention and wellbeing





SECTION 7 – LOCALIZING THE CAMPAIGN

Presentation Focus

The campaign becomes meaningful when connected to local experiences and success stories.

Brainstorm Activity

What local success stories should we highlight?

Which community outcomes best reflect our department's value?

Where can we better share our message?

Examples:

- Together for Health Campaign Website
 - Social media
 - Community events
 - Presentations
 - News media
 - Chambers of commerce
 - Faith organizations
 - Local government meetings
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SECTION 8 – EVERY EMPLOYEE HAS A ROLE

Presentation Focus

The campaign emphasizes that every employee contributes to public trust and visibility. This does not mean changing jobs. It means:

- Communicating clearly
 - Sharing success stories
 - Building relationships
 - Reinforcing consistent messaging
 - Helping people understand public health value
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Discussion Questions

1. How does your role contribute to healthier communities?
 2. What part of your work are you most proud of?
 3. What community impact might people not realize comes from your work?
 4. How can your team better share success stories?
 5. What would make staff feel more connected to the department mission?
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Personal Reflection Prompt

The part of my work that has the biggest community impact is:

One story I could share about public health impact is:

One thing I can do to strengthen our community connection is:





SECTION 9 – MEASURING SUCCESS

Presentation Focus

Success is measured not only through services delivered, but through:

- Community trust
 - Stronger partnerships
 - Increased public understanding
 - Better health outcomes
 - Greater support for public health work
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Discussion Questions

1. How would we know if community understanding is improving?
 2. What signs would show stronger public trust?
 3. How can we measure partnership success?
 4. What outcomes matter most to our community?
 5. What does long-term success look like for our department?
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Success Indicators Brainstorm

What would success look like one year from now?

What would success look like five years from now?





FINAL ACTION PLANNING

Team Commitments

One communication improvement we can make:

One partnership opportunity we should pursue:

One local success story we should highlight:

One next step our team will take:

CLOSING REFLECTION

Public health work changes lives every day, often quietly and behind the scenes.

The **Together for Health** campaign is an opportunity to:

- Tell our story more clearly
- Strengthen public trust
- Build stronger partnerships
- Align our message statewide
- Help communities better understand the value of local public health

Every employee plays a role in that effort.





This vision was shaped through collaboration and shared leadership across the state. A meeting held in March 2024 with state and local public health leaders sparked the development of this framework, grounding it in the real challenges and opportunities facing communities today. Since then, feedback has been gathered from hundreds of individuals across the state, ensuring the vision reflects diverse perspectives and a collective commitment to advancing **Health for All**.

Health is shaped by policies, environments, and daily conditions - not just health care. By improving public understanding of public health's role, Michigan can build trust, increase visibility, and create lasting support for prevention and wellbeing.

Together, this work positions Michigan to lead with a public health system that is resilient, responsive, community-centered, and prepared for the future - ensuring every community has the foundation it needs to thrive.

