



2026

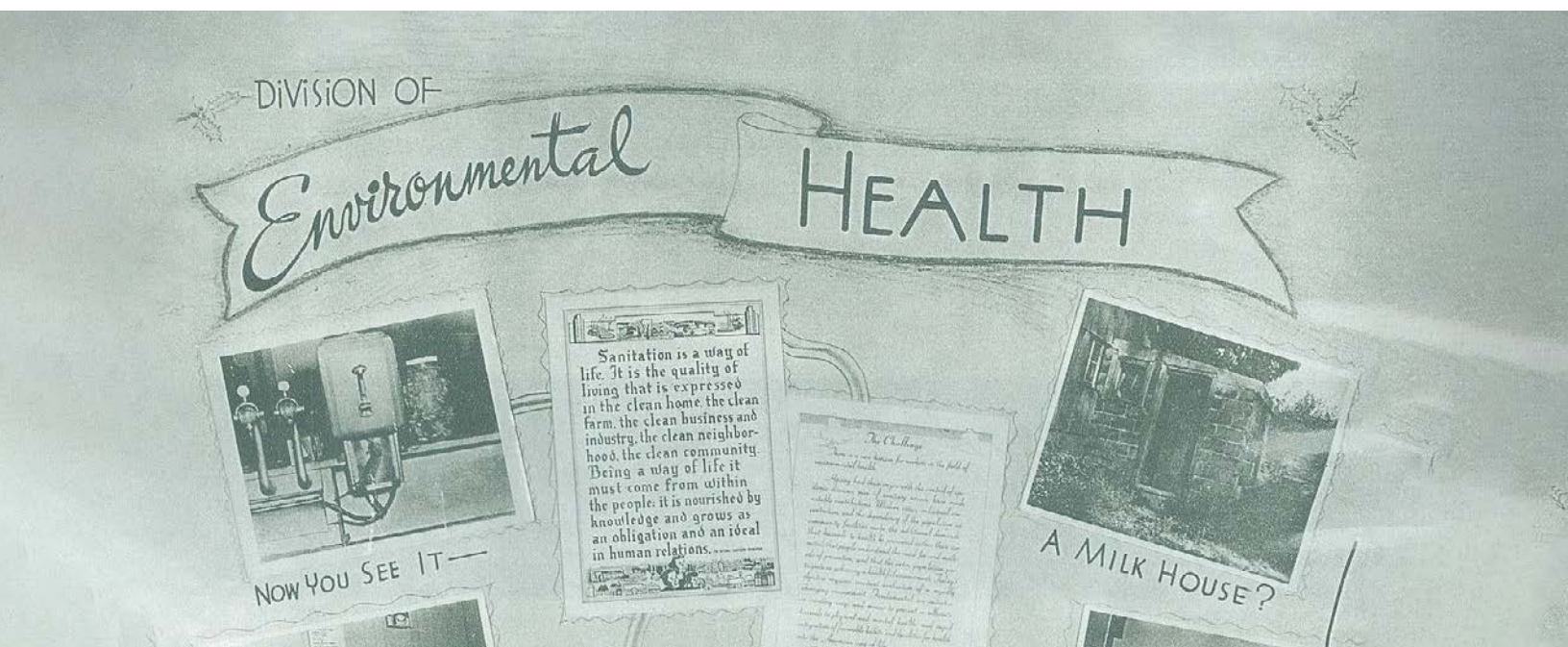
MICHIGAN PREMIER PUBLIC HEALTH CONFERENCE

Together for Health: Building Stronger
Communities in an Era of Change

Blue Water Convention Center

Port Huron, Michigan | October 8–9

Partners in Planning



Central Michigan University

Ferris State University

Grand Valley State University

Michigan State University

Great Lakes Chapter Society for Public Health Education

Michigan Association for Local Public Health

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

Michigan Department of Health & Human Services

Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy

Michigan Public Health Association

Michigan Public Health Institute

Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi

Region V Public Health Training Center

University of Michigan School of Public Health

Pre-Conference Sessions

WEDNESDAY

1:00–4:00pm

October 7, 2026

P-101 Community Engagement and Civic Participation for Public Health Improvement

To effectively foster trust, ensure programs are tailored to community needs, and promote sustainable efforts, it is crucial to engage with community members and organizations. There are many ways to involve the community in public health efforts, from informing to assessing to planning and sharing decision-making power. This highly interactive pre-conference workshop will describe how civic participation is linked to health outcomes, provide an overview of the ladder of community engagement, discuss methods and considerations for data collection efforts, and involve participants in a dialogue to identify ways to effectively navigate barriers to and incentives for engagement. Participants will learn from MPHI presenters and public health colleagues and will leave with tools and approaches to use in their engagement efforts.

Jessie Jones, Michigan Public Health Institute

Jeanette Ball, Michigan Public Health Institute

Kara Trimbach Shirley, Ingham County Health Department

Madeline Starr, Michigan Public Health Institute

Ali Rogers, Ingham County Health Department

1:30–4:30pm

P-102 Public Health Law 101

This workshop will review the powers and responsibilities (authority) of Michigan's Local Health Departments to protect and improve the public's health. The training will provide attendees with an overview of Michigan's Public Health Code (Public Act 368 of 1978, as amended) and the legal context in which it operates. Presenters will also provide a framework for incorporating legal and ethical considerations into public health decision-making.

Carrie Waggoner, JD

Pre-Conference Sessions

WEDNESDAY

1:30–3:30pm

October 7, 2026

P-103 Less Meeting, More Meaning: Rethinking Ethics Committees for Local Health Departments

Local health departments (LHDs) are required by PHAB Standards and Measures to maintain an ethics policy and committee, yet sustaining an active and engaged committee can be challenging due to infrequent need and time-sensitive decision-making. In response, a model ethics policy and procedure was developed that leverages a statewide ethics committee, reducing local burden while ensuring access to ethical guidance. This session will provide an overview of the model policy and introduce an interactive ethics tabletop exercise designed to simulate real-world scenarios. Participants may use this exercise as documentation of implementing an ethics policy for accreditation purposes. Use of this model and exercise does not guarantee a “fully demonstrated” PHAB score.

Karla Black, Kent County Health Department

Anne Barna, Ingham County Health Department

2:00–4:00pm

P-104 Local Health Department Collaboration and Exploration of Shared Approach to Delivery of Services

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has provided funds to continue the exploration of service sharing agreements and/or collaboration in the operations (role and function) of Michigan’s local health departments. Collaboration and/or a shared approach to delivery of services, also known as Cross Jurisdictional Sharing (CJS), are significant concepts in public health service delivery in America. CJS is recognized by NACCHO and supported by the Center for Sharing Public Health Services. The Center serves as a national resource on CJS, building the evidence, and disseminating tools, methods and models to assist local health departments and policy makers as they consider and adopt CJS approaches. Twenty-two local health departments received dollars to implement CJS projects. A panel of those health departments and MDHHS local health services staff will discuss their road map to include exploration, preparedness and planning, and finally implementation and improvement.

Schedule at a Glance

THURSDAY

October 8, 2026

7:30–8:15am

Breakfast, Registration, Posters/Exhibitors, and Networking

8:30–9:00am

Welcome

9:00–10:00am

Keynote Address

10:15–11:15am

Breakout Sessions

11:20–12:20pm

Lightning Presentations, Exhibitors, and Posters

12:20–1:20pm

Lunch/Awards

1:30–2:30pm

Breakout Sessions

2:45–3:45pm

Breakout Sessions

3:45–4:00pm

Networking Break and Poster Presentations/Exhibitors

4:00–5:00pm

Keynote Address

5:00pm

Wrap Up and Adjourn

Session Details

9:00–10:00am

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Evidence-Based Communication – The Missing Resource to Protect & Promote Community Health in 2026 and Beyond

We're not failing at science. We're failing at the communication of science. As a result, people are making less evidence-based health decisions and being led into harm's way. Studies show people still trust their local health professionals. But we squander this trust every day, because health professionals are not trained in communication. All too often, we fail to engage and connect with people in ways that meaningfully impact their health and well-being. This session offers some of the communication insights and information we never received but always needed.

Todd Wolynn, MD, MMM, Public Good Projects

10:15–11:15am

SESSION 101

Pivoting in an Era of Change: Building a Cross-Sector Food Access System Through Partnerships, Youth Engagement, and Farming of the Future

This panel explores how organizations can pivot in response to funding changes by integrating food access, youth engagement, and workforce development. Featuring partners from schools, community organizations, and food systems, the session highlights a cross-sector model where students grow food through hydroponics for cafeterias and community distribution. Attendees will learn practical strategies for building resilient, partnership-driven public health approaches.

Bernadette Dore, JD, M.Ed., Psy, Project Healthy Community

Emily Athey, Project Healthy Community

SESSION 102

Supporting the Public Health Workforce in an Era of Change: Practical, Human Centered Uses of AI for Grant and Administrative Work

Public health staff are navigating constant change, administrative overload, and increasingly complex grants. This session explores practical, human-centered ways generative AI can support the workforce – without replacing professional judgment. Through real-world scenarios, participants will examine how human-in-the-loop AI can strengthen onboarding and knowledge retention, reduce grant-related administrative burden, and improve documentation and compliance. Attendees will leave with concrete examples and decision tools to support staff capacity and reduce burnout in an era of change.

Hope Rollins, MBA, Michigan Public Health Institute



SESSION 103

The Purple Dot Project: Building Better Maps for Better Decisions

We are using GIS mapping technology to create a map of sewage systems and wells to map system locations and help understand if septic systems are affecting drinking and surface waters. Once complete, we can share this data with community partners to help each community decide how to best manage septic systems and wells and create a public map where homeowners, realtors, septic pumpers, and installers can easily find basic information about these systems.

Taylor Irwin, MPA, REHS, Central Michigan District Health Department

SESSION 104

Together for Hearing Health: Strengthening Newborn Screening in Community Birth Settings

Midwives and small independent birthing centers often face barriers in meeting Michigan's newborn hearing screening mandate. This session highlights a statewide interdisciplinary partnership between licensed midwives, audiologists, and public health professionals to address these challenges. Session attendees will gain insight into the model, challenges, and lessons learned from this ongoing collaboration – offering a framework that may be replicated or adapted for other regions or public health challenges.

Nan Asher, MLS, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Shannon B. Palmer, AuD, PhD, MPH, Central Michigan University

Patrice Bobier, CPM, LM, Full Circle Midwifery

SESSION 105

The State of Public Health and Medicine at America 250

America possesses a rich history of medical and public health achievements. Values of individualism, entrepreneurship, and promotion the general welfare informed America's approach to public health and medicine. This presentation will present an overview of American values and Michigan historical events that informed past and current health policy. A reframing of the differing perspectives of medicine and public health is proposed to address leading health challenges of the 21st century.

William Nettleton, MD, MPH, Kalamazoo County Health Department

ESCAPE ROOM 100



You Can't Be Serious: Using an Escape Room to Increase Knowledge of Disease Investigation

Like puzzles? Like Public Health? Feeling competitive? Come test your skills and see if you can beat the NEW 2026 disease investigation escape room developed by the Kent County Health Department and Ferris State University. Visit the [SignUpGenius escape room website](https://bit.ly/3SIN7yl) (URL: <https://bit.ly/3SIN7yl>) or scan the QR code to sign up for available timeslots.

1:30–2:30pm

SESSION 201

Health Beliefs in Action: Designing Michigan's PFAS Awareness Campaign

This presentation highlights how theory-driven communication supports public health awareness and health protective behaviors. Presenters explain the MDHHS PFAS campaign's scientific foundation, its messaging strategies, and lessons learned. Attendees explore the importance of theory in public health communication, approaches to partner engagement, and methods for building trust and delivering clear, actionable messages.

Ellery Johnson, MPP, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Sarah Allison, MPH, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

SESSION 202

Healthy Community Zones: Improving Health Through Place-Based, Community-Led Action

In 2025, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' Physical Activity and Nutrition Unit launched Healthy Community Zones (HCZ), a public health initiative investing in community-led strategies that improve food access, create safe places for physical activity, and strengthen social support networks. In a panel discussion, HCZ grantees will showcase these strategies, reflect on their experience with this funding model, and share guidance on building partnerships that center and empower community voices.

Caelan Keenan, MPH, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Denita Dorsey, Saginaw CAP

Daniel Washington, NW Goldberg Cares

Jessica Savoie, M.Ed., Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District

SESSION 203

Creating Stronger and Safer Communities: Public Health's Role in Preventing Gun Violence

This session will elevate the importance of a public health approach to gun violence prevention. Expert panelists will provide an overview of MDHHS-led and/or coordinated work in this space, including recommendations from the Michigan Gun Violence Prevention Task Force, the Office of Community Violence Intervention Services, and the Injury and Violence Prevention Section. Attendees will gain awareness of public health strategies and actionable state/local activities to prevent gun violence, create safer communities, and save lives.

Anita Singh Haynes, MPH, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Jared Welehodsky, JD, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Jennifer DeLaCruz, LMSW, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Alicia Goodman, MSA, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

SESSION 204

The Curb Cut Effect: Building Strong Plans Through Equity

This presentation explores how the curb-cut effect strengthens emergency preparedness by embedding equity into planning. Using survey data from Michigan public health and emergency management professionals, it highlights gaps and practical opportunities to improve outcomes. Attendees will learn actionable strategies to better integrate access and functional needs, strengthen partnerships, and enhance response operations across their jurisdictions.

Tim Mautz, CPH, PEM, NEMAA, Wayne County Health, Human, and Veteran Services

Jennifer Watts, PEM, APIO, Wayne County Health, Human, and Veteran Services

SESSION 205

Let's Chat! Michigan's Governmental Public Health Workforce: Workforce Development Successes, Challenges and Lessons Learned

Michigan's governmental public health workforce continues to face challenges addressing workforce capacity, skill building, funding challenges, and resilience in the face of ever emerging public health threats. This breakout session, led by MDHHS, will highlight workforce development progress and ongoing barriers, and will invite local public health partners to share their perspectives in a panel format.

Tamara Brickey, MS, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Jori July, MSN, RN, ANP-BC, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Elizabeth Suggitt, LMAS District Health Department

Brad Snyder, Genesee County Health Department

Alescia Farr, PhD, MPH, Detroit Health Department

Michelle Estell, RS, MSA, Genesee County Health Department

ESCAPE ROOM 200



**You Can't Be Serious: Using
an Escape Room to Increase
Knowledge of Disease Investigation**

Like puzzles? Like Public Health? Feeling competitive? Come test your skills and see if you can beat the NEW 2026 disease investigation escape room developed by the Kent County Health Department and Ferris State University. Visit the [SignUpGenius escape room website](https://bit.ly/3SIN7yl) (URL: <https://bit.ly/3SIN7yl>) or scan the QR code to sign up for available timeslots.

2:45–3:45pm

SESSION 301

Collaborative Data Storytelling for Systems Change – Making the Case for Community Thriving

This session explores how the Health Justice Community of Practice equipped community organizers to turn data into powerful narratives that inspire collective action. Presenters will share effective approaches and real-world examples of cross-sector collaboration, coalition building, and sustainable system change – offering practical tools attendees can apply to mobilize broad support for their own community thriving.

Melissa Moorehead, BA, Michigan Public Health Institute

Sonal Subhash, MBBS, MPH, Michigan Public Health Institute

Stephanie Johnson, MPH, Michigan Public Health Institute

SESSION 302

Prebunking: A Proactive Strategy to Boost Community Resilience Against Mis- and Dis-Information in Public Health

This session introduces prebunking, a proactive, evidence-based strategy rooted in inoculation theory that helps people recognize and resist misinformation before they encounter it online or in real life. Participants will explore how misleading tactics—such as emotional manipulation, polarization, and the appeal to nature fallacy—shape public understanding. The session highlights three key applications of prebunking concepts to real life public health scenarios. These elements ensure meaningful participation and help attendees directly connect the material to their own work.

Samantha Radecki, MPH, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

April Stevens, MPH, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

SESSION 303

Community-Engaged Evaluation of Public Perceptions of Water Fluoridation in Kent County, Michigan: An Oral Public Health Initiative

This presentation examines public perceptions of community water fluoridation in Kent County, Michigan using a mixed-methods community-based evaluation conducted with Master of Public Health students. Survey responses and stakeholder interviews reveal significant variability in public knowledge and highlight how information gaps can allow misinformation to shape community attitudes. Findings identify trusted information sources and opportunities for targeted communication strategies to strengthen public health understanding and support for fluoridation as an effective population-level oral health intervention.

Mario Ferrari, DDS, MScD, MscIH, PhD, Grand Valley State University

Kristi Cooper, DNP, MSN, RN, MPH, Grand Valley State University

SESSION 304

Findings from an Investigation of Blood Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Concentrations Among Michigan Firefighters

In 2019, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention awarded a five-year grant to MDHHS to expand monitoring of state residents' exposure to toxic environmental chemicals. Under this grant, MDHHS conducted two surveillance projects to determine the levels of PFAS and other environmental contaminants among Michigan adults and firefighters, respectively. This presentation will describe the rationale, methods, stakeholder and community engagement approaches and findings of the statewide biomonitoring in firefighters.

Carissa Hueter, MPH, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Jacob Carrick, MS, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Daniel Bator, MPH, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

SESSION 305

Listening That Leads to Equity: Transforming Organizations Through Relationships

The speakers will share in making a PowerPoint presentation that features highlights of the Look Book developed to summarize our findings. The Look Book is concise and includes photos from our listening sessions. We will also share recorded comments, both in written and audio forms so attendees can experience the inflection of those sharing their experiences and wisdom.

Toni Leaf-Odette, BSN, RNC-NIC, Munson Healthcare

Quran Griffin, MA, CPS, District Health Department #10

Janenne Pung, Health Department of Northwest Michigan

ESCAPE ROOM 300



You Can't Be Serious: Using an Escape Room to Increase Knowledge of Disease Investigation

Like puzzles? Like Public Health? Feeling competitive? Come test your skills and see if you can beat the NEW 2026 disease investigation escape room developed by the Kent County Health Department and Ferris State University. Visit the [SignUpGenius escape room website](https://bit.ly/3SIN7yl) (URL: <https://bit.ly/3SIN7yl>) or scan the QR code to sign up for available timeslots.

4:00–5:00pm

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

A Revolution for Public Health: George Washington's Inoculation Decision

The American Revolution was fought during a smallpox epidemic. Colonists broadly recognized that achieving political independence required protecting their communities from the disease. In this lecture, historian Andrew Wehrman will highlight how individuals and communities across the new United States insisted on inoculation creating a massive demand for public health. As a result, George Washington ordered the inoculation of the Continental Army and set a precedent that the government should protect the public from disease.

Andrew Wehrman, PhD, Central Michigan University

STUDENT *Networking* SOCIAL



**October 8,
5:30 p.m.**

**Freighters Eatery
& Taproom**

800 Harker Street,
Port Huron, MI 48060

Connect with public health professionals from both state and local organizations in a relaxed, welcoming setting. This informal event offers students a chance to practice their networking skills, explore a variety of public health career paths and build meaningful connections.

Co-sponsored by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Public Health Administration Workforce Development team and the Michigan Association for Local Public Health (MALPH).



Schedule at a Glance

FRIDAY

October 9, 2026

7:00–7:45am

Exercise Activity

7:45–8:45am

Breakfast, Registration, and Networking

8:45–9:45am

Keynote Address

10:00–11:00am

Breakout Sessions

11:00–11:15am

Networking Break and Poster Presentations/Exhibitors

11:15–12:15pm

Lunch

12:30–1:30pm

Breakout Sessions

1:30–1:45pm

Networking Break

1:45–2:45pm

Keynote Address

2:45–3:00pm

Adjourn

Session Details

7:00–7:45am

EXERCISE ACTIVITY

Back by popular demand! Cari Draft is one of the lakeshore's most active and community-involved personal fitness trainers. While she is founder and owner of EcoTrek Fitness (unique outdoor group workouts with several series all over Michigan) she also trains numerous fitness clients, ranging from marathon runners to men and women of all ages interested in losing weight or just feeling more fit.

Cari Draft, EcoTrek Fitness

8:45–9:45am

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Imagine Doing Better: Improving Population Health with Imagination, Reflection, & Action

In this presentation, Dr. Paul Fleming will discuss how to think about and approach creating communities—in our workplaces and where we live and play—where all people can be healthy and thrive. He will highlight key themes from his book *Imagine Doing Better*: Why policies backfire and how prevention thinking can change everything which will help attendees imagine better futures, reflect on the status quo, and take action to create a better future in their organization and their world.

Paul J. Fleming, PhD, MPH, University of Michigan School of Public Health

10:00–11:00am

SESSION 401

Collaboration Is a Discipline, Not a Buzzword: Lessons from BWell Saginaw

If collaboration were easy, we'd already have the outcomes we're chasing. This session takes an honest look at why collaboration is often overused and underdeveloped. Through BWell Saginaw, we'll explore the discipline required to move beyond partnership talk and into trust, alignment, and measurable impact.

Christina Harrington, MPH, Saginaw County Health Department

SESSION 402

Understanding and Applying the Latest Cervical Cancer Screening Guidelines

Discover evidence-based strategies for modern cervical cancer screening using primary HPV testing. This session examines randomized trial data demonstrating superior disease detection with fewer tests, colposcopies, and false positives compared to traditional co-testing. Learn practical implementation of screening algorithms incorporating dual-stain triage and self-sampling techniques. Gain actionable knowledge to integrate federally endorsed guidelines into clinical practice, overcome patient barriers, and expand screening participation toward achieving WHO cervical cancer elimination goals.

Thomas John Bender, MD, PhD, Bay County Health Department

Diane Harper, MD, MPH, University of Michigan

SESSION 403

Test Fast, Report Faster: Speed as a Beach Public Health Tool

Ottawa County Department of Public Health (OCDPH) serves a Lake Michigan shoreline community where beach water quality monitoring is a seasonal public health priority. Through a 2025 EGLE grant, OCDPH upgraded to the IDEXX TECTA system, reducing turnaround time and automated public health reporting through a Power BI dashboard. This session covers OCDPH's first full TECTA season, implementation realities, lessons learned and the public health impact of faster data reporting.

Drew Shaw, Ottawa County Department of Public Health

Kimberly Moore, Ottawa County Department of Public Health

SESSION 404

The Grass Isn't Always Greener: Cannabis Trends and Poisoning Risks in Michigan

This presentation will show an analysis of 2018–2024 Michigan ED data, demonstrating a brief decline followed by sustained increases in cannabis-only visit rates. It will cover geographic differences, with rural counties experiencing higher overall rates and urban/suburban areas showing higher odds of polysubstance involvement. It will also summarize key demographic patterns, including elevated risk among older adults and disparities across racial/ethnic groups, and discuss how these trends can inform targeted prevention and response efforts.

Jacob Moosekian, MPH, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

SESSION 405

Equity in Uncertain Times: A Fireside Conversation on Sustaining Health Equity Work

Public health professionals are navigating increasing political tension around health equity. This session explores lessons from implementing the Dignity in Health Assessment at MDHHS and reflects on how practitioners can sustain equity-focused work during uncertain times. Through a candid conversation with Health Equity Strategists, the session will highlight strategies for navigating language shifts, building staff capacity, and maintaining focus on equitable outcomes.

James Bell, DSW, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Jasmine Hardy, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Melanie Ward, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

ESCAPE ROOM 400



You Can't Be Serious: Using an Escape Room to Increase Knowledge of Disease Investigation

Like puzzles? Like Public Health? Feeling competitive? Come test your skills and see if you can beat the NEW 2026 disease investigation escape room developed by the Kent County Health Department and Ferris State University. Visit the [SignUpGenius escape room website](https://bit.ly/3SIN7yl) (URL: <https://bit.ly/3SIN7yl>) or scan the QR code to sign up for available timeslots.

12:30–1:30pm

SESSION 501

Advancing Health Equity Through Statewide Fall Prevention Partnerships and Policy Strategies

This session explores how cross-sector partnerships and policy strategies can advance health equity in fall prevention. Attendees will examine barriers affecting access to prevention resources and learn scalable approaches to strengthen collaboration between public health, healthcare, and community organizations. Practical strategies will support efforts to reduce disparities and improve outcomes for older adults aging in place.

Christopher Wilson, PT, DPT, DScPT, Oakland University

Sara Arena, PT, MS, DScPT, Oakland University

SESSION 502

Advancing Diabetes Prevention for Priority Populations in Southeast Michigan Through Hospital Collaboration

The Southeast Michigan Hospital Collaborative (SEMIHC) unites five health systems – Ascension, Corewell Health East, Henry Ford Health, Trinity Health, and the National Kidney Foundation of Michigan and the Michigan Public Health Institute to advance diabetes prevention among African Americans in Southeast Michigan. This panel will share best practices, challenges, and innovations in cross-sector partnership, community engagement, and program implementation, offering replicable strategies for addressing health equity and chronic disease prevention.

Keoshia Banks, MPH, Michigan Public Health Institute

Mary Niester, MPH, RD, Trinity Health Livonia

Phyllis A. Nelson, APRN, FNP-C, PMHNP-C, Henry Ford Health

SESSION 503

Bridging Law and Medicine in Rural Michigan: A Qualitative Study of Interprofessional Dynamics in Medical-Legal Partnerships

This presentation examines how rural Michigan MLPs strengthen the public health workforce by fostering collaboration between physicians and attorneys to address health-harming legal needs. Drawing on qualitative research, it explores how cross-sector partners identify and communicate about social determinants of health, navigate professional differences, and build shared strategies to improve outcomes. The session highlights practical approaches for engaging partners and adapting interventions to the unique needs of rural communities.

Rong Kohtz, JD, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

SESSION 504

Then and Now: The Evolution of Environmental Health Issues in Michigan Across 100 Years

Test your knowledge of environmental health history and explore how issues from the past may be some of the same challenges we face today. Using documented examples from professional journals, newspapers, and State of Michigan records, this presentation examines historical environmental health incidents alongside modern examples and case studies. Participants will see how environmental health practices have advanced over the last century while also recognizing the barriers that prevent the full elimination of long-standing concerns.

Dana DeBruyn, BS, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy

Ariel Zoldan, MPH, Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy

SESSION 505

From Data Streams to Community Impact: Empowering Use of Statewide Systems for Local Needs

This presentation highlights three statewide surveillance systems that can provide actionable data for local partners. Attendees will learn how to access and use information on maternal attitudes and experiences across the perinatal period, adult health behaviors, preventive care and key chronic diseases. These systems offer valuable insights to help communities assess health outcomes and guide local public health efforts.

Mary Kleyn, MS, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Olivia Barth, MPH, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Jill Hardy, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

ESCAPE ROOM 500



You Can't Be Serious: Using an Escape Room to Increase Knowledge of Disease Investigation

Like puzzles? Like Public Health? Feeling competitive? Come test your skills and see if you can beat the NEW 2026 disease investigation escape room developed by the Kent County Health Department and Ferris State University. Visit the [SignUpGenius escape room website](https://bit.ly/3SIN7yl) (URL: <https://bit.ly/3SIN7yl>) or scan the QR code to sign up for available timeslots.

1:45–2:45pm

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Reimagining Maternal and Infant Health Through Rx Kids

This keynote explores Rx Kids, the nation's first prenatal and infant cash prescription program, designed to reduce poverty, improve birth outcomes, and strengthen family well-being. Panelists will share early insights from implementation, discuss cross sector partnerships, and highlight how unconditional cash support can reshape public health practice and policy to better serve families during the most critical stages of life.

Luke Shaefer, PhD, City of Detroit

Christina Harrington, MPH, Saginaw County Health Department

Ali Abazeed, MPH, MPP, City of Detroit Health Department

Conference Objectives

Conference Takeaways

- Relate Michigan's public health history to contemporary public health practice and science.
- Explore strategies to support Michigan's public health workforce in a rapidly changing landscape.
- Examine best practices for engaging partners in building healthier communities.
- Describe approaches to effectively communicate with stakeholders to strengthen public health initiatives.
- Identify factors and characteristics of Michigan's diverse communities that can be used to inform effective public health interventions.

Overarching Conference Outcome

Every learner will examine key milestones, movements, and lessons from the history of public health to identify the knowledge, skills, and collaborative strategies needed to build stronger and healthier communities today.

CHES/MCHES [Continuing Education]

SOPHE, including its chapters, is a designated provider of continuing education contact hours (CECH) in health education by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc. Application for CHES® (entry-level)/MCHES® (advanced level) Category I continuing education contact hours (CECH) has been made to Great Lakes Chapter SOPHE and is pending approval.

OCME and Nursing Credits [Continuing Education]

The MSU CHM Office of Continuing Medical Education (OCME) approval for this activity is pending.

Registration Information

Conference Registration

Please register for the conference by visiting the [2026 MPPHC registration page](https://bit.ly/4v48EPv) (URL: <https://bit.ly/4v48EPv>) or scanning the QR code. Registration includes breakfast and lunches.



Once the registrations have been processed, confirmation will be emailed to all registrants.

- One Day Registration | **\$119**
- Full Conference Registration | **\$189**
- Late Fee (After 9/11/26) | **\$50** (Add-On)

Conference Location

Blue Water Convention Center
800 Harker St.
Port Huron, MI 48060

Conference Cancellations

Cancellations must be received in writing 48 hours prior to arrival, and are subject to a \$25 administrative fee. Please email Jodie Shaver at jshaver@malph.org.

Early Registration

The deadline to register without incurring additional fees is September 11, 2026. Registrations occurring after this date will be assessed an additional \$50 fee.

Hotel Accommodations

DoubleTree by Hilton Port Huron

800 Harker St.
Port Huron, MI 48060
(810) 984-8000

Group Code: **PPH**

Conference attendees will receive a discounted rate starting at \$149 per night.

Hampton Inn Port Huron

1655 Yeager St.
Port Huron, MI 48060
(810) 966-9000

Group Code: **MLP**

Fairfield Inn Port Huron

1635 Yeager St.
Port Huron, MI 48060
(810) 982-8500

Group Code: **MAL**

Note:

DoubleTree by Hilton Port Huron, Hampton Inn Port Huron, and Fairfield Inn Port Huron are the only hotels associated with our conference. While other hotel resellers may offer rooms for your trip, they are not affiliated with MALPH or the Michigan Premier Public Health Conference. Please be aware these hotels will NOT solicit you to make a reservation.