

## Reducing Cardiac Health Disparities



 **226**  
partner physician  
practices

 **3,000+**  
blood pressure  
screenings



*MPRO staff at one of over 160 blood pressure screening events.*

### BACKGROUND

Rates of heart disease and stroke in Michigan are among the highest in the United States for all races and ethnicities, and are particularly a concern for African Americans and Hispanics.<sup>1</sup> Among non-Hispanic blacks ages 20 and older, 44 percent of men and 49 percent of women have cardiovascular disease. Among Hispanic adults age 20 and older, 33 percent of men and 30 percent of women have cardiovascular disease.<sup>2</sup>

In Michigan, the population of Genesee County is 24 percent African American or Hispanic.<sup>3</sup> The population of Wayne County is 45.6 percent African American or Hispanic.<sup>3</sup> Together, these counties clearly represent communities in need.

### STRATEGY

To improve health equity and cardiac health in Michigan, MPRO partnered with multiple community groups, faith-based organizations and physician practices in Wayne and Genesee counties for the Disparities and Cardiac Health program.

MPRO's work with physician practices focused on optimizing their use of health information technology, including electronic health records and electronic registries, to improve their ability to identify and care for patients with high blood pressure. Strategies included:

- Practice workflow
- Clinical decision support
- Patient education
- Physician education
- Report data review

Throughout the program, MPRO collected data from all participating practices on five measures including: aspirin therapy, blood pressure control, management of cardiovascular disease risk factors, LDL-C/cholesterol management and smoking cessation.

MPRO provided participating physician practices with an educational resource guide to help pursue improvements in cardiac health disparities. The guide was based on expert opinions and best practices that drive improved health outcomes and promote long-term adoption of the strategies being used.

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<sup>2</sup> American Heart Association/American Stroke Association, Statistical Fact Sheet, 2013 Update

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Quick Facts

## Reducing Cardiac Health Disparities

In addition to working with practices, MPRO participated in community events to promote cardiac health. Specific strategies were implemented to reach people with high blood pressure, but were unaware of their condition (undiagnosed). Most of the events were conducted in partnership with community and faith-based organizations and held in popular community locations in southeast Michigan.

Events included blood pressure screenings and educational sessions to encourage heart-healthy lifestyle changes, as well as opportunities to pledge participation in the Million Hearts® initiative - a national program with the goal of preventing one million heart attacks and strokes by 2017. Participants were given information about MPRO's consumer-based heart health website [www.bloodpressurehealthandyou.org](http://www.bloodpressurehealthandyou.org) and a toll-free hotline. To extend community awareness and attendance, selected events were supported with radio messaging.

### HOW THIS MADE A DIFFERENCE IN HEALTH CARE IN MICHIGAN

As a result of this program, MPRO and its partners impacted the lives of thousands of people in Wayne and Genesee counties. Through extensive outreach, MPRO:

- Partnered with 226 physicians
- Participated in more than 160 events
- Did blood pressure screenings for more than 3,000 people
- Secured more than 1,000 pledges to participate in the Million Hearts® initiative



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**“The partnership between American Heart Association and MPRO’s Disparities and Cardiac Health Program has been very rewarding,”** said Kristian Hurley, Health Equity regional director, American Heart Association Midwest Affiliate.

**“Collaboration of our two organizations to help reduce health disparities in Wayne County focused on hypertension and cardiac health and has optimized our community outreach. Narrowing the gap in disparities and working toward health equity for all is the goal of both of our quality based organizations.”**