



#HealthierMO

Transforming the Future of Public Health in Missouri

Moving Closer to Alignment for a #HealthierMO

Missouri's professional public health organizations moved closer to alignment during their third meeting on March 20, 2018. They committed to collaborate in coordination with the #HealthierMO initiative, in order to transform the future of public health in Missouri. Representatives agreed alignment is necessary to address limited resources and a drop in membership, and to remedy the cacophony of legislative requests made by multiple organizations with varying agendas and priorities.

During the meeting, the group discussed the top barriers and benefits to alignment. The most common barrier expressed was concern that organizations might lose their identity or the value of membership. Other barriers listed included fear of change, resistance to change, history of shared experience, lack of clarity, opposition, and varying agendas.

The top benefits of alignment included collective impact through strength in numbers, a unified voice, shared knowledge and resources, and coordinated training and education opportunities. The group expressed confidence that a thoughtful alignment with support from membership could overcome barriers and benefit all. They agreed the alignment structure chosen should allow each organization to retain its individual identity and should increase value for members.

The alignment structure most favored was a coalition model where each organization participates in the coalition, but retains its own individual identity. A coalition would create a strong unified voice for advocacy, facilitate resource sharing, improve communication, and foster collaboration on priority health issues. It would create shared benefit for all participants.

The conversation continues next month, as the group meets again to discuss details on what a more specific alignment process and structure might look like.

The group is guided by its vision "United for public health" and its mission "Leading public health system alignment through collaboration, communication, workforce development, and advocacy." To learn more about the professional public health organization alignment efforts or the #HealthierMO initiative, visit HealthierMO.org or Facebook [@HealthierMO](https://www.facebook.com/HealthierMO).

The Missouri Public Health Association is leading the #HealthierMO initiative in partnership with Support KC. Funding for the first phase of this multi-year initiative was provided by the Missouri Foundation for Health and the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City. To learn more, visit www.HealthierMO.org.