



Montgomery County **Health** Department

Your partner for a healthy community

## Our Success Story

“There is a history of working together in this community. We are building on that,” said Harold Brown, CEO and Director of Sterling Health Solutions, Inc. (SHS), a federally qualified health center (FQHC) that opened in 2012 in Montgomery County, Kentucky. With an approximate population of 27,500, Montgomery County is located in northeastern Kentucky, about 35 miles east of Lexington on I-64 and is considered the “Gateway to the Mountains.”

### MAPP History and Process

Prompted by Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards for health department accreditation and the Affordable Care Act’s requirement for nonprofit hospitals to conduct community health needs assessments, the Montgomery County Health Department (MCHD) and Saint Joseph Mount Sterling Hospital (SJMS) joined forces in 2011 to conduct a community health assessment using the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships, or MAPP framework. MAPP is a community-driven strategic planning process that helps communities apply strategic thinking to prioritize public health issues and identify resources to address them. In January 2012, the MAPP Partnership — composed of members of the community, local leaders, and elected officials — was created, under the leadership of MCHD and SJMS.

The assessment was conducted over the course of the year. In January 2013, three community health action teams were formed to address the identified strategic issues of substance abuse, obesity, and teen pregnancy. Following much discussion about an accountability structure for the action teams, the MAPP Partnership decided that the existing Montgomery County Healthy Communities Coalition (MCHCC) — formed in 2010 by the health department to increase community collaborative efforts around health issues — should provide the oversight and the action teams would report on progress at quarterly meetings.

Planning for the second MAPP cycle began in summer 2015. The FQHC joined the health department and hospital in leading and coordinating assessment planning. These partners invited those instrumental in the first MAPP cycle, in which the group’s planning process and partnership were developed, to a planning meeting. The first MAPP cycle was reviewed and opportunities for improvement were discussed. Improvements identified included increasing the visibility of the MCHCC, improving data collection from at-risk populations, using the National Public Health Performance Standards to conduct the Local Public Health System Assessment, and improving alignment of the community health improvement plan and SJMS’ implementation strategy.

During the first MAPP cycle, the community identified with the MAPP Partnership through the assessment phases. After action teams were formed, many of those involved in the assessment did not participate on any of the teams. Each team expanded its participation by reaching out to the community and identifying others that had an interest in their strategic issue. However, these new members were focused on the issue that led them to the planning table. They had a limited knowledge of the



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assessment process, and did not realize how the work of the action teams fit into a larger health improvement planning process. “Partnership development is an ongoing process. It never ends. To keep the momentum going, you have to continue to engage partners and find commonalities in your mission and vision,” said Jennifer Gulley, Montgomery County MAPP Coordinator.

In our second MAPP cycle — in which a shared community vision and common values are defined — coalition members recognized the work of the substance abuse, obesity, and teen pregnancy action teams and, based on the data collected and assessed, agreed that the work in these areas must continue. In addition to these three groups, the coalition saw the need to form a fourth workgroup to address communication. This group was charged with creating a mission, vision, and logo for the MCHCC to increase visibility and to identify ways to promote awareness of the health assessment and improvement planning process, as well as the successes of the action teams. Each of these groups are currently working on formulating their goals and strategies (Phase 5 of the MAPP framework).

Another improvement is aligning SJMS’ Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Strategy with the Montgomery County Community Health Improvement Plan. “Although they are separate documents, we feel it is very important for them to coincide so that we can more effectively impact the health of our community,” said Sister Janet Carr, Mission Leader and Chaplain at the hospital.

Jennifer said that through MAPP, the “jelly bean diagram” — which illustrates an example of how organizations and providers across a community collectively impact health — was brought to life in Montgomery County. It is frequently on display during community meetings, as well as the “MAPP map.” An illustration of the six phases of MAPP as a process of forming partnerships, assessing your community’s needs, determining the health priorities as a result, and taking collective and collaborative action to address those priorities. During the first MAPP cycle, community partners were brought together that had never worked together. This created a forum for health improvement planning dialogue to occur. “I have a greater awareness of the resources available in our community. I used to think that we had few resources. After getting involved in the MAPP process, I came to realize that we had many resources; I just wasn’t aware of them,” said David Charles, Chief, Mount Sterling Police Department and chairman of the substance abuse action team, known as the Montgomery County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Team (MC ADAPT).

## **For More Information**

To learn more about the Montgomery County Healthy Communities Coalition, go to <http://montgomerycountyhealth.com/about-us/community-health-assessment/>

To learn about MAPP at <http://www.naccho.org/programs/public-health-infrastructure/mapp>

To learn about other MAPP communities go to: <http://mappnetwork.naccho.org/>