

# Michael Reese Health Trust (MRHT) and Polk Bros. Foundation (PBF)

Cook County, IL

*Chicago and Cook County Housing for Health Partnership*

## Challenge

In 2014, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, in collaboration with the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, chose Chicago and Cook County as the first major U.S. metropolitan area to implement a healthcare and housing initiative.

## Innovation

As part of the planning process, MRHT convened 45 stakeholders, including state, county, and city representatives and leadership of the nine managed care organizations (MCOs) that at that time insured Illinois Medicaid enrollees. Together the group outlined goals that would ensure that people who experience homelessness and chronic health issues have stable housing and coordinated services that lead to improved health and healthcare cost reductions.

## Overview

With the support of MRHT and PBF, the Center for Housing and Health (CHH) recruited lead partner agencies and launched the Chicago and Cook County Housing for Health Strategic Plan (H2). CHH recruited an unprecedented cross-sector leadership council comprised of city, county, state, federal, and managed care leaders, nonprofit housing and advocacy organizations, and foundation leaders. With significant input from more than 250 stakeholders, the group developed a three-year strategic plan with three primary goals: create additional housing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness; share data across the housing and health systems; and provide cross-sector training and coordination. The leadership council, currently chaired by Chicago's Public Health Commissioner, meets biannually. Three stakeholder workgroups each developed a set of deliverables and meet regularly to implement activities to meet the overarching goals.

### PUBLIC-SECTOR PARTNERS

Over a dozen public sector partners, including local government, education, health, and housing partners

### OTHER PARTNERS

Many partners, including foundations, nonprofits, and community groups

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Rachel Reichlin and Debbie Reznick  
([RReichlin@HealthTrust.net](mailto:RReichlin@HealthTrust.net),  
[DReznick@PolkBrosFdn.org](mailto:DReznick@PolkBrosFdn.org))

