

Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together

FAQs

- **What is Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together?**

Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together supports communities in building the skills, behaviors, and systems which lead to health, well-being, and equity.

Participating communities receive coaching and resources, and participate in a learning collaborative, as well as engage its partners across sectors, including residents with living experience of inequity – to learn, plan, and act together.

Methodist Healthcare Ministries will also advance Community-faith Connections (CFC) through the engagement of faith communities alongside our Communities of Solutions and will provide funding, technical assistance, and resources for community collaborations across sectors who wish to advance equity.

- **Where are Methodist Healthcare Ministries' Communities of Solutions?**

Communities of Solutions (CoS) will be developed in various counties across South Texas. Interested communities in these counties will come together for peer learning, coaching, and monthly webinars to expand skills in leadership, implementation, change management, collaboration, and other areas. The first step is the Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together Learning Collaborative which will draw participants from Bexar, Dimmit, Edwards, Kinney, LaSalle, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, Val Verde, or Zavala counties.

- **What is Community Faith Connections?**

Methodist Healthcare Ministries defines Community Faith Connections through its vision and desire to connect with faith communities recognizing faith communities can occupy more than a transactional relationship in their community. A relationship that extends past meeting acute needs, focusing on building transformative relationships in their community in ways faith communities are uniquely positioned to accomplish.

The overarching goal is for faith communities to partner with those they serve to address the root causes of disparities. Through co-creating, co-designing, and co-implementing, faith communities embark on a journey to build their capacity and work together with individuals from their communities and congregations to identify a vital condition and to develop a health equity strategy to improve upon that vital condition.

Community Faith Connections is not a church hub model where we would increase services in a community by locating them in a single space, specifically a church building – rather CFC is about transforming the system and processes that are not servicing our communities. Faith communities are part of the change process, along with other organizations in our communities. More central to this process of change are faith communities in partnership with persons living through disparities.

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- **Who can participate in Community Faith Connections?**

Any faith community or organization with a faith-based mission or affiliation.

- **What will participants of Community Faith Connections learn?**

All content shared during our Communities of Solutions sessions has been developed to meet the specific needs, challenges, and histories that faith communities face. Special attention will be placed in enhancing and highlighting the unique ways of being faith communities inhabit: the ability to accompany, convene, connect, give voice, provide sanctuary, bless, pray, endure and hope.

- **When will the Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together: Learning Collaborative start?**

Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together: Learning Collaborative work begins in January of 2022.

- **What type of time commitment can I expect to give to Prosperemos Juntos Learning Collaborative?**

Every first, second, and third Tuesday of the month, the Community of Solutions Team will host three distinct learning sessions.

1st week of the month: the entire Prosperemos Juntos Learning Collaborative will attend to engage in didactic learning and discussion. Typically, at the end of this session, an activity will be assigned and due for completion by the 1st Tuesday of the following month.

*This session is required to attend as a part of the expectations for participation and lasts three hours.

2nd Tuesday of the month: our Community Faith Connections Sessions are designed to cover some of the topics and concepts discussed in Week One but contextualized to meet the specific needs of faith communities.

*These sessions are mandatory/strongly encouraged for all self-identified faith communities, but are optional for other organizations; however, are invited and welcome to attend.

*Community Faith Connections sessions are two hours in duration.

3rd Tuesday of the month: our On-Demand Coaching session where our team will field any lingering inquiries or questions you might have about the learnings or the activity assigned from the previous week. This is also a time to come together with other coalitions in the collaborative for peer learning, networking, and fellowship.

*These sessions are optional but highly encouraged, especially if you need a concept revisited. *These sessions are an hour and a half in duration.

- **What type of time commitment can I expect to give to Prosperemos Juntos Learning Collaborative? (Continued...)**

Last week of the month: there is no formal Prosperemos Juntos session this week. However, this week by design is reserved to help your coalition find time to convene, discuss next steps, and accomplish the activity for the month. Since we meet every Tuesday, we encourage you to carve out time in your schedule to ensure your coalition is meeting regularly at least once a month and is making meaningful progress towards the learning objectives for the month.

Depending on COVID risks, we intend to host some sessions in-person, both in the Mid-Border region and in Bexar County (coalitions will be invited to attend depending on their location and the geographical area they serve). These will be all-day, hands-on workshops designed to increase your knowledge and confidence as your coalition grows.

We encourage you to be creative about how your coalition attends these meetings. This might mean choosing a representative to attend the meeting if organizational leadership cannot or providing space for your persons with current lived experience to be the main participants. We have an appreciation for the diversity of ways teams function and come together.

If you have a unique circumstance and would like to participate in the Prosperemos Juntos |Thriving Together Learning Collaborative, feel free to reach out to our team thrivingcommunities@mhm.org.

- **Who is a Person with Current Lived Experience?**

One definition of a person with current lived experience by Community Commons is: “someone who has lived (or is currently living) with the issues the community is focusing on and who may have insight to offer about the system as it is experienced by consumers.” This person will have “expertise that doesn’t come from training or formal education; knowledge from an experience with an issue or challenge; direct experience with a system, process or issue, or trying to engage with a resource; awareness of what works, what doesn’t work, and what resources (formal or informal) are available in the community.”

Something important to note is that someone who is currently experiencing or recently experienced an issue (within the last 5 years) will have more timely expertise.

- **What does success look like in Phase 1?**

By the end of Phase 1, coalitions will:

- Have created multi-sector partnership;
- Focus on specific geography within the initial areas of impact;
- Have created leadership teams that include residents with current lived experience;
- Have a genuine commitment to racial and health equity;
- Possess a shared common vision for community transformation;
- Have an increased awareness of vital conditions and their impact on health (beyond access to healthcare);
- Have created a 3-year health equity strategy to improve vital conditions in their community.

- **Will the community I serve, whose primary language is not English, be able to participate?**

From the beginning of our design process, we made a commitment to language justice. In collaboration with the Rio Grande Language Justice Collective, we are able to ensure that interpretation and translation services are available in every aspect of our program. Every tool, communication, and session is available in Spanish and in English to demonstrate respect and support autonomy to persons who communicate in either language.

Language justice includes being able to speak, understand, and be understood in the language in which we live. It is a necessary and critical piece to ensure that our dignity is at the forefront when building movements with each other and that our autonomy as individuals, our existence, our world is respected. For a world where all worlds fit.

Currently, we have language services for Spanish only at this time. However, if your organization serves a community that speaks another language, reach out to our Community of Solutions team to discuss how we might partner together to assure your community's full participation in Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together. We are always looking to grow our capacity in this area to be more inclusive of multiple communities of varying cultures and origins.

- **What comes after the Learning Collaborative?**

After completing the Learning Collaborative, coalitions are invited to apply to Phase 2, the Implementation Phase. The Implementation Phase lasts 3 years and includes funding as well as capacity-building resources. Although coalitions will focus their time working in community, they will still be invited to collaborate with each other through convenings and training.

- **How has Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together adapting to COVID-19?**

That is a good question. The Communities of Solutions team has a deep commitment to ensuring the safety of our collaborators and the communities in which they live and serve. Since its inception in 2021, we have held all Learning Collaborative sessions virtually. For our two in-person sessions, we followed a strict protocol of mask-wearing and social distancing also an alternative synchronist experience via Zoom for participants who were unable or uncomfortable attending an all-day in-person session. Lastly, leveraging Methodist Healthcare Ministries clinics and resources, we organized to provided COVID vaccinations for our collaborators.

- **Why is developing a Communities of Solutions critical?**

Methodist Healthcare Ministries recognizes communities in South Texas face health inequities which are barriers to achieving a full and healthy life for some. In order to improve the balance, various sectors in area communities will need to unite for change. The Community of Solutions (CoS) and Community-Faith Connections (CFC) are the way of bringing communities together to achieve health and well-being. A Communities of Solutions approach acknowledges that while MHM can accompany communities in their journey toward building thriving communities, it will take strong leadership from the people who live there.

- **Who is a Lead Applicant?**

A Lead Applicant will be the person who formally submits the application to Phase 1. The lead applicant is also the organization who will be responsible for managing the initial \$5,000 gift for the coalition.

- **Who is a Key Contact?**

A Key Contact will be the main point of contact for your coalition. Still, because the Community of Solutions framework values transparency, we typically make all announcements, calendar invites, and other communications accessible to all coalition members.

- **What is a coalition?**

We are defining a coalition as an alliance of 3 or more organizations united for joint action to address the challenges to the vital condition affecting their community; they all serve in some capacity.

- **What is the expected size of a coalition?**

We are asking for a multisector group of three entities. Even if it is one or two, with plans to pull together some other groups in the coming weeks or months, that is ok. Even if you are not finalized in the number of people or organizations participating in your coalition, we encourage you to still apply.

- **Will you be helping organizations with grant funding?**

Yes, all groups accepted into Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together will receive a \$5K gift. The purpose for this funding is to support your collaborative in compensating persons with current lived experience for their contribution to your local decision-making. With this in mind, the gift can also be used to remove real and potential barriers that hinder the full participation of persons with current lived experience in your coalition. These barriers can include but are not limited to: technology challenges, lack of transportation, childcare accessibility issues, and food insecurity.

We recognize that as a funder, we do have connections to other funders, and we intend to leverage those relationships as we form groups that move onto Phase II.

- **Why is Methodist Healthcare Ministries starting this initiative at this time?**

1. Methodist Healthcare Ministries understands that health and wellness begin long before individuals seek clinical care and prioritizes the importance of the social determinants of health and access to quality resources and care as driving factors for the well-being of individuals, families and communities throughout their lives.
2. Methodist Healthcare Ministries realizes achievement of improved health and well-being of the people and communities we serve is a long-term commitment that requires intentional efforts focused on health equity.
3. Methodist Healthcare Ministries seeks to balance its work for the least served by providing the best quality clinical care, connecting individuals and families to needed resources, and working with communities to improve their health and well-being.
4. Methodist Healthcare Ministries recognizes it can't address the needs of every community alone, but it can support, convene, and/or partner with others engaged in and/or leading efforts to improve community health and well-being.
5. Methodist Healthcare Ministries builds relationships with churches and faith communities of all denominations to advance the health and well-being of families and whole communities.
6. Methodist Healthcare Ministries partners with people with current lived experiences to co-design, co-create, co-evaluate changes that improve health and well-being of families and communities.
7. Methodist Healthcare Ministries supports place-based efforts to strengthen historically underserved communities.
8. Methodist Healthcare Ministries sustains a culture of continuous improvement and learning where innovation is welcomed, practiced, tested, and implemented.

- **How can communities learn more about the application process for Communities of Solutions?**

Communities can learn more about the application process at mhm.org/thriving-communities.