

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 coalitions will 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 (MHM) will provide funding, technical assistance, and resources for community coalitions across sectors who wish to advance equity.

- **What is MHM's definition of health equity?**

MHM believes that to improve the wellness of the least served and fully live out its mission of “Serving Humanity to Honor God,” it must recognize the inequities inherent in its communities that contribute to poor health outcomes. Health Equity is both the process and goal by which Methodist Healthcare Ministries seeks to carry out that purpose. Health Equity is a framework of thought and action that strives to reduce racial and socio-economic disparities and create fair and just opportunity for every person to reach their full potential for health and life and contribute to that of others.

- **Where are MHM's Communities of Solution?**

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. Coalitions come from Bexar, Dimmit, Edwards, Jim Hogg, Kinney, LaSalle, Maverick, Real, Uvalde, Val Verde, Webb, Zapata, or Zavala counties.

- **What is Community Faith Connections?**

Community Faith Connections is a monthly opportunity for faith communities and leaders to apply the concepts of Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together to faith settings. The MHM team adapts the curriculum to speak more directly toward faith communities, seeking to support faith communities in growing beyond transactional relationships with their neighbors.

The goal is for faith communities to partner with those they serve to address the root causes of inequities. Through co-creating, co-designing, and co-implementing, faith communities will:

- embark on a journey to build their capacity,
- work together with individuals from their communities and congregations to identify a vital condition,
- and develop a health equity strategy, or plan, to improve upon that vital condition.

- **What is Community Faith Connections? (continued)**

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 inequities.

- **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?**

The third cohort, or group, of Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together: Learning Collaborative begins in February of 2023.

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

*Coalitions are expected to attend and participate in this session. Virtual sessions typically last three hours. Three of these sessions are held in-person. In-person sessions are all-day events.

2nd session 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 coalition members; however, all are welcome to attend.

*Community Faith Connections sessions are two hours in duration.

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

3rd session Tuesday of the month: our On-Demand Coaching session is where our team will address any lingering inquiries or questions you or your coalition might have about the learnings or the activity assigned the previous weeks. 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.

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 the Learning Collaborative meets every week, we encourage your coalition to carve out time in your schedule to ensure your coalition is meeting regularly at least once a month outside the Learning Collaborative sessions and is making meaningful progress towards the learning objectives for the month.

Depending on COVID-19 risks, we intend to host some sessions in-person, both in the Mid-Border region, Laredo, 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 the coalition members who identify as 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, reach out to our team atthrivingcommunities@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 inequity (within the last 5 years) will have more timely expertise.

- **What does success look like in the Learning Collaborative?**

By the end of the Learning Collaborative, coalitions will:

- Have maintained a multi-sector partnership with at least three partnering organizations
- Focus on a specific geography;
- Have persons with lived experience will representing at least one-third of their leadership team
- Have a genuine commitment to racial justice 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.

- **What is the difference between a coalition member and a partnering organization?**

A coalition member is an individual who is participating only as themselves, and does not represent a full organization. A partnering organization is a full organization involved in your coalition work. A partnering organization may have several representatives who attend coalition meetings and activities. When determining if someone represents a full organization, consider:

- Are other members of the organization aware of the participation?
- Is the organization representative participating in your coalition able to influence organizational resources (i.e. staff time, money, etc.)?
- Is there buy-in from the executive leadership of the partnering organization?
- If the current representative left the organization, would the organization still support the work of the coalition? Would someone else start attending coalition meetings?

- **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.

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

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 at ThrivingCommunities@mhm.org to discuss how we might partner 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 the Implementation phase. The Implementation 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 bi-annual convenings and peer coaching sessions.

- **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 most Learning Collaborative sessions virtually. For our in-person sessions, we follow a strict protocol of mask-wearing and social distancing. In-person sessions are recorded and posted online for those who cannot attend. Lastly, leveraging Methodist Healthcare Ministries clinics and resources, we organized to provide COVID vaccinations for the coalitions participating in Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together. MHM team members can help you navigate vaccination if you need this help.

- **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. Communities of Solutions (CoS) and Community-Faith Connections (CFC) are ways of bringing communities together to achieve health equity 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, the Community of Solutions framework values transparency, we typically use email announcements, calendar invites, and other communications to keep all coalition members.

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- **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; each partner will serve in some capacity.

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

We are asking for a multisector group of three organizations. If your group does not have three organizations, you can still apply; however, you will be expected to have three organizations by March.

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

Yes, all coalitions accepted into Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together Learning Collaborative will receive a \$5K gift. The purpose for this funding is to support your coalition 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.

- **How can communities learn more about the application process for Prosperemos Juntos | Thriving Together?**

Communities can learn more about the application process at mhm.org/thriving-communities or by calling 210-692-0234.