

# Health and Home: Addressing Social Determinants of Health in Newport News, Virginia

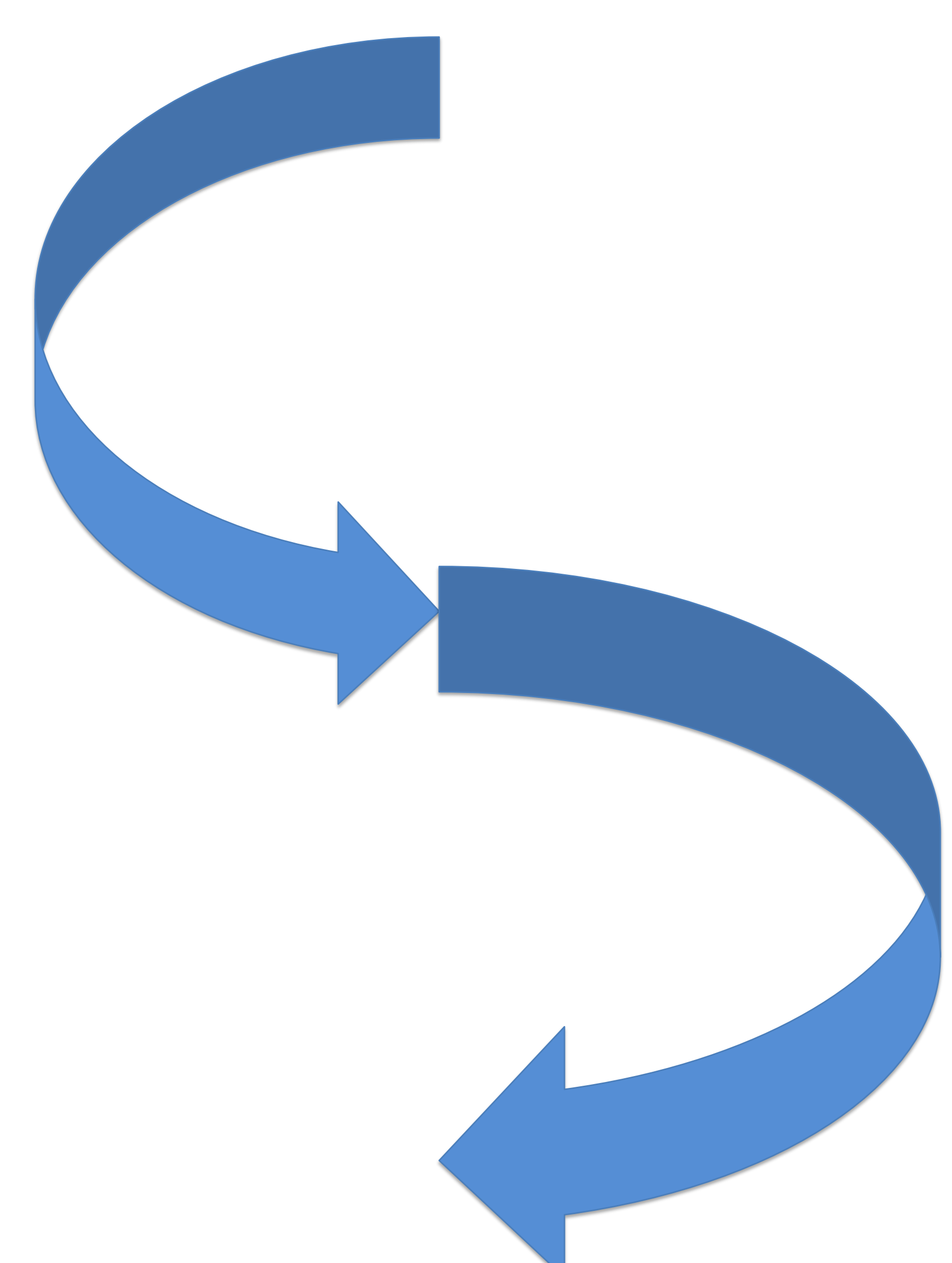
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## Introduction

Health is the platform on which individuals pursue happiness, contribute to their communities, and engage with society. To ensure the stability of this platform, individuals pay high costs to combat personal illnesses, while national governments invest billions of dollars annually to investigate the biomedical origins of disease. These investments do lead to incredible discoveries and miraculous life-saving tools; however, they also contribute to the existing medical dogma that presents illness as a purely biological phenomenon, which can be cured exclusively with downstream approaches - cutting-edge drugs, surgical techniques, and bioengineering technology. This downstream approach ignores the growing body of research that shows poor health outcomes are tied directly to social factors, like race, housing, community-level poverty, and income inequality (Donohoe, 2013; Williams & Collins, 2001; Smith et al., 2016). Due to the existing dogma, these upstream social determinants of health are not adequately addressed in communities across the United States. This failure is illustrated clearly in Newport News, Virginia. The Southeast Community of Newport News is a predominantly African-American community characterized by high unemployment, generational poverty, high violent crime rates, and particularly adverse health outcomes (Virginia Department of Health, 2018)

## Upstream Approach

- Focuses on addressing behavioral, environmental, and structural forces that contribute to disease
- Relatively low-cost interventions
- Manifests at population level, rather than exclusively at the individual level
- Accessible for volunteers and community-workers



## Downstream Approach

- Focuses on treating acute disease and illness
- Relatively high-cost interventions
- Manifests at individual level, rather than at the population level
- Accessible for highly trained physicians, nurses, and other practitioners

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Language: \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to call: \_\_\_\_\_

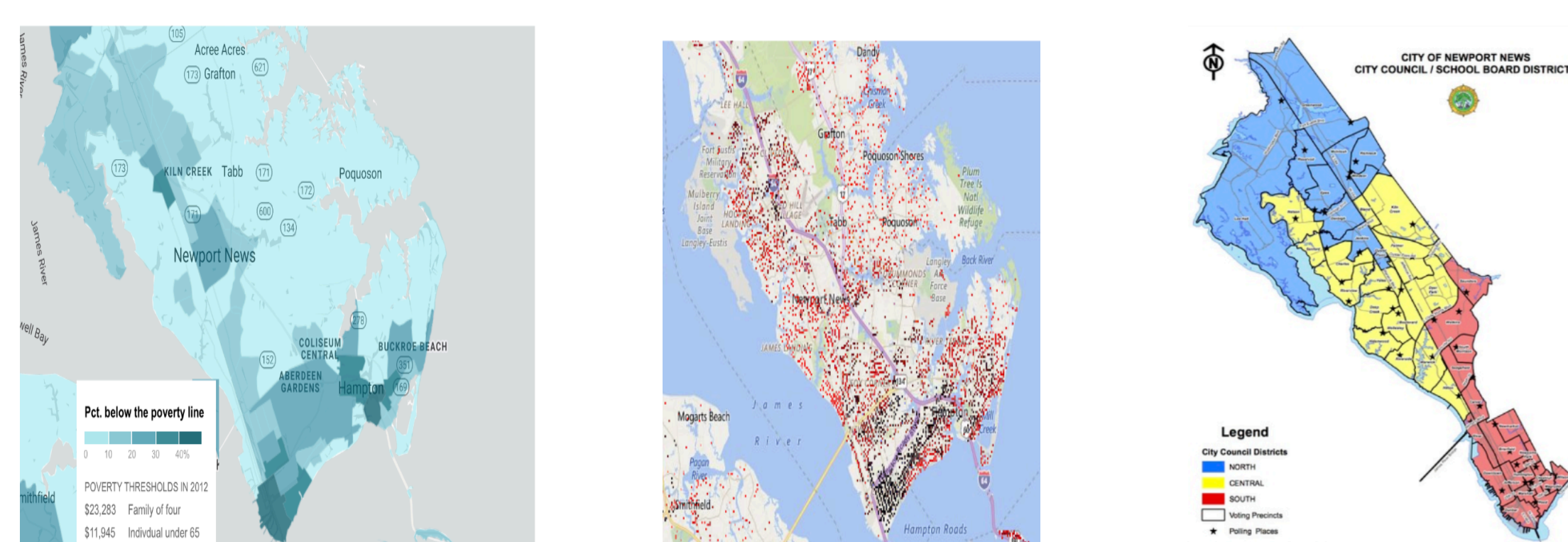
	Yes / No
In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
In the last 12 months, has the electric, gas, oil, or water company threatened to shut off your services in your home?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Are you worried that in the next 2 months, you may not have stable housing?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Do problems getting child care make it difficult for you to work or study? (leave blank if you do not have children)	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
In the last 12 months, have you needed to see a doctor, but could not because of cost?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
In the last 12 months, have you ever had to go without health care because you didn't have a way to get there?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Do you ever need help reading hospital materials?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Do you often feel that you lack companionship?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Are any of your needs urgent? For example: I don't have food tonight, I don't have a place to sleep tonight	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
If you checked YES to any boxes above, would you like to receive assistance with any of these needs?	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N

## Aim

The issues in Newport News require a program that addresses these social determinants of health upstream in the community, rather than downstream on the hospital bed. Addressing social determinants upstream will restore the platform of health that individuals in Newport News require to empower themselves and advance their communities. This health-provided empowerment is the foundation of any Good Society, and must not be dependent on race, social class, or income. Free from the burden of illness, individuals in the Good Society will be enabled to work for personal and collective prosperity.

## Mission Statement

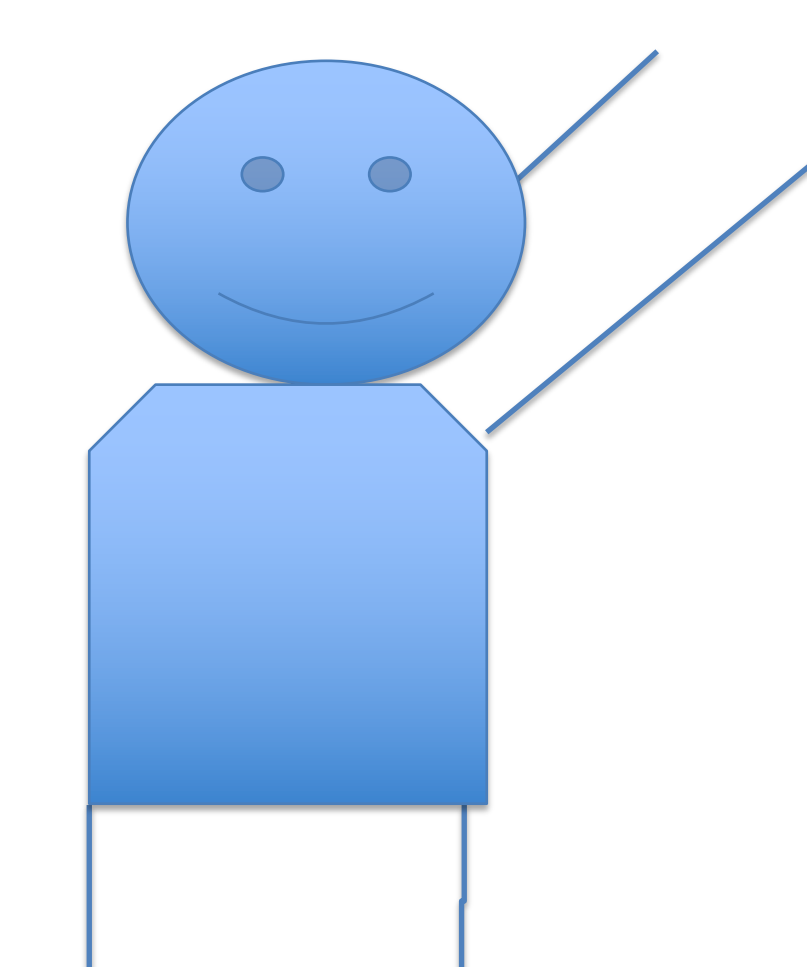
This organization will address the sources of disease that traditional healthcare institutions cannot. The Health Leads model, a simple mechanism by which clinicians can address social determinants of health, will lower costs, fight disease, and promote health in Newport News. With this upstream approach, we have the capacity to fight illness before it manifests and build a platform of health for all the residents of Newport News, empowering them to pursue happiness and contribute to their community.



Happiness

Community

Compassion



Health