

ALIGNING SYSTEMS FOR HEALTH

Health Care + Public Health + Social Services

The Georgia Health Policy Center (GHPC) leads the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's (RWJF's) national initiative, [Aligning Systems for Health: Health Care + Public Health + Social Services](#). The initiative focuses on learning about effective ways to align health care, public health, and social services, to better address people's and communities' goals and needs.

Aligning Systems for Health accomplishes these goals by:

- Synthesizing existing research and making actionable results available by multiple means with targeted audiences;
- Supporting original research and evaluation; and,
- Building relationships with those already working in the field.

Aligning Systems for Health strengthens the evidence base around conditions that foster alignment and translates these insights for communities, researchers, and decision makers to support on-the-ground efforts aimed at greater system alignment.

The [Cross-Sector Alignment Theory of Change](#) proposes that aligned systems are those in which cross-sector systems and leaders

- Share a set of priorities for outcomes;
- Create a shared data, metrics, and measurement system;
- Establish stable financing with incentives and share accountability; and
- Develop strong governance.

Collectively, these are referred to as the core components of alignment. Equally important are external factors affecting urgency, internal factors affecting capacity, factors affecting success, the level at which cross-sector alignment occurs (individual, organizational, and system), and the involvement of a strong community role. Applicants are encouraged to explore the Cross-Sector Alignment Theory of Change and related definitions at www.alignforhealth.org.

Call for Rapid-Cycle Research and Evaluation Projects

The center supports a rolling submission process for a second call for rapid-cycle research and evaluation projects that examine cross-sector alignment efforts already underway. In this round, and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, GHPC is particularly interested in early observations related to the following types of research questions, especially as they relate to cross-sector alignment, the COVID-19 response, equity, and underserved and marginalized populations:

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- What is the role of aligned systems in navigating the response to the covid-19 pandemic?
- How have individual and organizational roles shifted, and how have pathways to cross-sector alignment changed during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- Given the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, how are collaboratives and partner organizations engaging community members in alignment activities?
- How did prior alignment activities help communities be more ready to respond to COVID-19 and/or be more resilient in bouncing back as a community or state?
- What kinds of shared infrastructure, processes, and policies were most valuable for communities or states to already have had in place?
- How do elements of the Cross-Sector Alignment Theory of Change rise or fall in importance during crisis response, and with what consequence?
- How have changes to regulations or policies impacted cross-sector alignment efforts?
- With resources being stretched thin, how are collaboratives preparing long-term for the continuation of their work/services?
- How does the pandemic better position collaboratives to assist in the recovery effort?
- How is cross-sector alignment measured in fast-changing times, where technical details are often pushed aside?

These questions are examples of areas of interest, not an exhaustive list. Emphasis will be placed on rapid translation of findings to the field. Projects should be achievable in nine months or less with \$50,000 to \$75,000 of support. Exact timelines and grant support are flexible dependent on the project proposed. We expect to award up to six grants with a total value of up to \$300,000. The call will remain open until all funds are awarded.

Applicants should submit a brief paragraph to aligning@gsu.edu describing the idea. Based on a review by project staff, applicants may be asked to submit a brief proposal.

Applicants are encouraged to review materials at www.alignforhealth.org to better understand RWJF's alignment strategy and the specific goals of this project.

For questions or more information, contact us at aligning@gsu.edu.