

Executive Summary: Maternal and Child Health Measurement Research Network Strategic Agenda

Purpose

The Maternal and Child Health Measurement Research Network (MCH-MRN) is a multidisciplinary, collaborative network of experts who represent the MCH lifespan and who are active in the measurement of health and well-being of MCH populations. The purpose of the MCH-MRN is to provide a sustainable platform to inspire, support, coordinate, and advance efforts related to MCH measurement, measurement innovation, and shared accountability to improve outcomes and systems performance on behalf of the nation's children, youth, and families. This robust and broad-based Network—grounded in a common framework, shared vision, and Strategic Agenda—is designed to improve, align, and harmonize measures and data across the diverse landscape of systems, programs, and practice settings responsible for promoting and protecting the health and well-being of MCH populations.

What is the focus of the Strategic Agenda for MCH measurement?

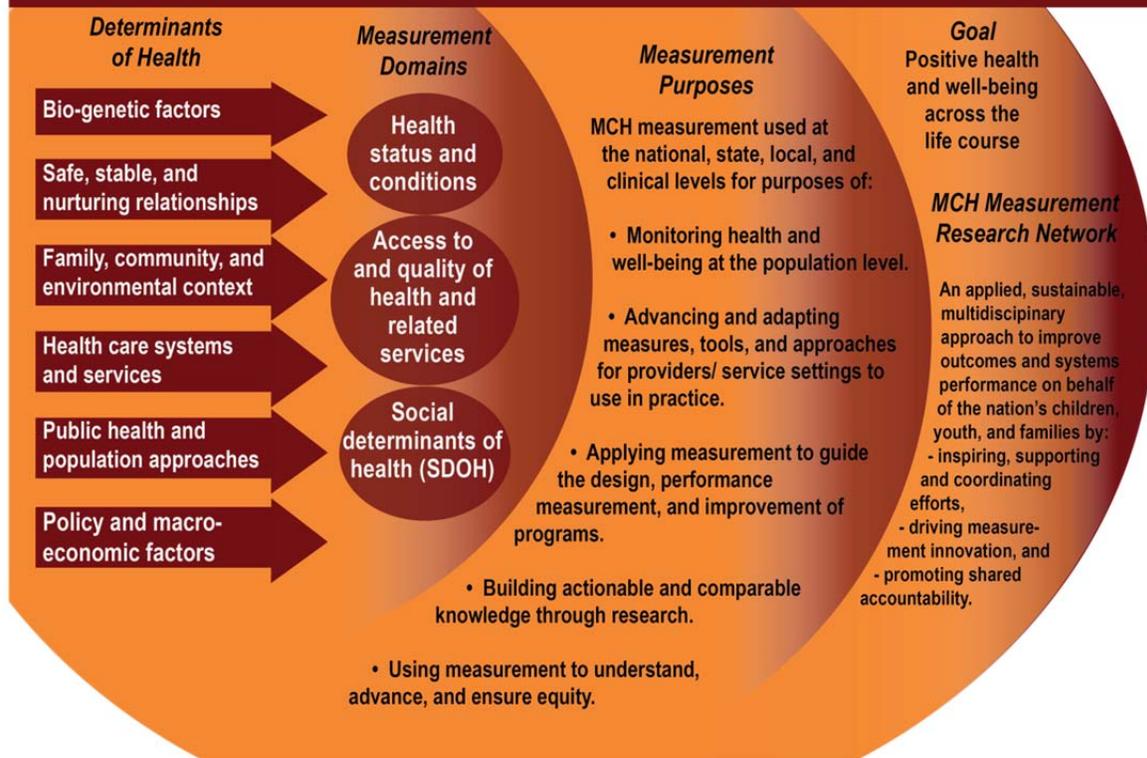
The MCH-MRN Strategic Agenda:

- Aims to improve MCH measurement and its application toward better health and well-being for MCH populations;
- Is based on identified gaps and opportunities in MCH measurement;
- Makes recommendations for action to fill gaps and optimize opportunities;
- Sets short-term priorities for action in research, capacity building, and other areas;
- Promotes the development, harmonization, and alignment of measures across programs and initiatives; and
- Guides translation of knowledge and data using MCH measures into policy, programs, and practice.

Prepared by the Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative for the Maternal and Child Health Measurement Research Network. This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant UA6MC30375 (MCH-MRN).



Figure 1. APPLIED FRAMEWORK FOR ADVANCING MCH MEASUREMENT



What are the priorities in the Strategic Agenda for MCH measurement?

The MCH-MRN Strategic Agenda is an applied roadmap to address MCH measurement gaps and leverage key opportunities to promote effective and harmonized MCH measurement across programs and initiatives at the national, state, and local levels. The Strategic Agenda focuses on the use and translation of knowledge derived from using MCH measures into the improved design, improvement and outcomes of MCH related programs, policies, and practices. The processes and analyses conducted by the Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative for the MCH-MRN led to identification of strategic, high-level priorities and accompanying recommendations for action. The six high-level priorities and recommendation for action for 2018-19 are shown below.

Priority 1: Fill key conceptual gaps, such as positive health, well-being and life satisfaction, family/relationship factors, socio-emotional functioning, perinatal health, early and middle childhood, and social determinants of health.

- *Recommendation 1.1: Prioritize filling positive health and family health conceptual gaps, as suggested by experts in the field.*
- *Recommendation 1.2: Leverage influential frameworks and initiatives to fill conceptual gaps.*
- *Recommendation 1.3: Harmonize, evolve, and support use of measures related to social determinants of health specific to MCH populations.*

Priority 2: Promote the use and application of under-utilized measures.

- *Recommendation 2.1: Identify a strategic suite of measures which address emerging priority areas, are under-utilized, and require application.*
- *Recommendation 2.2: Leverage national surveys to promote the use and application of under-utilized measures.*

Priority 3: Address barriers to equity analysis through the collection and use of key person-reported and demographic data.

- *Recommendation 3.1: Promote a re-examination of socio-economic data collection practices in light of new protective statuses.*
- *Recommendation 3.2: Explore how to promote safe socio-economic data collection practices.*
- *Recommendation 3.3: Support the inclusion of self-reported sexuality measures.*

Priority 4: Improve data availability and translation at the local level.

- *Recommendation 4.1: Use local-area estimation techniques to increase the availability of MCH data at the county, city, and community level.*
- *Recommendation 4.2: Provide training and technical assistance to communities in the production and use of local-area data.*
- *Recommendation 4.3: Support local and practice-based collection of data on measures of high value.*

Priority 5: Promote alignment across programs and practices to enable shared accountability for health and well-being outcomes.

- *Recommendation 5.1: Create a core set of social determinants of health measures to promote alignment across practices and programs.*
- *Recommendation 5.2: Promote alignment across federal programs to enable shared accountability.*
- *Recommendation 5.3: Data linkage can help promote alignment across programs.*

Priority 6: Address gaps in measure validity and specification.

- *Recommendation 6.1: Promote publication of validity studies among journals.*
- *Recommendation 6.2: Address specification gaps among priority measures.*

How is the MCH-MRN moving from recommendations into action and change?

The MCH-MRN structure offers mechanisms and actionable resources to support MCH stakeholders in their knowledge and use of MCH measures and in the development and application of measures into policies, programs, practices, and processes. The MCH-MRN uses five key levers for change. (See diagram of the context and components.)

Conclusion

As national priorities shift toward a focus on the overall health and well-being of children, it is more critical than ever that the field respond to the need for systematic and collaborative MCH measures and moves toward shared accountability for MCH measurement processes. Ultimately, the MCH-MRN Strategic Agenda seeks to catalyze collaboration and shared accountability toward improving MCH outcomes within and across programs and systems, while aiming to support an era of innovation in MCH measurement to optimize and ensure the health potential of our nation's mothers, children, and families.

Context and Components of MCH-MRN Strategic Agenda

MEASUREMENT GOAL & PURPOSES	GAPS & OPPORTUNITIES	PRIORITIES FOR ACTION 2018-19	LEVERS FOR CHANGE
<p>Goal: Positive health and well-being across the life course.</p> <p>Purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Monitoring health and well-being at the population level. * Advancing and adapting measures, tools and approaches for providers to use in practice. * Applying measurement to guide the design, performance measurement, and improvement of programs. * Using measurement to understand, advance, and ensure equity. * Building actionable and comparable knowledge through research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptual • Population-based • Use • Application • Equity • Alignment and shared accountability • Translation • Specification and validity 	<p><i>Priority 1:</i> Fill conceptual gaps in areas such as positive health, well-being, family, and social determinants of health.</p> <p><i>Priority 2:</i> Increase the use and application of under-utilized measures at the national, state, and local levels.</p> <p><i>Priority 3:</i> Address barriers to equity analysis through better data collection and use.</p> <p><i>Priority 4:</i> Improve data availability and translation at the local level.</p> <p><i>Priority 5:</i> Promote alignment and shared accountability for health and well-being outcomes.</p> <p><i>Priority 6:</i> Address gaps in measure specification and validity.</p>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <p>Shared vision, strategic agenda, and common framework</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;">  <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <p>Applied multi-disciplinary Network with Technical Work Groups (TWGs)</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;">  <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <p>Research to advance methods and knowledge</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;">  <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <p>Web-based measures compendium and other resources</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;">  <div style="margin-left: 10px;"> <p>Public-private funding for sustainability</p> </div> </div>