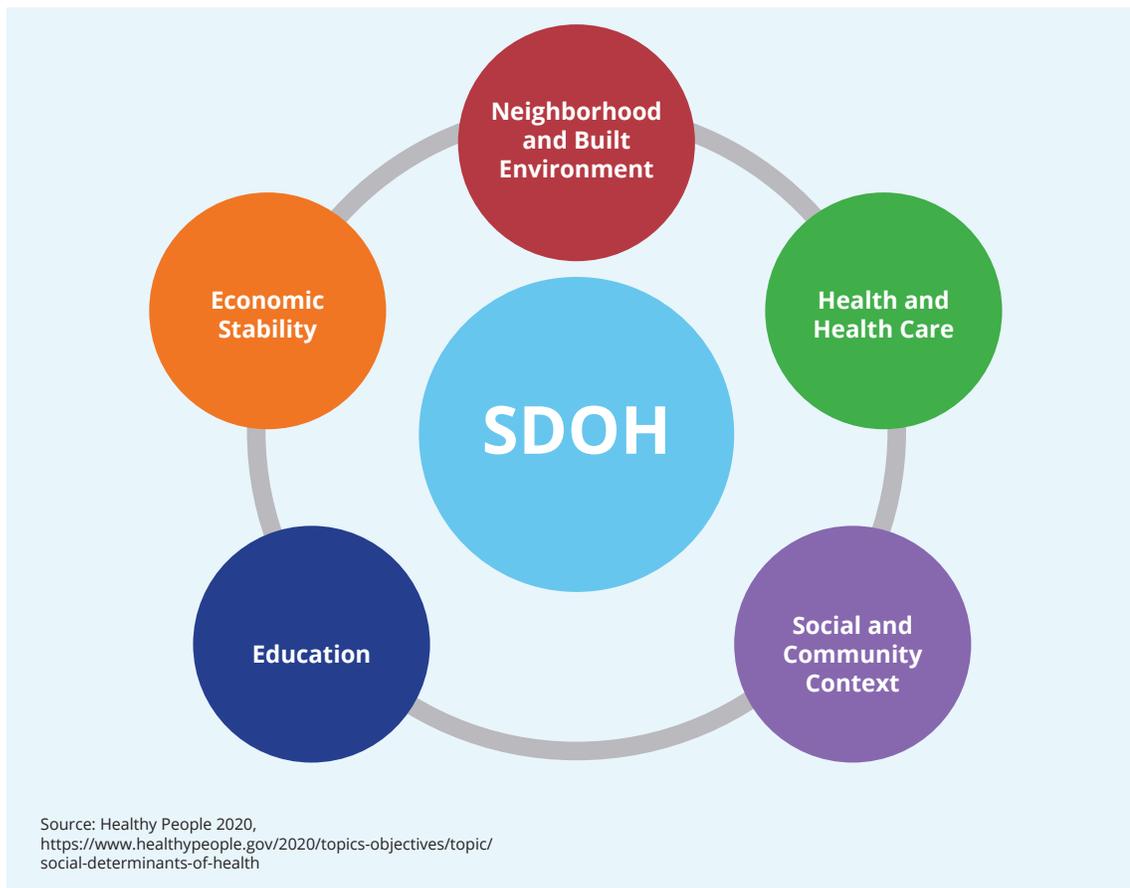




The Social Determinants of Health Meta-Analysis

A person's health and life expectancy are determined by many factors outside of biological measures (e.g. heart rate, kidney function) and their genetic code. These factors are known as the social determinants of health (SDoH), which are "the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life."¹ SDoH affect health outcomes in ways including mortality, morbidity, life expectancy, health care expenditures, health status, and functional limitations.²

The SDoH fall into five basic categories:



Health Disparities

Difference in the SDoH (defined above) often lead to disparities in health outcomes and life expectancies between different people and populations in the United States and other countries. There are noticeable health disparities across genders, gender identity and orientation, age, disability status, education level, income, employment, and particularly, geographic location. In fact, where you live is a better predictor of your overall health than your genetic code.³

The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) contracted with Health Management Associates, Inc. (HMA) to explore promising strategies at the national, state, and particularly, the community level that address SDoH and health disparities. Table 1 presents the subject area by HHS-defined categories of SDoH; notably, there can be overlap among categories that topics fall under, underlining the complex way in which SDoHs interact.

¹ "Social Determinants of Health." World Health Organization, 2017, http://www.who.int/social_determinants/en/

² Henry J. Heiman and Samantha Ariga, "Beyond Health Care: The Role of Social Determinants in Promoting Health and Health Equity" Kaiser Family Foundation. November 4, 2015. <http://www.kff.org/disparities-policy/issue-brief/beyond-health-care-the-role-of-social-determinants-in-promoting-health-and-health-equity/>

³ Garth Graham, MaryLynn Ostrowski, and Alyse Sabina, "Defeating The ZIP Code Health Paradigm: Data, Technology, And Collaboration Are Key", Health Affairs Blog, August 6, 2015, <http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2015/08/06/defeating-the-zip-code-health-paradigm-data-technology-and-collaboration-are-key/>



TABLE 1: SDOH KEY FOCUS AREAS FOR CDPHE RESEARCH PAPERS

KEY AREA	ELEMENTS	CDPHE HMA FOCUS TOPICS
Neighborhood and Physical Environment	Access to healthy food, quality housing; exposure to environmental conditions, crime, violence	Quality Housing
Health and Health Care	Access to health care and primary care; health literacy	Family Friendly Business Practices
Social and Community Context	Social cohesion, civic participation, discrimination, incarceration	+ Neighborhood Fabric and Social Connectedness + Criminal Justice: Cradle to Prison Pipeline
Education	Early childhood education and development, high school graduation, enrollment in higher education, language and literacy	+ Childcare + Early Childhood Education + K-12 Education
Economic Stability	Poverty, employment, food insecurity, housing instability	+ Economic Opportunity + Homelessness + Affordable Housing + Paid Leave

These interventions outside of the health care system are important to an individual’s overall health, even more than their family’s history. Because of this, Colorado participates in a variety of federal initiatives and programs, as well as state and local programs, aimed at addressing SDOH in efforts to achieve “the highest level of health for all people”⁴ as envisioned in Healthy Colorado. Healthy Colorado is Colorado’s five-year plan for improving public health and the environment. It focused on the priorities of healthy eating, active living and obesity prevention, and mental health and substance abuse, as well as Colorado’s 10 Winnable Battles (healthier air, clean water, infectious disease prevention, injury prevention, mental health and substance abuse, obesity, oral health, safe food, tobacco, and unintended pregnancy).⁵

⁴ “Healthy Colorado: Shaping a State of Health. Colorado’s Plan for Improving Public Health and the Environment 2015-2019, p. 2”, CDPHE, https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/OPP_2015-CO-State-Plan.pdf

⁵ Ibid.