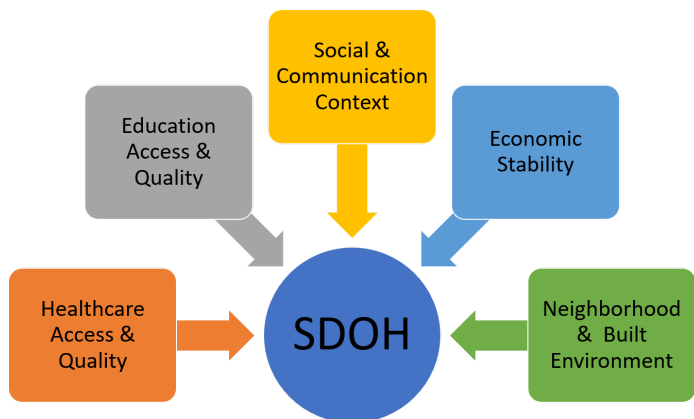


What are the Social Determinants of Health?

Social Impacts on Health

The context in which people are born, live, work, and age are referred to as the social determinants of health (SDOH). These conditions can have a big impact on the well-being of individuals and families. In fact, several studies suggest that social determinants account for 30-55% of health outcomes. Social determinants include things like access to good education, safe and affordable housing, clean air and water, stable employment, and supportive communities. Structural and environmental conditions such as economic stability, social support, and access to healthcare require multifaceted approaches. Policies that reduce inequalities and improve access to critical resources are key to improving population health.



Mapping Provides Actionable Insight

Because the social determinants of health differ across community contexts, population health policy and interventions should be tailored to meet the unique needs of each community. For this reason, our research team mapped the social determinants of health for every community in Iowa to identify places that may be particularly vulnerable to negative health outcomes. We modeled the Iowa SDOH index after one developed by the state of Washington. The index measures:

- Education
- Access to healthcare
- Employment
- Poverty
- Language proficiency

Interviews we conducted with substance use treatment providers showed that the SDOH is central to the substance use of many people in Iowa. Addressing SDOH can help people who use substances and improve their lives.

Scan here to view the dashboard!

