

Quick Tips: Social Determinants of Health Resources

Modified: July 2020

Definition: Social determinants of health (SDOH) are “the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life.” Today, we understand that most of our disparities in health outcomes are due to SDOH.

Purpose: Helping patients address social determinants of health such as housing and transportation will help address barriers to patients sustaining recovery.

Considerations:

- Don't be afraid to ask about barriers even if you don't know how to address them – asking helps build trust with patients and lets you know where to focus efforts in identifying resources.
- Start where you can with making referrals, and build out your capacity to refer to social service resources over time.
- Be patient-centered – start with the priority areas your patient identifies and try to make sure you refer patients to sites that work for them (language, open hours, etc)
- Work to build relationships with the social service agencies you refer to often.

Resources for the team

There are a variety of resources your team can access to build out community partnerships, screen for SDOH needs, and identify potential social service resource referral agencies. We recommend that you:

Utilize the knowledge and relationships of your team - To identify what resources your team already knows, identify gaps in your social service referral network, and review tips for building relationships with social service partners (you can utilize this [tool](#)).

Start to screen for SDOH barriers - Not every patient will have SDOH barriers, but it is sometimes hard to know without assessing. Screening for barriers is a great way to identify the top needs of your patient population, as well as identify barriers/needs early on before they become a potential crisis. You can ask each of your patients about barriers, but many providers utilize screening tools to help with this process. We recommend you consider using:

- [The Accountable Health Communities screening tool](#) developed by CMS (currently being used in Camden, Gloucester, Burlington, and Bergen counties as a part of a federal program for Medicaid/Medicare patients.)
- [PRAPARE](#) tool developed by the National Association of Community Health Centers.
- If neither of these meet your needs, this [table](#) shows a quick summary of various available tools and the types of questions they contain, and this [website](#) helps you search for tools depending on the questions or your population focus.

Identify community resources - There are some state-wide resources that can be useful for any of your patients. These resources, which include SNAP, SSI/SSD, and Medicaid renewal, can help provide the foundation to address food, income, and ongoing access to healthcare.



Resource	Description
NJhelps.org	This site allows you to complete a screening and/or application for health and social service programs such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food stamps (SNAP), • Cash assistance programs such as - Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), and General Assistance (GA). • NJ Family Care/Medicaid
County Boards of Social Service	This website is a list of all the county boards of social services. These agencies can help residents apply for programs available through NJHelps and, depending on the county, administer other programs such as temporary housing.

Other patients may be facing additional challenges around housing, legal needs, job training, etc. Depending on the specific need in each of these areas and where the patient lives, different types of resources may be most appropriate.

In order to find the right resources for each specific patient, we recommend utilizing one of the social service directories available in New Jersey. These directories can help you identify resources for your patient’s specific needs – for example, one patient with a housing need may need a temporary shelter for that night, while another may have an apartment, but needs to be connected to a program to assist with rent. If your agency needs a new service, find the directory that covers your region and have your staff spend some time reviewing the resource.

Tool	Recommended for	Next Steps
MyResourcePal - a social service directory and referral platform (powered by Aunt Bertha) that lets you search for resources within your local area, or look at different resources available in a variety of categories. You can filter, save favorites, and for some resources apply or refer directly from the platform. This platform is also available for patients to search for resources themselves.	Anywhere in New Jersey	Click on the link, create account, and contact mkang@camdenhealth.org or 856-365-9510 ext. 2069 with questions.
NowPow - a social service directory that lets you identify social services and make referrals to them in closed-loop referrals in select New Jersey regions.	Newark, East Orange, Irvington, Trenton.	Newark, East Orange, Irving contact - info@greaternewarkhcc.org or Phone: 973-322-0361 Trenton contact - Jessica Burnett at jburnett@trentonhealthteam.org



211 - a social service with the direct ability to search for resources or call or chat directly for assistance.	Anywhere in New Jersey	Go to the website to browse, or call 2-1-1.
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Additional Resources

- **COVID-19** - Given the increased importance of access to internet and/or phone services during COVID-19, highlighted below are specific resources, discounts, and opportunities available in order to stay engaged in treatment.

Employment	The State of New Jersey has developed a centralized resource for available job opportunities in front-line industries serving New Jerseyans during the outbreak.
Amazon Prime	For SNAP/Medicaid recipients: Amazon Prime is \$5.99 monthly (instead of \$12.99 monthly) if you verify your Medicaid/EBT card after the free intro period. Also, recipients will receive free shipping and access to free streaming of shows, movies, free reading materials, and more.
Comcast	Internet Essentials will increase speeds from 15/2 Mbps to 25/3 Mbps for all customers. This speed increase will happen automatically – no action is required by customers. In addition, new customers will receive two months of free service.
Spectrum	Spectrum is offering free internet for 60 days to households with K-12 or college students who don't already have a Spectrum subscription.
Sprint	Participating in the FCC pledge . Sprint is providing unlimited data to existing customers. Starting Tuesday, 3/17/2020, Sprint will allow all handsets to enable hot spots for 60 days at no extra charge.
T-Mobile	Participating in the FCC pledge . T-Mobile is providing unlimited data to existing customers. Coming soon: all handsets will be able to enable hot-spots for 60 days at no extra charge.
AT&T	AT&T will offer open hot-spots, unlimited data to existing customers, and \$10/month plans to low-income families.

- Training - send your Navigators to the OBAT Navigator training focused on building trusting relationships with complex patients, patient-centered care-planning, and identifying social service partners.
- Other toolkits for setting up SDOH screening and referrals:
 - <https://www.aafp.org/patient-care/social-determinants-of-health/everyone-project/eop-tools.html>
 - <https://www.nationalcomplex.care/tag/social-correlates/>