



## Long COVID, Health Equity & Policy

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# Disproportionate impacts

- Inequities before COVID
  - + greater exposure to COVID
  - + less access to COVID prevention, treatment
  - + more underlying conditions***may = more long COVID***
  - BIPOC communities, immigrants, LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, rural and low-income areas
- Other challenges: layers of “isms” and stigma, historical trauma/mistrust, less access to leave and accommodations, misinformation, messaging

# Important signals & policy implications

- Findings & challenges
  - Prevalent in working- & caregiving-age adults
  - Stigma & politicization
  - Lack of awareness
  - Limitations to daily activity, new disability for some
  - Few formal diagnoses
- Calls for comprehensive supports & services
  - Care coordination, case management
  - Wrap-around services, support beyond the clinical encounter
  - Workplace accommodations, disability benefits

# MDH Long COVID Program Goals

- **Understand who is most impacted** by long COVID and related conditions
  - Health, disability status, employment, school, quality of life, service needs, financial & economic
- **Inform health professionals and the public** about risks, outcomes, evolving guidance
  - Target tailored information and resources to people/communities most impacted
  - Provide sector-specific education and resources
- **Increase access** to quality care and support
  - Promote evidence-informed practices around prevention and management of long COVID and related conditions
  - Consider policy levers to enable access
- **Build and sustain partnerships** to maximize outcomes
  - Assure timely and equitable design, implementation, and sharing of knowledge, programs, and resources

# *Health Equity Lens*

## **Partnerships & Engagement**

Grantee Network, Community Voices partners & contractors, health care providers & systems, patients & caregivers, ADA Minnesota/CILs, State agencies, local, state, national public health

### **Understanding Impacts of Long COVID**

- Surveys & assessments
- Analyzing existing claims & EHR data
- Overlap with other chronic diseases, mental health, & post-infectious conditions

### **Engaging Health Systems**

- Guiding Council/learning network around emerging evidence & practice
- Workgroups: screening questions, documentation for return-to-work requests, evidence briefs, ECHO
- Focus on healthcare “gatekeepers,” implementation

### **Education & Resources**

- Awareness campaigns, website, graphics, videos
- Sector-specific presentations & resources (workplaces, schools)
- Culturally-relevant messaging, trusted messengers; community-specific support groups