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THE COMMON HEALTH COALITION ANNOUNCES THE 2026 COMMON HEALTH CHALLENGE: CATALYZING AND GROWING REGIONAL ACTION NETWORKS

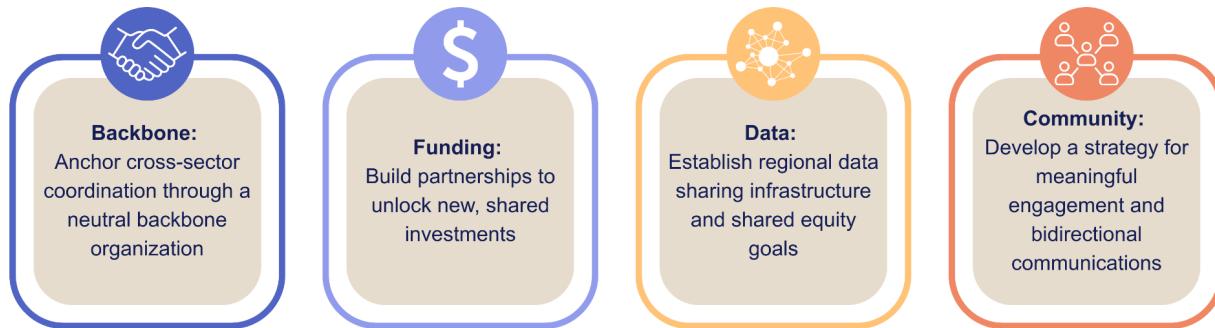
\$500,000 to be awarded to vanguard organizations through the Catalyst Awards

New York, NY — The [Common Health Coalition](#) today unveiled the [2026 Common Health Challenge](#), focusing on catalyzing and growing **Regional Action Networks**. These networks will consist of health care and public health organizations working across geographic borders—crossing multiple counties or states—to best respond to emerging health needs, improving outcomes for patients and communities. The 2026 Challenge aims to advance, strengthen, and scale regional networks built on strong health care–public health partnerships and adapted from proven models.

“Regional Action Networks have immense potential to reshape how our nation’s public health and health care systems partner for the benefit of everyday people,” said **Dr. Dave A. Chokshi, Chair of the Common Health Coalition**. “Ultimately, the rubber meets the road at the state and local levels. Health threats don’t respect borders. Regional coordination is about shared purpose, shared resources, and shared accountability.”

“We’ve seen so much creativity from our members on the ground who are forming action networks across borders, and through the Challenge, we’re looking to uplift that work, help scale it, and empower the formation of more networks around the country,” said **Chelsea Cipriano, Managing Director of the Common Health Coalition**. “This isn’t just about meeting the moment, but about creating sustainable and resilient collaborations that can enable public health and health care organizations to move faster and be more responsive to people’s needs.”

Through the 2026 Challenge, Regional Action Networks will advance four key pillars:



The Coalition will grant at least \$500,000 in Catalyst Awards to vanguard organizations to help them start, expand, or scale this work. Particular priority will be given to seeding and uplifting Regional Action Networks in parts of the country where such collaborations are not yet formalized.

“Improving health means looking beyond the clinic walls—and beyond traditional care,” said **Dr. Bechara Choucair, Executive Vice President and Chief Health Officer at Kaiser Permanente**. “Regional Action Networks show what’s possible when health care and public health work together. By investing in shared resources, we’re preventing problems, building resilience, and strengthening systems to respond effectively to crises.”

“Resilient public health systems aren’t built by any one sector alone,” said **Dr. Judy Monroe, President and CEO of the CDC Foundation**. “These networks can serve as the connective tissue between health care, public health, philanthropy, and communities, ensuring that partnerships are already in place, data can move faster and all groups can collectively act with speed and confidence when it matters most.”

“Health doesn’t improve by accident, it improves when leaders across sectors join together and commit to concrete and strategic action around shared priorities,” said **Dr. Mandy Cohen, National Advisor at Manatt Health and former CDC Director**. “Regional Action Networks create a practical way to hold ourselves accountable across sectors, continuously learn from what’s working, and apply those lessons to improve health day in and day out, not just during emergencies.”

“As we’ve seen time and time again, so many of the health challenges we face don’t stop at state or county lines,” said **Dr. Susan Kansagra, Chief Medical Officer at the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO)**. “State and territorial health leaders are strongest when they’re learning from and coordinating with one another. Regional Action Networks can help public health and health care leaders work across borders by improving coordination and ensuring that strategies and resources are better aligned across jurisdictions.”

“At the Institute for Public Health Innovation (IPHI), we believe lasting impact comes from working shoulder-to-shoulder with partners who are committed to collaboration and equity,” said **Michael Rhein, President and CEO of IPHI**. “We’re excited to work with and support the Common Health Coalition’s efforts to strengthen Regional Action Networks and bring these models to more communities across the country.”

“Many of today’s pressing health challenges—from infectious disease and toxic threats to drug shortages—involve multiple states and counties and require coordinated responses,” said **Dr. Joshua Sharfstein, Vice Dean for Public Health Practice and Community Engagement at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health**. “Regional Action Networks allow public officials, health care leaders, public health officials and others to develop effective responses together.”

More information about how the 2026 Challenge will be available in the coming weeks, including a forthcoming [webinar](#) scheduled for **January 7, 2026 at 1PM ET** on the Catalyst Awards opportunity hosted by the [Institute for Public Health Innovation](#), the Coalition’s partner in implementing and advancing the annual Challenge.

About the Common Health Challenge

The annual Common Health Challenge is designed to elevate and advance timely, actionable, and scalable solutions that strengthen collaborations between public health and health care systems. The Challenge consists of grant funding via the Catalyst Awards for vanguard organizations, the creation of a community of practice to elevate and learn from existing efforts, and a call to action for all members to advance activities aligned with the Challenge’s focus area within their own communities.

The [2025 Challenge](#) advanced the model of integrating Community Health Workers (CHWs) as trusted professionals who serve as bridges between public health and health care organizations to better meet community needs. Through the 2025 Challenge, 11 vanguard CHW initiatives around the country were awarded more than \$400,000 to support their respective locally-based initiatives. The Community of Practice will continue, and the 2026 Challenge will include a continued focus on the essential role of CHWs.

About The Common Health Coalition

The Common Health Coalition is a first-of-its-kind collaboration spanning clinician groups, health departments, hospitals, payers, and community organizations. By uniting leaders who rarely share the same table, we turn alignment into action at a scale no single sector can reach, and transform relationships into results for people and communities.

Founded in 2023 by the Alliance of Community Health Plans, AHIP, American Hospital Association, American Medical Association, and Kaiser Permanente, the Coalition now represents more than 300 members across 45 states and territories. Learn more by visiting [commonhealthcoalition.org](#) and follow on [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#).

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