

Business Attraction Strategies and Michigan's Recovery

Citizens Research Council of Michigan

August 6, 2026

Social Determinants of Health Report

- Published in November 2025
- Origins:
 - Health of Michigan residents, slow population growth
 - Interest in “social determinants of health” and contextualizing those health outcomes
- Provide grounding for policymakers, stakeholders, and public in **how public health is more than “health policy”**

Health Outcomes in Michigan

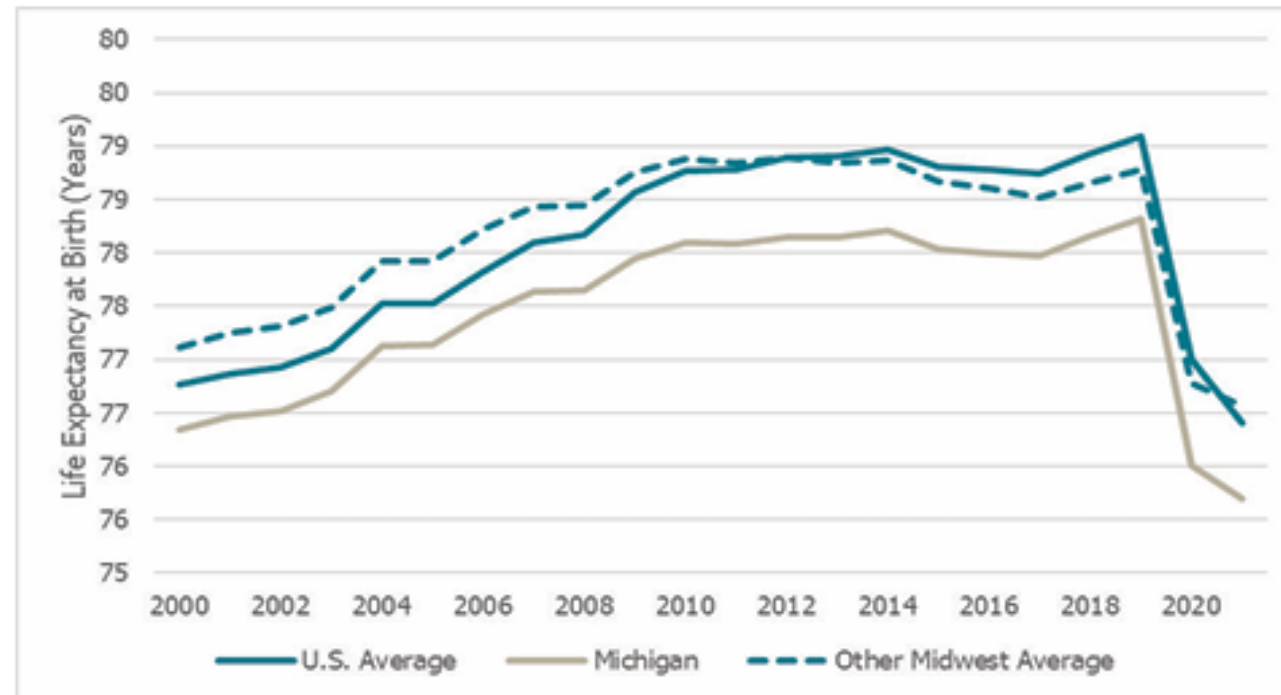
Health Outcomes in Michigan

- No single measure of health outcomes, but some key metrics:
 - Life expectancy at birth
 - Premature death
 - Infant mortality
 - Self-reported health status
 - Poor physical and mental health days
 - Prevalence for specific health conditions
- The news for Michigan – in general and as it relates to vulnerable populations – **is not encouraging.**

Health Outcomes in Michigan

Chart 2

Life Expectancy at Birth, Michigan, Other Midwest States, and U.S. Average, 2000-2021

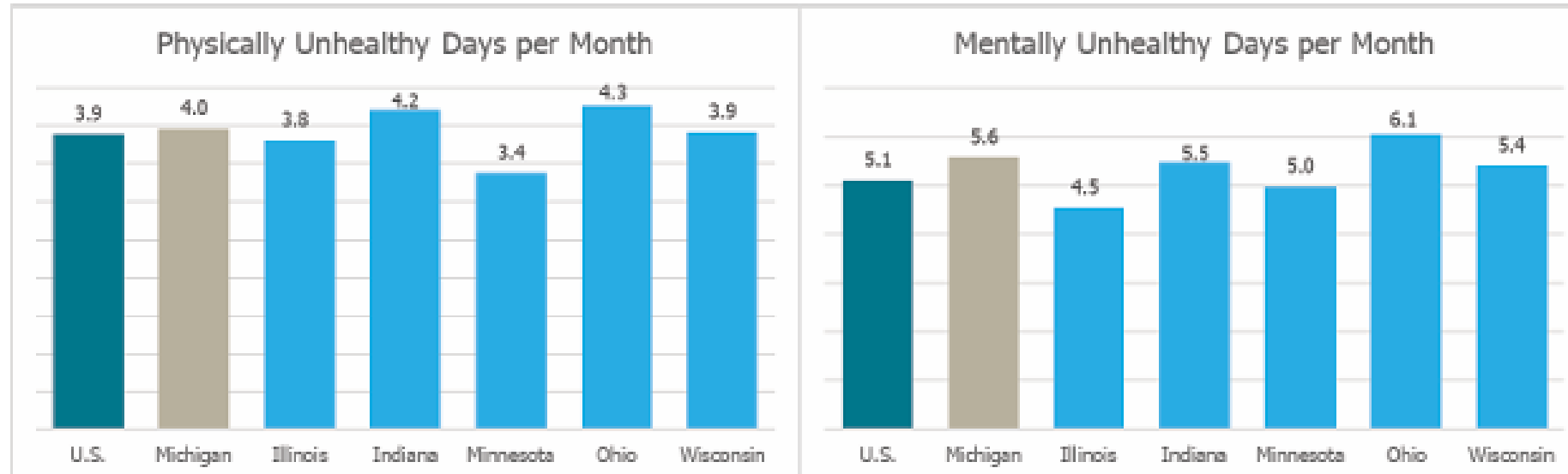


Source: "U.S. State Life Tables, 2020 and 2021." National Vital Statistics Report; Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, Global Health Data Exchange.¹⁷

Health Outcomes in Michigan

Chart 9

Average Number of Poor Physical and Mental Health Days per Month, Selected States, 2022

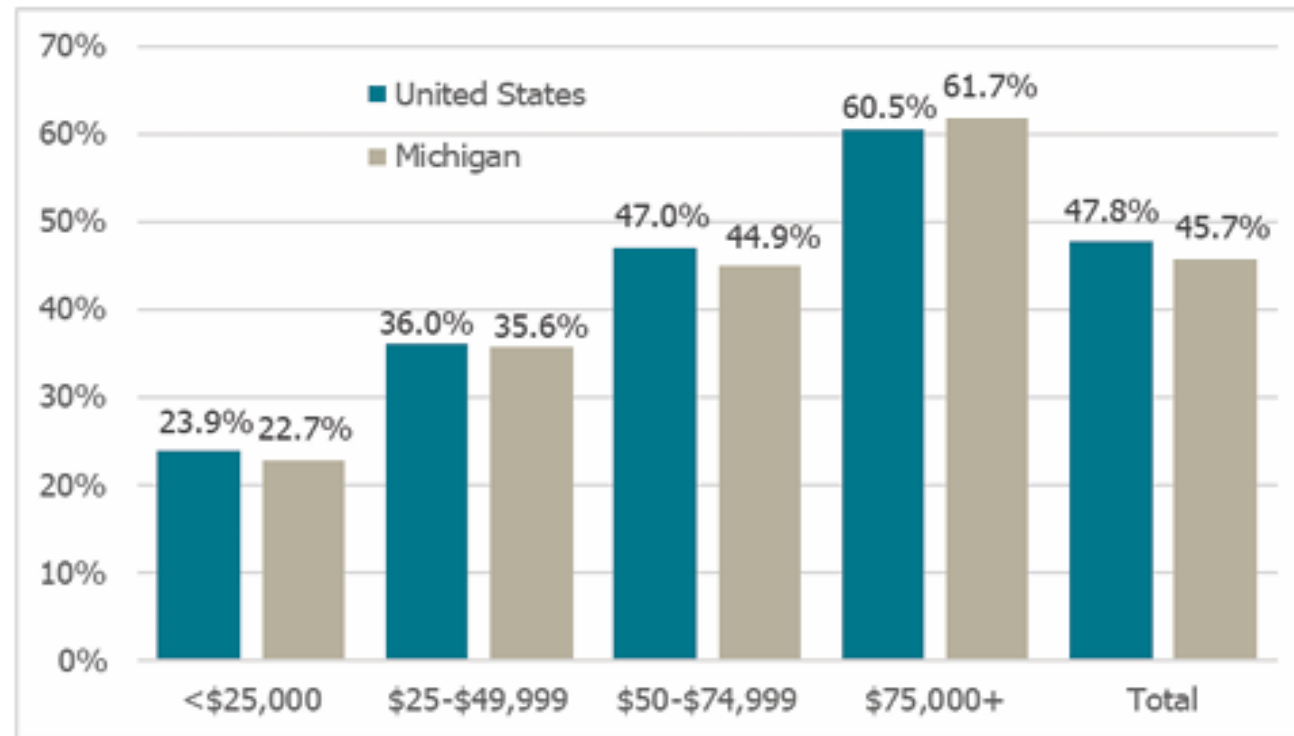


Source: County Health Rankings, 2025 Report.⁴³

Health Outcomes in Michigan

Chart 8

Self-Reported Good or Excellent Health by Income, U.S. and Michigan, 2023

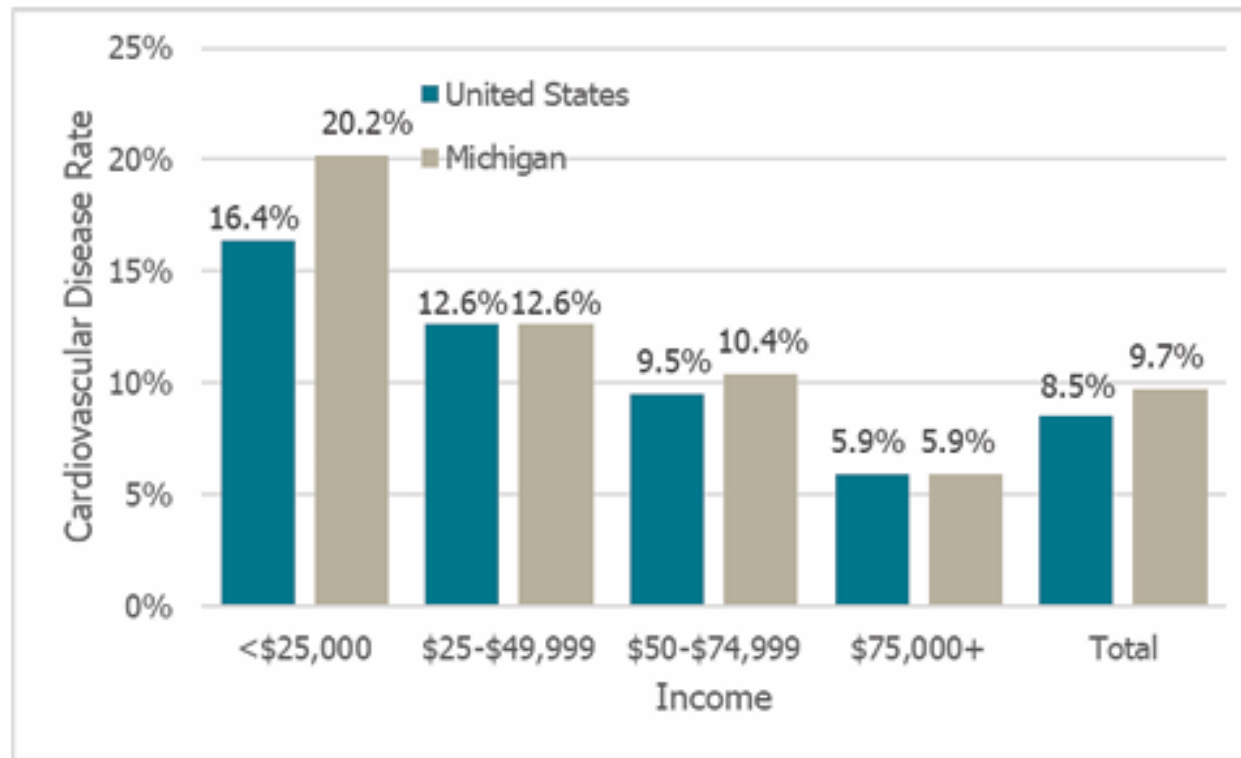


Source: "High Health Status Trends." America's Health Rankings. ⁴¹

Health Outcomes in Michigan

Chart 13

Rate of Cardiovascular Disease, By Income, Michigan and U.S., 2023

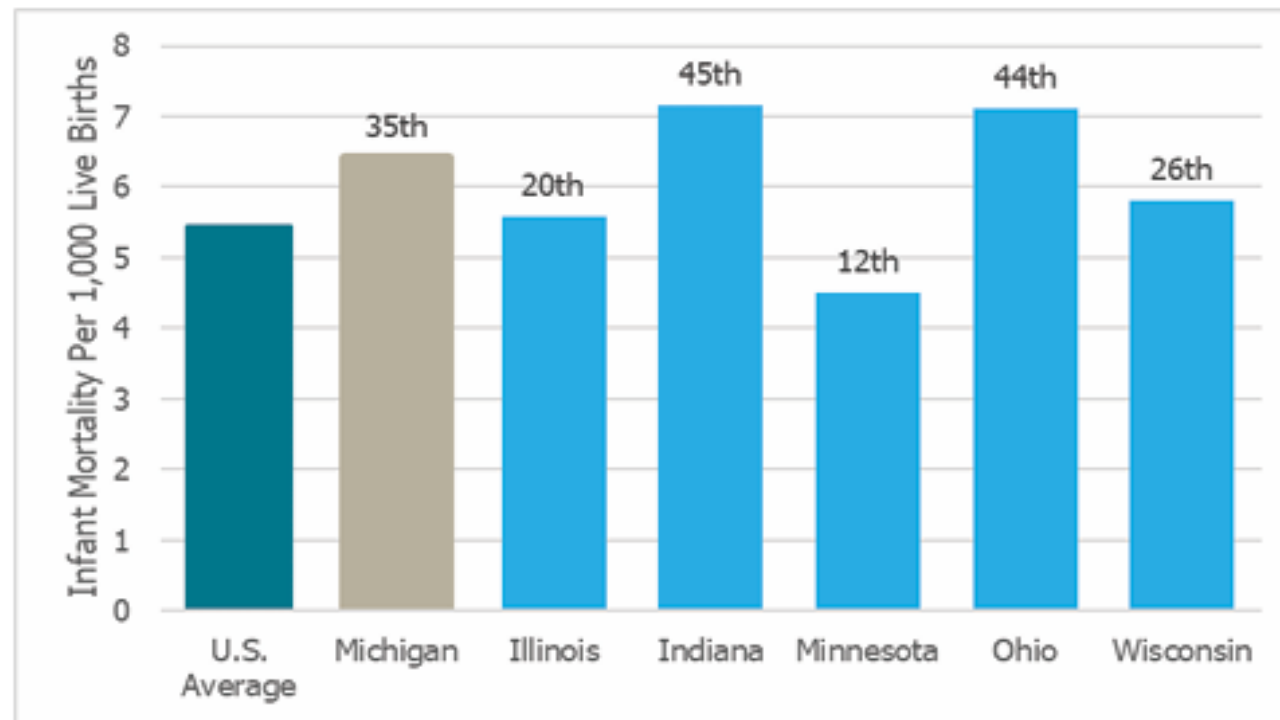


Source: "Cardiovascular Disease." America's Health Rankings. ⁵⁴

Health Outcomes in Michigan

Chart 5

Infant Mortality Rate Per 100,000 Live Births, Selected States, 2022

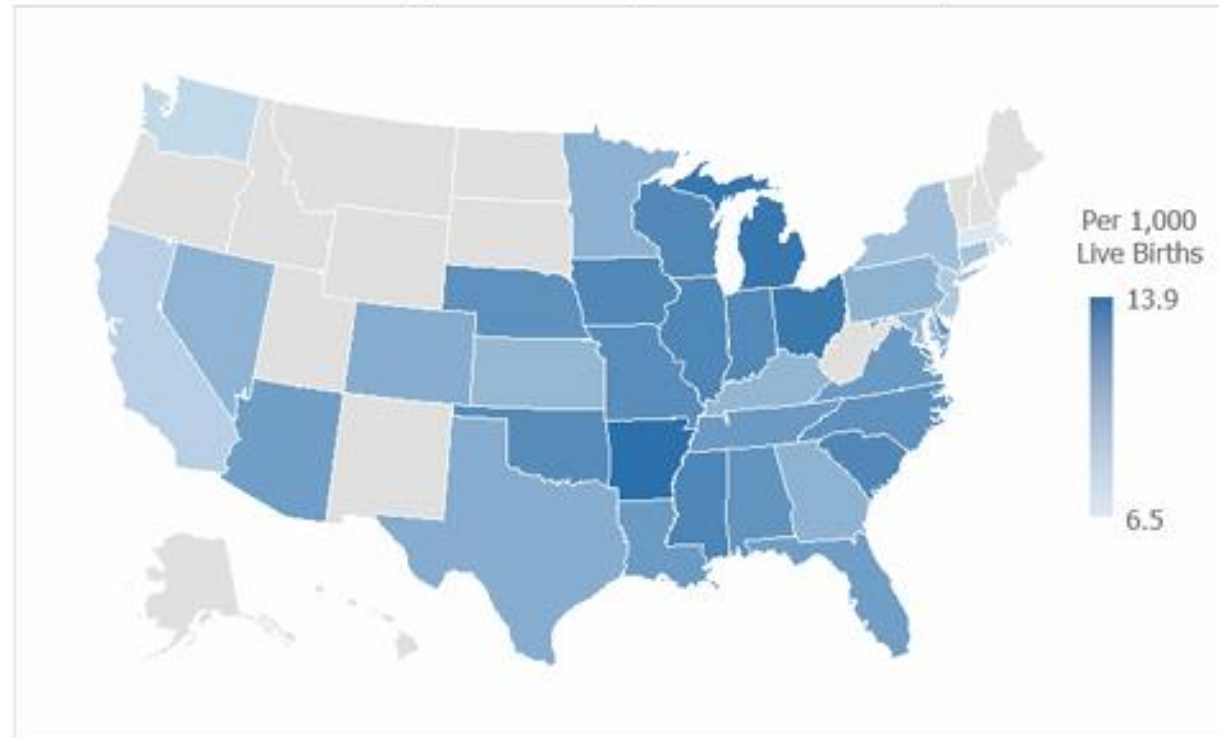


Source: "Infant Mortality Rates by State, 2022." National Center for Health Statistics.³¹

Health Outcomes in Michigan

Map 3

Black Infant Mortality Rate Per 1,000 Live Births, 2021-2022



Source: "Infant Mortality Trends by Race/Ethnicity." America's Health Rankings.³⁴

Health Outcomes in Michigan

- The health outcome data from Michigan and the entire country leads to **three key insights**:
 - Michigan has below average health outcomes relative to the national average, and the national average is typically below average among international counterparts.
 - Health outcomes nationwide and in Michigan are worse for certain races, people with lower levels of education, and people with lower incomes. There is also variation by sex in some measures.
 - The racial disparities in Michigan are larger than the national average, particularly for the Black population.

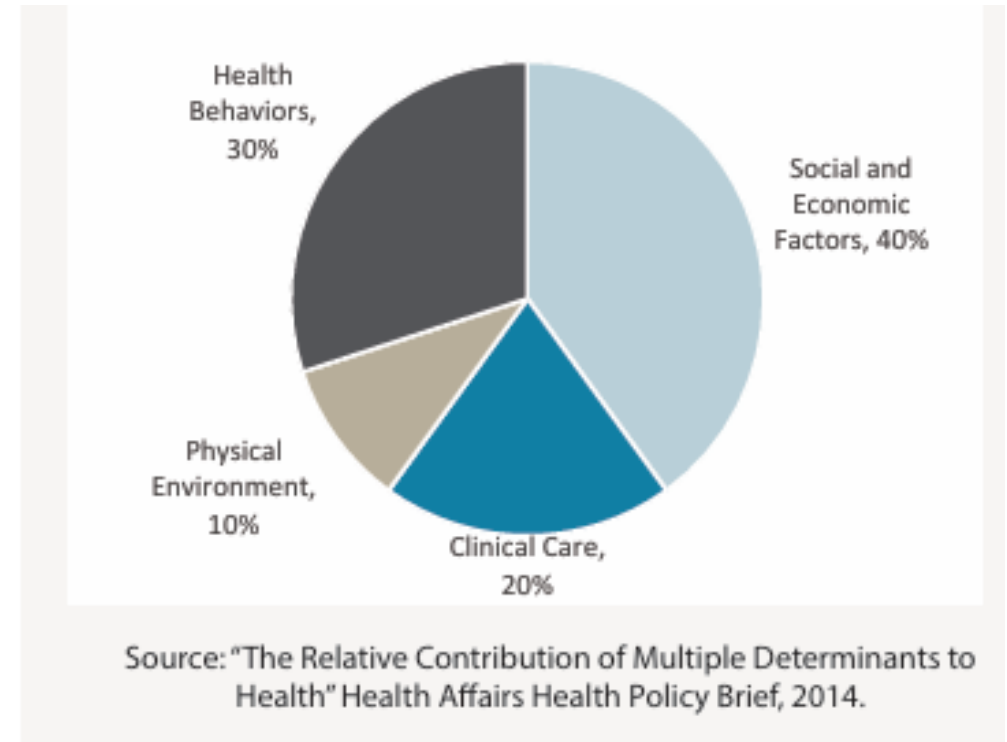
Health Outcomes in Michigan

- What does Michigan need to do to be *at least in line with the national average* in overall health and in terms of health disparities?
- What can Michigan do to become a *leader* in public health and health equity?

Social Determinants of Health

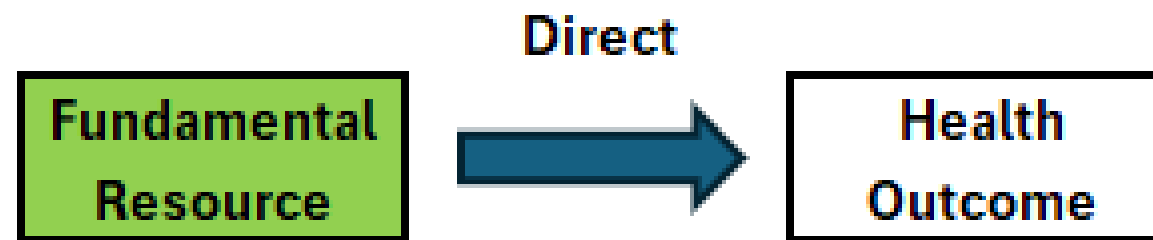
Social Determinants of Health

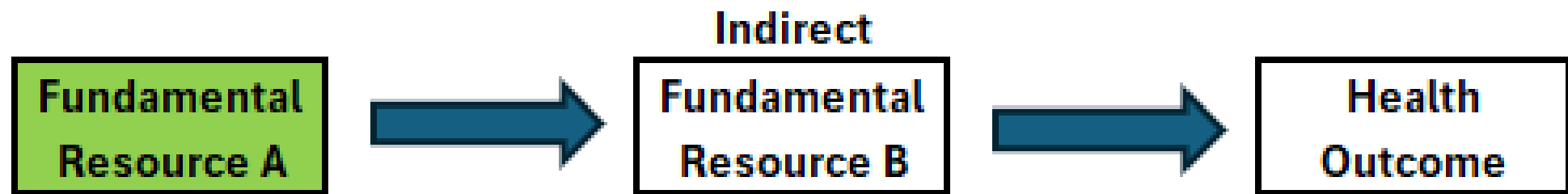
- What are they?
 - SDOH is an umbrella term for the **social, cultural, environmental, financial, and political factors** that influence a person's health.
- Why are they important?
 - SDOH recognizes that there are systemic and structural factors that can unequally or unfairly limit a person's range of options.
 - Shift in focus – less about individual control and health behaviors.



SDOH – Fundamental Resources

- We conceptualize SDOH as parts of the causal pathway that creates poor health and health disparities.
- There are basic elements that are necessary for health, which generally fall under one of five categories (**Fundamental Resources**):
 - Financial Resources
 - Health Care
 - Food and Nutrition
 - Safety
 - Social Support





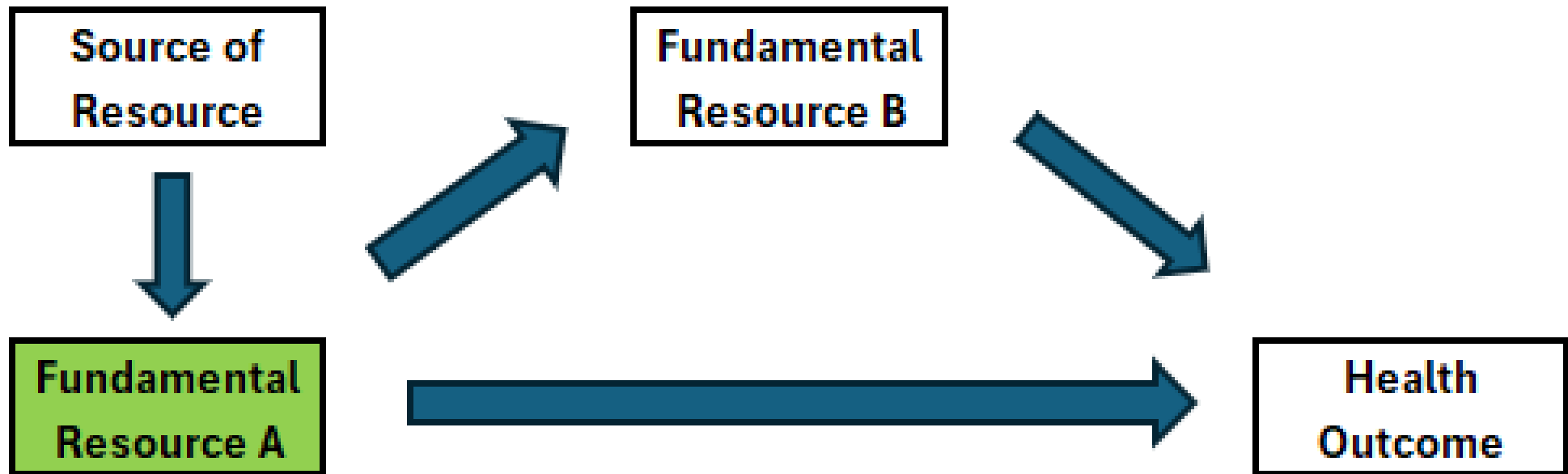
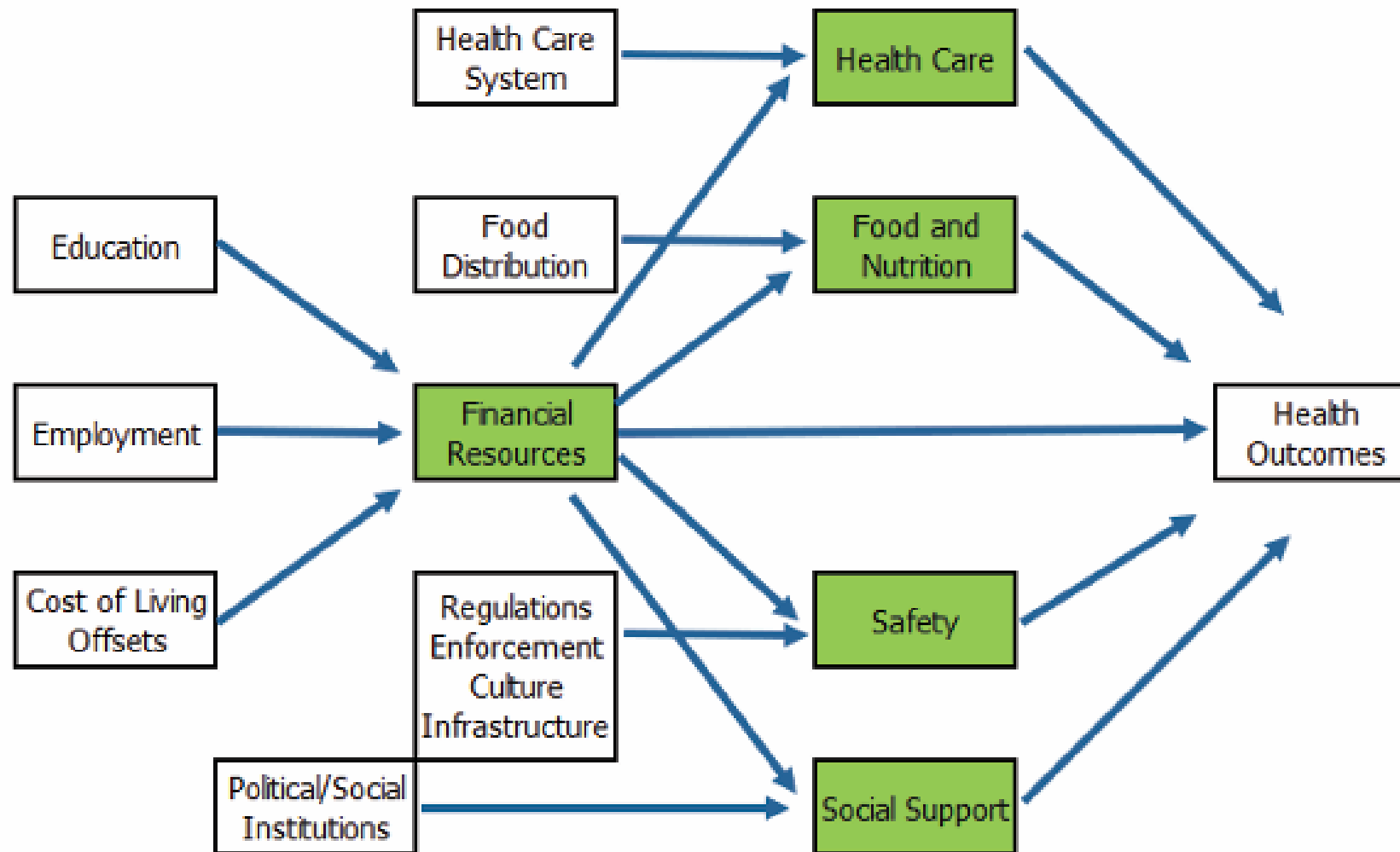


Figure 18
Pathways to Health Outcomes



Analyzing Fundamental Resources

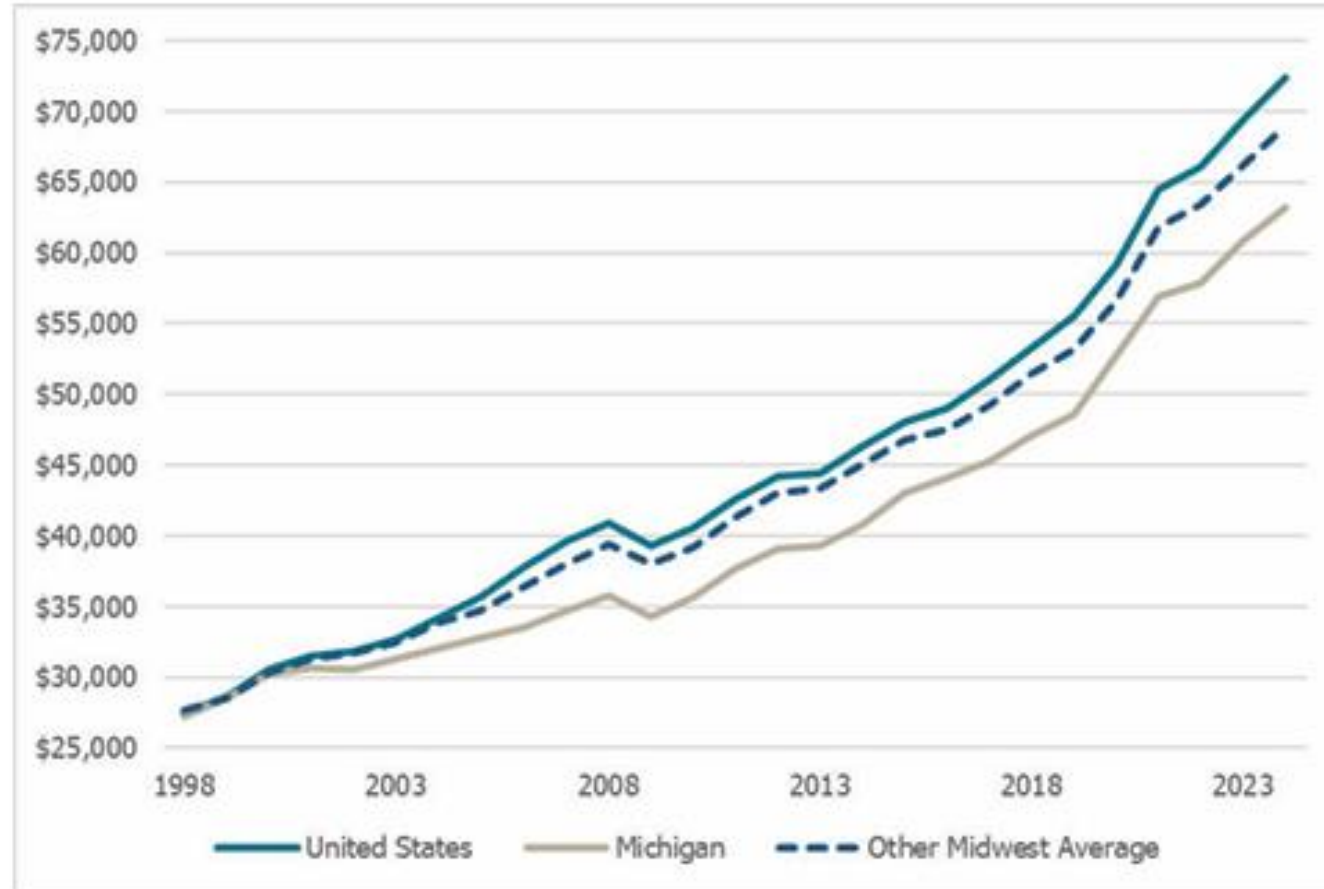
Analyzing Fundamental Resources

- Compare U.S. to other developed countries
- Compare MI to national average and neighboring states
- Analyze disparities across demographic groups

Direct Financial Resources

- While the U.S. is one of the richest countries in the world, **income is more unequally distributed in this country** than elsewhere and there are greater disparities across other demographics.
- Michigan has **below average per capita personal income** relative to the rest of the country, and in some dimensions, particularly gender and race, the **disparities are greater than the national average**.

Chart 15
Per-Capita Personal Income, U.S, Michigan, and Other Midwest
States, 1998 to 2024

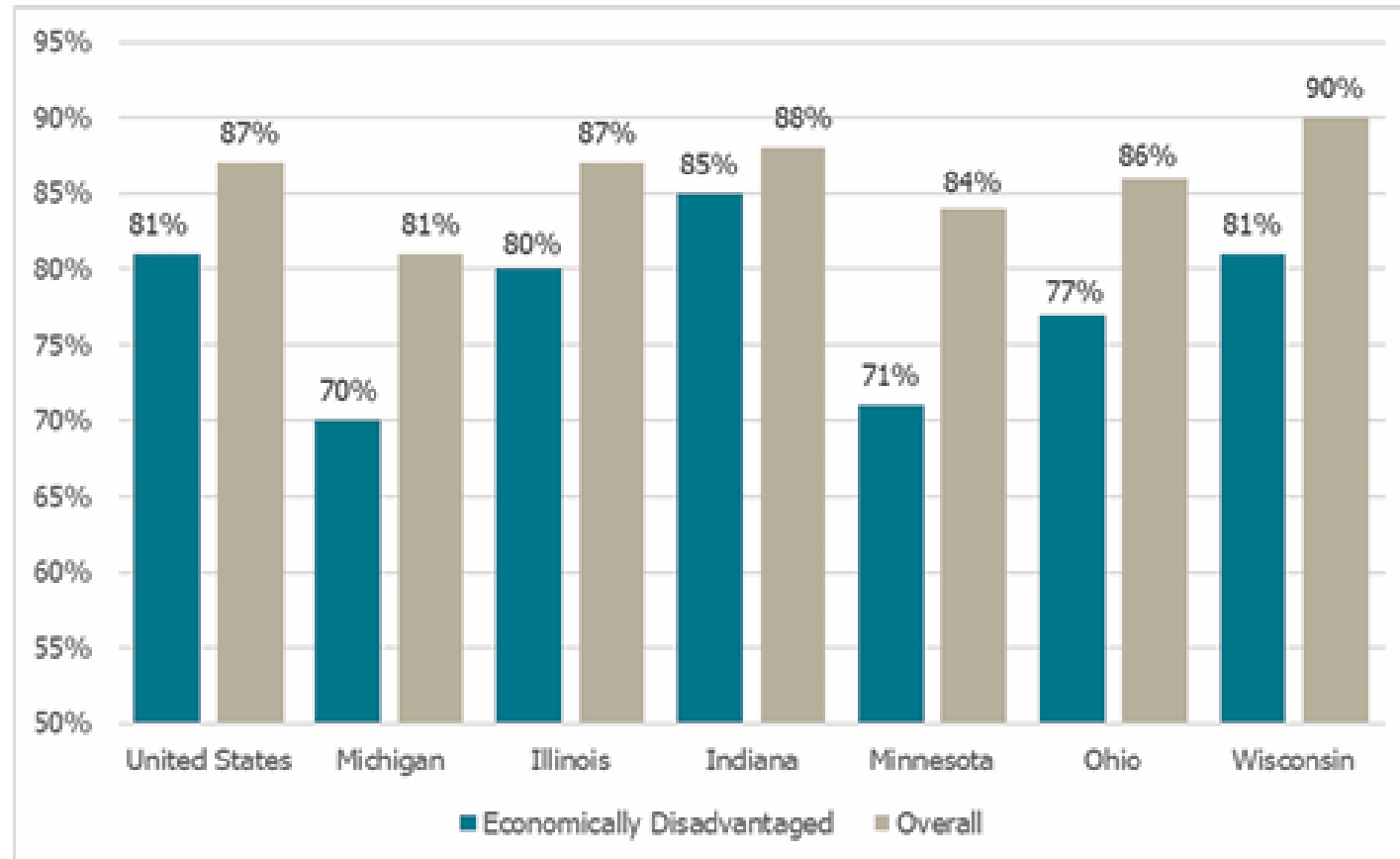


Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Note: Y-axis does not begin at 0 to highlight trends.⁸²

Sources: Education and Employment

- Education:
 - U.S. does better in attainment and performance compared to other developed countries, but disparities exist in Black and Hispanic/Latino residents, and low-income brackets.
 - Michigan **lags behind** the national average in post-secondary educational attainment overall, as well as student performance (primary and secondary).
 - The **disparities for Black students and residents** in Michigan are larger than the national averages, and high school graduation rates in Michigan are **worse for economically disadvantaged students** than the national average.

Chart 17
High School Graduation Rates, All Students vs Economically Disadvantaged Students, 2021-22



Source: National Center for Education Statistics.⁹⁹

Sources: Education and Employment

- Employment:
 - Labor participation rates in the U.S. are relatively typical for a developed country, with gender disparities in line with the rest of the OECD.
 - Within the U.S. women, certain racial minorities, and those with lower levels of education have lower rates of employment.
 - Michigan has a **lower labor participation rate** than the rest of the country.
 - In Michigan, those **without a high school education**, as well as **Black and Hispanic/Latino** residents have **worse employment prospects** in Michigan than their counterparts in other states. Similarly, **millennials** in Michigan are more likely to be unemployed in Michigan than elsewhere.

Making Michigan Healthier

Making Michigan Healthier

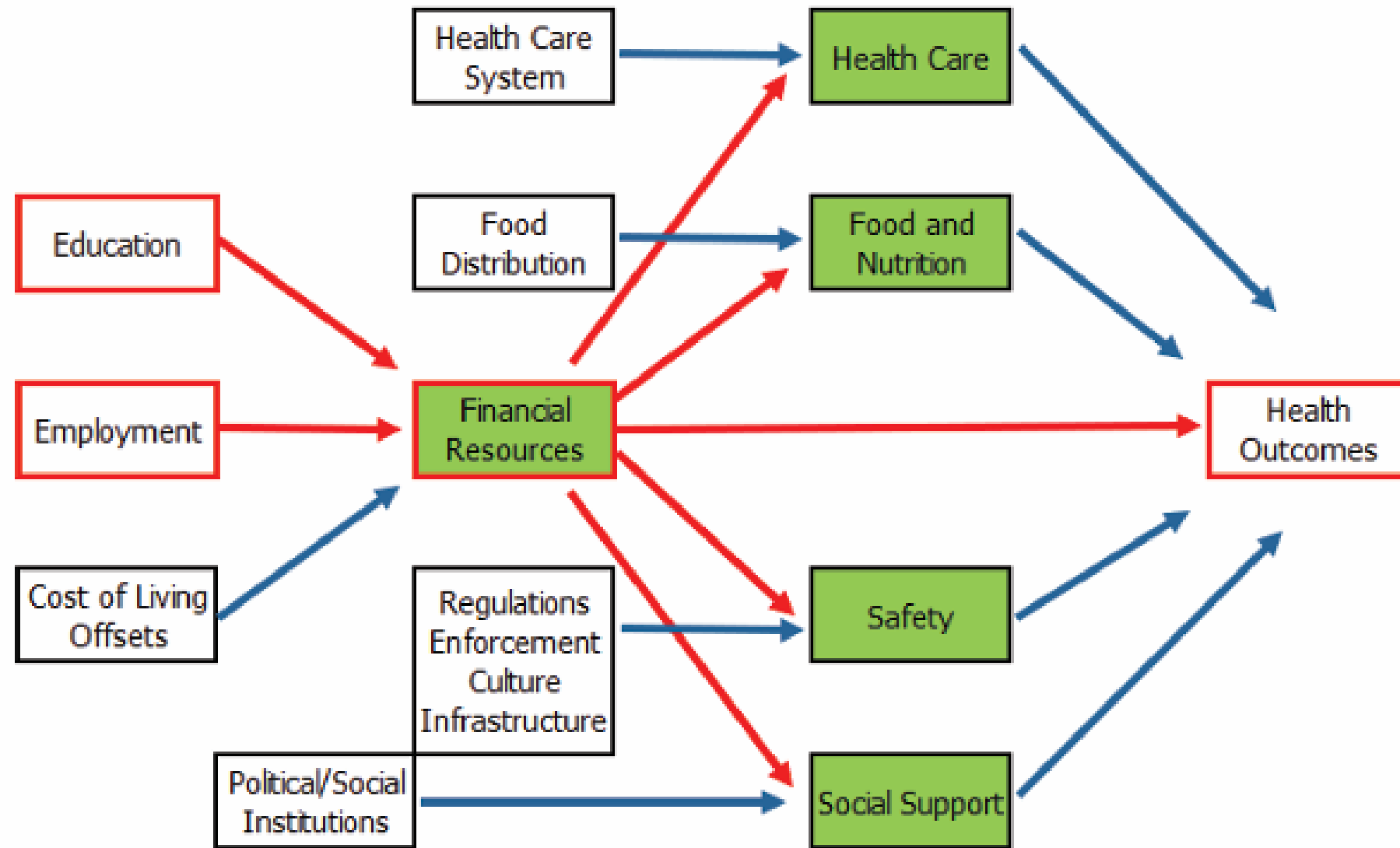
- Two broad themes:
 - *Interconnectedness* of the social determinants of health
 - Centrality of **financial resources** in the story of Michigan's lagging health outcomes.

Centrality of Financial Resources

- The pathways can almost always be traced back to whether or not **an individual has the necessary financial resources.**
- Access to the building blocks for obtaining financial resources (i.e., education and employment) is also **limited for those who do not already have some financial resources** to start with.
- While Michigan is far from perfect across the other fundamental resources, **it is clearly financial resources where the state is failing behind.**

Figure 19

Pathways to Health Outcomes, Highlighting Michigan's Shortcomings

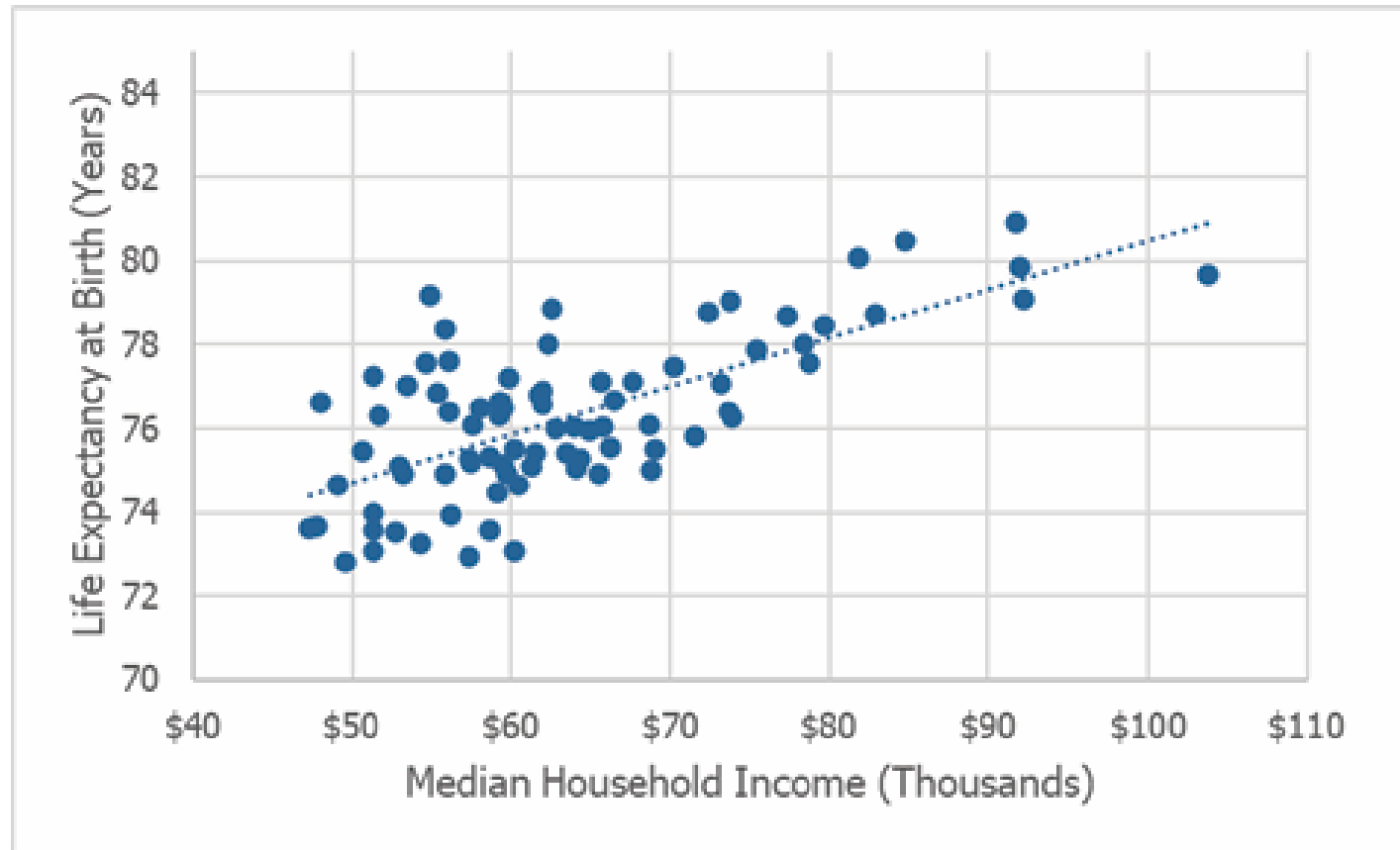


Centrality of Financial Resources

- The relationship between income and health outcomes is clear when comparing Michigan to other states, but it is also **extremely clear when comparing counties** within Michigan to one another.
- A key way to improve health outcomes in Michigan is to **improve education, employment, and income**, particularly for low-income communities, those with lower educational attainment, and racial minorities.

Chart 19

Median Household Income vs Life Expectancy at Birth, Michigan Counties



Source: County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, 2025. Median Household Income is 2023 five-year measure. Life Expectancy at Birth is 2022 three-year measure.

Note: Axes do not begin at 0 to highlight trends.²⁶⁵

Other Levers of Improvement

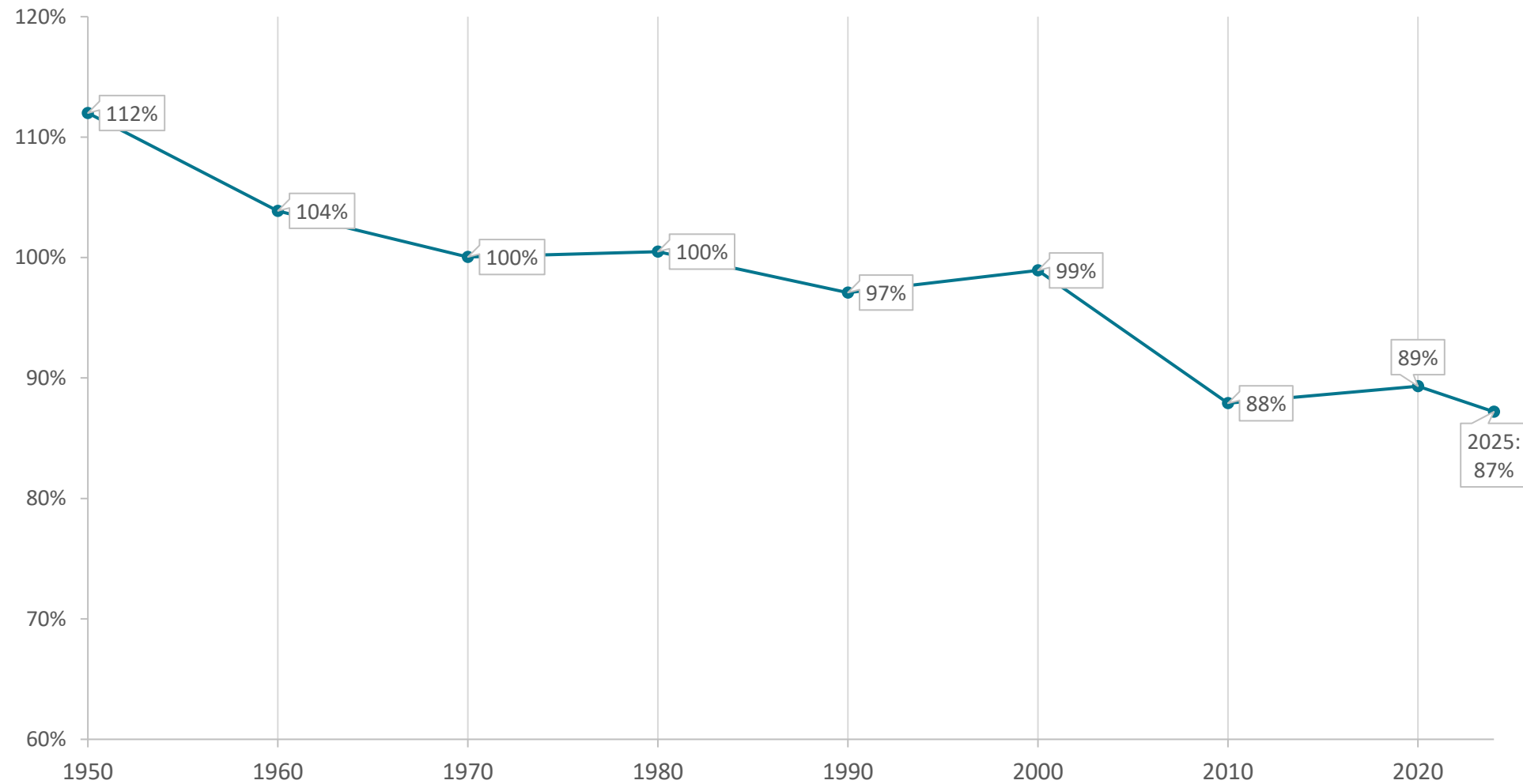
- U.S. Health Care System
- Health Care Workforce
- Transportation Death/Injuries
- Community and Interpersonal Violence
- Air Quality

Making Michigan Healthier

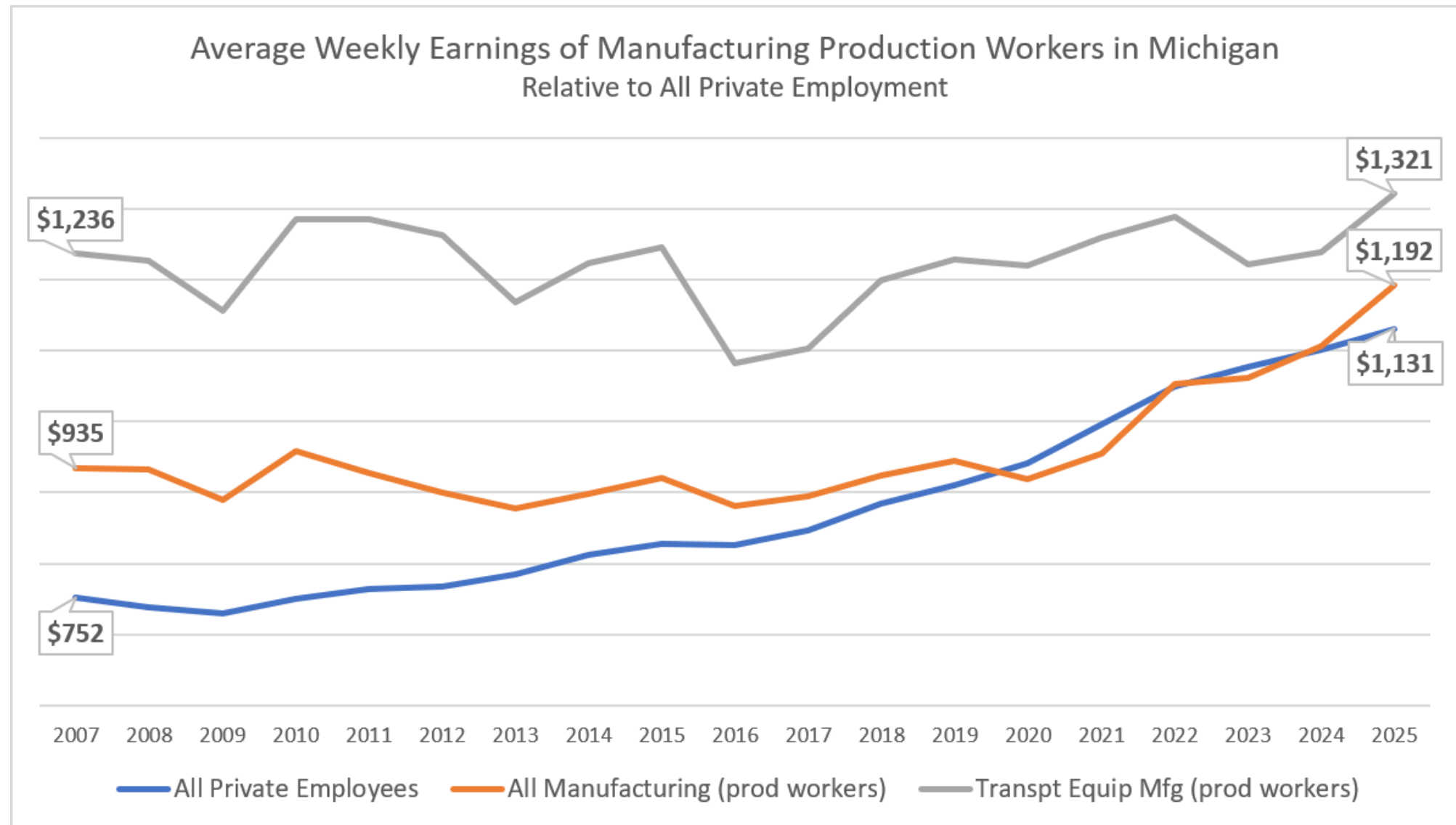
- Michigan needs to focus on **improving financial resources**, both in terms of direct resources (i.e., income) but also the sources of financial resources (i.e., education and employment).
- The key to making the population healthier is a better education system and a more robust, fairer economy.
- The precise policies that take the state from here to there are up for debate, but the **pathways it needs to follow to connect public policy to health outcomes** are clear.

Per Capita Personal Income in Michigan

Percentage of U.S. Level



Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics