



Accurate BP Measurement Practices in the Rural Midwest Grant

Receive up to \$2000* for your efforts to improve accurate measurement of BP

The American Heart Association's mission is to be a *relentless force for a world of longer healthier lives*. For millions of Americans, hypertension is a significant barrier in achieving that reality for themselves. We know too that the burden of high blood pressure is not carried equitably across the population.

Among other health challenges, rural Americans face higher rates of hypertension with CMS identifying uncontrolled hypertension among diabetic patients as one of the biggest disparities between urban and rural populations. We know too that within rural populations, Blacks and others face even higher rates of uncontrolled HBP. The dangers associated with HBP, always relevant when talking about heart, brain, and kidney health, became even more dramatic as we saw underlying conditions exacerbate the impact of COVID-19.

The American Heart Association is committed to both health equity and hypertension control. Together with the **American Medical Association**, we launched Target: BP with the goal of helping health care organizations (HCOs) develop the policies, systems, and practices that have been shown to move the needle on HBP. Using the MAP Framework, Target: BP has provided more than a 1000 HCOs with resources and support while also recognizing their commitment and success.

The "M" in MAP stands for "Measure Accurately." Achieving accurate measurement is the foundation of any diagnosis and treatment of HBP. Improvement can happen in both the clinical setting (where evidence suggests that about 90% of current readings have some degree of error) and by increased utilization of effective, Self-Measured Blood Pressure (SMBP). Specifically, Target: BP has identified six evidence based strategies to improve accurate measurement – and thus sustainable HBP control. In short these are:

- Calibration of existing inventory according to the manufacturer's guidelines
- Increased utilization of validated, automated devices in the clinic
- Standardized staff training on accurate measurement every 6 to 12 months.
- Competency evaluation of staff measurement skills every 6 to 12 months
- Adoption of standard protocols for SMBP (and/or confirmatory readings in the office)
- Placement of positioning poster/educational materials where BP readings are conducted.

We currently have funding to provide support for up to 4 rural (Am I Rural?) health care organizations that share our **commitment to address chronic disease in at-risk populations and that see accurate measurement policies/practices as a key to doing so**.

To apply, complete this brief survey (and submit the required narrative) by September 19th.

Note: As a condition of eligibility and because we are seeking to support and measure sustainable change, HCO's, who have not done so previously, MUST REGISTER for Target: BP by September 19th and commit to making 2023 data submission for the same a priority.

Questions: Contact Tim Nikolai, Sr. Rural Health Director, American Heart Association, Midwest Region.

*As a combination of materials/resources and funding to maximize impact. Exact combination TBD based on needs/priorities.