

**2023-2025**

**Community Health  
Implementation Plan  
Progress Report**

## Executive Summary

Bronson recognized three years was an insufficient period to notice visible improvement in the health of a community. The results of the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) confirmed our belief. The communities Bronson serves remained concerned about health needs that were identified in the previous CHNA, specifically, access to healthcare/health services, food insecurity, and mental/behavioral health. Thus, improving maternal and infant health outcomes remained the priority focus of our Community Health Implementation Plan for 2023 through 2025.

The 2022 CHNA also brought additional health needs that community members felt impacted their health to the forefront; discrimination/racism, violence and crime, and housing. As a result, the 2023-2025 Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP) continued to focus its efforts upstream, acknowledging the root causes of behaviors, death, and disease.

The CHIP remained a step for a systematic approach to use community voice, data, and engagement to understand and address the needs of our mothers, babies, and families.



**Together, We Advance the Health of Our Communities**



# 2023-2025 Community Health Implementation Plan

**Fact: Social, economic, and structural inequities negatively impact health outcomes of families in our communities.**

**PROBLEM:** There are racial/ethnic disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes driven, in part, by inequities in healthcare access (worsened by lack of trust) in healthcare systems. Bronson commits to engage and build trust with family supports to eliminate racial/ethnic disparities among mothers and babies across our region (Van Buren, Kalamazoo, Calhoun).

## Bronson's Priority I

Eliminate racial/ethnic disparities in a family's perinatal experience and clinical outcomes.

### Goals

- ◆ Establish new, and improve on existing, social and demographic data infrastructure and improve SDOH screening collection.
- ◆ Improve patients' connection to community resources by enhancing community engagement.
- ◆ Expand Intercultural Development to improve quality of care.
- ◆ Expand implementation of evidence-based models to improve maternal/infant health (e.g., culturally appropriate birth education, centering pregnancy, community healthcare workers, strong fathers' programs, breast feeding initiatives, nutrition education, and food supports).



## Bronson's Priority II

Eliminate racial/ethnic disparities in our workforce at every level to support families.

### Goals

- ◆ Establish new, and improve on existing, social and demographic data infrastructure.
- ◆ Expand Intercultural Development to improve quality of care.
- ◆ Create and promote internal opportunities that allow employees to thrive (e.g., career pathways, support for home ownership, connection to resources, etc.).
- ◆ Review and revise organizational policies and practices using an equity lens to support the health and wellbeing of employees.

\*BHG Board Community Health Committee Approved April 2023. Scope of initiatives may shift pending available resources in 2024.



# **PRIORITY I**

Eliminate racial/ethnic disparities in a family's perinatal experience and clinical outcomes.

# PRIORITY I

## **Goal 1**

Establish new, and improve on existing, social and demographic data infrastructure and improve SDOH screening collection.

## **Goal 2**

Improve patients' connection to community resources by enhancing community engagement.

## **Goal 3**

Expand Intercultural Development to improve quality of care.

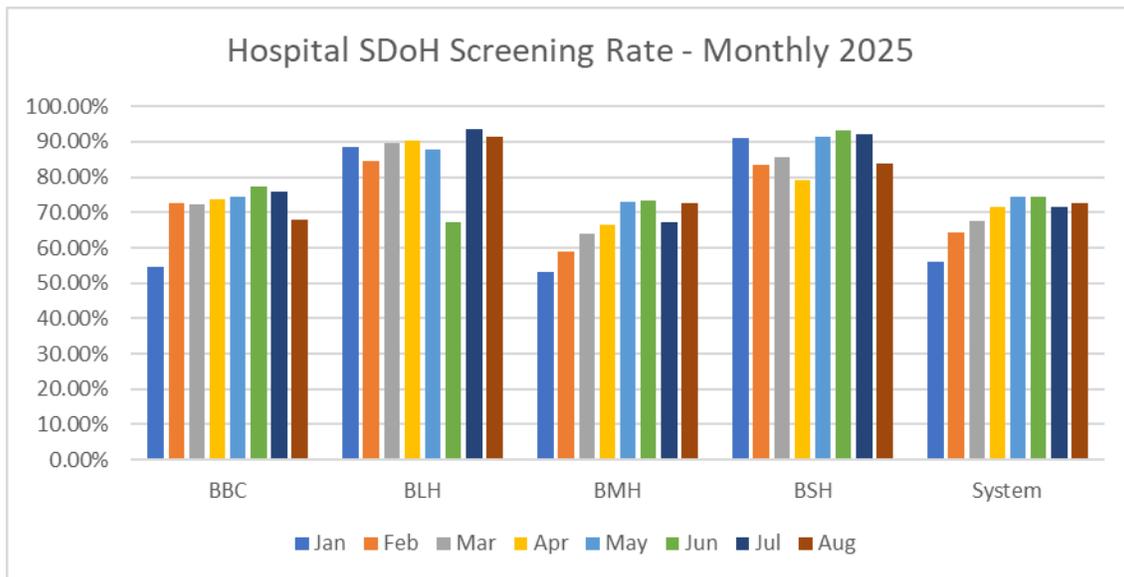
## **Goal 4**

Expand implementation of evidence-based models to improve maternal/infant health (e.g., culturally appropriate birth education, nutrition, etc.).

# Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) Screening

## Progress Highlights

- Started screening all patients age 18+ at all Bronson care locations.
  - Before January 2024, screenings were only done in primary care.
  - Now, over **70%** of patients are being screened across the system.



- Increased screening for OB (pregnancy) patients:
  - **Battle Creek:** Over **90%** screening rate
  - **Kalamazoo:** Over **60%** screening rate
- Added **324 new community programs** to Bronson's *findhelp* directory since January 2025.
- The **System SDoH Optimization Committee** is working to expand screening and improve access to social support across Bronson and the communities we serve.

## Barriers

- Patients are sometimes asked the same questions more than once, which can be frustrating.
- It's hard to coordinate between different groups to make sure people get the help they need.
- Federal regulations for how we screen keep changing, which slows down improvements.

## Connecting Patients to Resources

Bronson has invested in its capacity to connect patients to community-based organizations through its [communityresources.bronsonhealth.com](http://communityresources.bronsonhealth.com) website and platform powered by Findhelp. Findhelp.org is a nationwide database and interface connecting individuals to free or low-cost social services like food, housing, and job training. Through Bronson Health's Community Resources portal, users in Southwest Michigan can easily search by ZIP code to access local support tailored to their needs. Additionally, Bronson's support teams can make referrals for their patients to these organizations after screening them for social needs.

### Progress Highlights

- Many of Bronson's most utilized community partners have adopted the Findhelp platform and claimed their listings giving them the ability to verify services. These include Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes, YWCA of Greater Kalamazoo, and Cradle Kalamazoo.



# Community Health Education Partnerships

## Progress Highlights

Improving the health of the communities we serve.

Using data from past and recent Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNA), and qualitative and quantitative information provided by past program participants, Bronson's Community Health Education team, a part of the Community Health Advancement Department, planned and provided a variety of community health education programs, initiatives, and engagement opportunities.

Delivery methods included both virtual and in-person education, family and community engagement activities, partnerships and coalition building, and policy, systems, and environmental change approaches.

For the 2023-2025 Community Health Implementation Plan (CHIP) cycle, the Community Health Education (CHE) team engaged in a total of 23 collaborations across Van Buren, Kalamazoo, and Calhoun Counties.

### ***Van Buren County***



**Parent Café set up and ready to welcome parents to foster connection and well-being.**

#### **Community Resiliency Model and Parent Cafes**

The team delivered a variety of free, mental health support classes including the evidence-based Community Resiliency Model™ and Parent Cafés through meaningful collaborations with local organizations. These initiatives were designed to strengthen community connections and to promote both individual and family health and well-being. During these presentations, participants had opportunities to gain practical tools for managing their stress, building their emotional resilience, and how to access supportive networks that support overall health.

### **Van Buren Senior Center Cooking Club**

These healthy cooking classes offer ideas on how to eat healthy in a quick, convenient, low-cost manner that is appropriate for all ages. Participants receive information and education around a certain health topic, and then they watch and partake in a food demonstration. They get to bring the healthy recipes home so they can recreate the dish after class. Each class included opportunities for participants to chat, share aloud, and play games to learn more about the foods we talked about in each class. These classes not only provided nutrition and health education to attendees but also allowed them to meet and converse with one another, resulting in stronger social connection.



## ***Kalamazoo County***

### **Food security – American Heart Association Grant**



**Refrigerator purchased with AHA funding full of fruit and vegetables at a pantry in Kalamazoo.**

### **Food Pantry Partnership**

Through grant funds provided by the American Heart Association, Bronson Community Health was able to partner with 12 food pantries with 9 of these pantries being in Kalamazoo. The goal of this pantry initiative was to 1.) improve and increase access to healthy foods and 2.) provide nutrition education to pantry clients. The initiative was successful in purchasing cold storage units for food pantries, providing nutrition education on food safety, stretching food dollars, shelf-stable pantry choices and eating seasonally. Nutrition education materials were translated and printed in English, Spanish and Arabic



Kitchen kits with basic kitchen

### Pantry Kitchen Kits

Through grant funds provided by the American Heart Association, Bronson Community Health partnered with Kalamazoo Loaves & Fishes to provide “kitchen kits” to newcomers to the Kalamazoo area including recent arrivals and refugees. This initiative was successful in offering 75 kits that included pantry food staples, basic kitchen equipment, nutrition education, and culturally relevant food items.

## **Calhoun County**

### **Nutrition & Wellness Pop-Ups**

This initiative started in 2024 with Bronson’s Community Health Advancement Department, Sprout Battle Creek and WMed residents and has continued in 2025 to support food security and wellness. This bi-monthly event provides free local fruits and vegetables, nutrition education, recipe tastings, blood pressure and blood sugar screenings. Sixty percent of participants say that this program has had a positive impact on their health and fifty-five percent report their energy levels have increased.



Participants in line for fresh fruits and vegetables – all grown in Michigan.



**Representatives of Bronson's Community Health Advancement team and Trinity Neighborhood Center in the newly created food pantry.**

### **Food Security – AHA**

With grant funding from the American Heart Association, the Community Health Advancement team collaborated with Trinity Neighborhood Center to start a food pantry in their center. The Executive Director at the time had a goal of having a pantry in the center for a few years so this was a well-timed partnership. The neighborhood center had become a hub for well-being with a community garden, free clothing shop, parent support groups and more – plus a hub for physical activity with senior exercise classes too!

### **Barriers**

- The biggest barrier for CRM, Parent Cafes, and the Senior Cooking Club continues to be encouraging attendance at in-person events post-Covid 19 pandemic. Numbers have varied greatly between events and classes.
- The biggest barrier for the AHA and Nutrition & Wellness Pop-Up initiatives is the sustainability of the programs. These programs are dependent upon grant funding which may lead to instability in the program and uncertainty among the partnerships and the participants.

# Language Access Services

## Progress Highlights

Language Access Services supports effective communication for patients and families with limited English proficiency (LEP) or who prefer a language other than English for their healthcare in the Bronson system.

The course, Language Access Services, previously called "Language Services" became a Minimum Working Requirement (MWR) for all employees in 2025.

Course Objectives are:

- To define language access and the requirements for it in health care.
- To provide an understanding of the disparities that exist when those needs are not met and to provide an understanding of the benefits of language services.
- To inform Bronson employees of their responsibilities, the resources available and how to access them.

The MWR Computer Based Learning (CBL) course is in place and was required to be completed by all employees by October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025.



# Maternal-Infant Health Advancement Team (MIHAT)

## Progress Highlights

- **Data & Feedback Systems** – Working to restore an on-site exit survey position to better align with *Maternal Levels of Care* abstraction. Current reliance on Press Ganey surveys limits feedback, but the team is actively tracking comment trends related to pain management disparities.
- **Postpartum Care Equity** – MIHAT is addressing divides in both *3- and 7-day hypertension follow-up appointments* and *6-week postpartum visits*, ensuring all birthing patients receive timely and equitable care.
- **Alignment with State & National Initiatives** – Work is being integrated with **Michigan Alliance For Innovation On Maternal (MI AIM)**, **Michigan Obstetrics Initiative (OBI)**, and **Maternal Levels of Care** to improve data collection consistency and strengthen accountability.

## Barriers & Challenges

- **Limited Black Patient Feedback** in existing Press Ganey survey tools.
- **Staffing Gaps** – No dedicated personnel for exit surveys due to grant funding constraints.
- **Data Infrastructure** – IT and abstraction capacity remain a barrier to timely, reliable reporting.
- **System Alignment** – Continued need for coordination across providers, leaders, and participants.

## Broader Updates & Opportunities

- **Community Health Worker Integration** – Work is advancing to bridge hospital-employed and community-based Community Health Workers (CHWs), closing referral and support gaps for postpartum families.
- **Maternal Hypertension Dashboard** – Tracking outcomes and guide targeted interventions across birthing hospitals to help support system strategy goals.
- **Pain Management Redesign** – *Labor Coping Scale* as an equity-focused alternative to traditional pain scales.
- **Community Partnership Engagement** – Ongoing collaborations with Cradle Kalamazoo, Milk Like Mine, Birth Kalamazoo and Rootead (Battle Creek and Calhoun partners) to build trust, enhance culturally appropriate education, and increase breastfeeding and early postpartum support.

## Looking Ahead

- MIHAT remains committed to **eliminating disparate outcomes in perinatal care and outcomes** across Region 8. The next phase of work will focus on:
  - Increasing meaningful feedback from the most vulnerable patients.
  - Embedding equity into postpartum hypertension and pain management pathways.
  - Scaling evidence-based, culturally grounded supports (e.g., centering pregnancy, CHWs, nutrition/education initiatives) to help affect maternal and infant mortality rates and disparities.
  - Collaborating with Dr. Arthur James to connect upstream determinants of health to reduce disparate outcomes in infant mortality.

# Community Health Worker Program

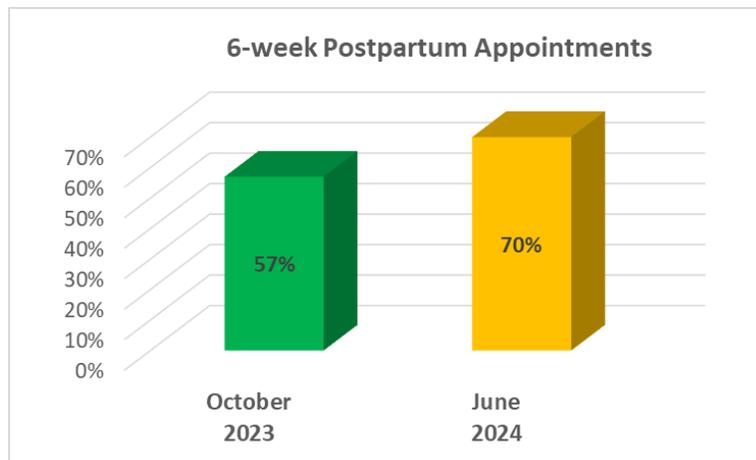
## Progress Highlights

Community Health Workers (CHWs) are trusted individuals from the community and/or have a deep understanding of the communities they serve. CHWs help people access health and social services and provide education, advocacy, and support to those they serve.

In late-October 2024, the CHW program was paused and realigned under the Engagement and Community Partnerships team in early 2025. Prior to the transition, the CHW program made great strides in advancing the work of the CHIP.

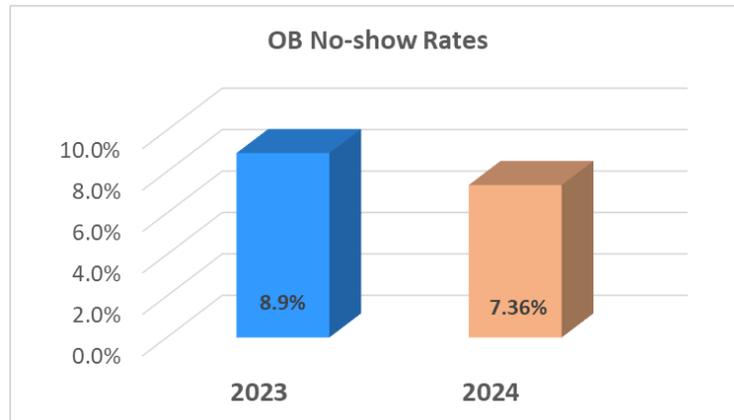
The CHW Program accomplished the following:

1. Increased scheduling of 6wk pp appointments with direct contact to patients to get scheduled per American College of Obstetrics & Gynaecology (ACOG) recommendations.



In Oct 2023, Bronson OB-GYN & Midwifery Specialists (BOGMS) completed 6-week postpartum appointments were at 57%. With a steady increase each month, by June 2024 (last reported data), the completion rate was 70%. This is the highest it had been. This measure includes a range of tactics for scheduling and encouragement of completion; including the discharging nurse at delivery, reminders from physicians, calls from our front desk staff and follow-up with our CHWs.

2. Decreased OB no-show rates by addressing transportation needs and/or other barriers to care.



No-show rates were 8.29% in 2023. In June 2024, the OB no-show rates decreased to 7.36%.

3. Completed outreach to any OB patient identified with needs (baby supplies, parenting support, transportation, housing, food) at the OB preadmission intake appointment.

As of June 2024, the CHWs completed a total of 1411 outreach "touches" to patients. Patients were contacted after their preadmission appointment and then followed at intervals throughout pregnancy based on patient request/need.

### **Looking Ahead**

June 2025 marked the beginning of a new Maternal/infant health Community Health Worker (CHW) program designed to build upon the previous years' progress. Using data, input from patients and Bronson employees, community partnership insights, and the expertise of Dr. Author James, the Bronson program is better aligned to be sustainable and strategically meet the objectives of improving maternal/infant health.

# **PRIORITY II**

Eliminate racial/ethnic disparities in our workforce at every level to support families.

# PRIORITY II

## **Goal 1**

Establish new, and improve on existing, social and demographic data infrastructure (for Bronson's Workforce).

## **Goal 2**

Expand Intercultural Development to improve quality of care.

## **Goal 3**

Create and promote internal opportunities that allow employees to thrive (e.g., career pathways, support for home ownership, connection to resources, etc.).

## **Goal 4**

Review and revise organizational policies and practices using an equity lens to support the health and wellbeing of employees.

# Leadership Development and Workplace Culture

## Progress Highlights

During this CHIP Period, Bronson received a number of awards and recognitions that illustrate the progress it has made in developing a culture that allows employees to thrive and promotes the health and wellbeing of employees.

### **Newsweek: America's Greatest Workplaces for Women (2023)**

Bronson is one of three healthcare organizations in Michigan to receive this award. To select America's Greatest Workplaces for Women, Newsweek identified the top 600 companies in the U.S. for women. The study surveyed over 37,000 women working for companies that employ at least 1,000 people. The study collected over 224,000 reviews across all industry sectors. Final scoring was based on company image, corporate culture, working environment, work-life balance, training and career progression, compensation and benefits, sustainability awareness and proactive management of the diverse workforce.

### **The Nation's 101 Best and Brightest Companies to Work For® (2023, 2024, 2025)**

From The National Association for Business Resources (NABR), Bronson Healthcare is included on both the West Michigan and National lists. Categories reviewed during the award selection include: Compensation, Benefits and Employee Solutions; Creative Wellness and Wellbeing Solutions; Employee Enrichment, Engagement and Retention Employee Education and Development; Recruitment and Selection; Employee Achievement and Recognition; Communication and Shared Vision; Civility and Inclusion; Work-Life Blend; Community Initiatives and Corporate Responsibility Leadership, Strategy and Company Performance.

### **Additional achievements within the Best & Brightest program include:**

2024: National Elite Winner - Employee Achievement and Recognition category

2025: West Michigan Elite Winner - Best of the Best (scoring in the top 5% across every category)

## Internal Opportunities that Allow Employees to Thrive

In response to feedback from employees, Bronson grew its internal benefits programs to include a greater variety of supports for employees' health, finances, wellbeing, and careers.

- Prescription coverage: Including fertility benefits up to \$10,000 for employees and \$10,000 for an enrolled spouse, discounts at Bronson pharmacies.
- Competitive pay, income protection plans and incentives.
- Per paycheck retirement 403b/401k match.
- Public Service Loan Forgiveness: help for employees to navigate student loan debt and qualify to have federal loans forgiven.
- Free, virtual, financial advisor available to all employees
- The Lifestyle Spending Account reimbursed employees at least \$250, up to \$1,500, for enrolled families each year on services that support their financial, physical, and emotional health. Eligible reimbursement includes gym membership, massage therapy, home purchasing expenses, camping/hunting/fishing licenses or passes, pet care, and adoption assistance.
- Bronson offered multiple childcare assistance programs including Michigan's Tri-Share program which reduces up to 66% of an employee's childcare costs, dependent flexible spending accounts (FSA) to which Bronson contributes, and more. Bronson is the largest participant in Michigan in the Tri-Share program.
- Tuition reimbursement – amounts are available per calendar year and vary based on course level (i.e. bachelor's degree, master's degree)
- Service Awards – Special events and gifts awarded in recognition of service, no matter your role at Bronson.
- Employee recognition program allows supervisors to recognize their employees' hard work and encourages peers to acknowledge one another.

Bronson Ongoing Learning and Development (BOLD) offerings provided convenient on-site, online, and live remote opportunities to learn and grow. They are meant to appeal to every employee at every level in helping them to Be a Problem Solver, Be Accountable, Be Respectful, and Be Well.



- Resume Writing
- Goal Setting
- Presentation Skills
- Critical Thinking



- Interview Prep
- Career Exploration
- Self-Critic to Self-Champion
- Strengthening Well-Being
- Power of Focused Attention



- Presenting Your Best Self
- Communication Skills
- Customer Service
- Engagement in the Workplace



- Time Management
- Stress Reduction
- Working Through Burnout
- Emotional Intelligence
- Wellness and Resiliency



- Conflict Resolution
- Teamwork
- Navigating Change
- Giving/Receiving Feedback
- Respect in the Workplace

Bronson also developed an internal career pathway for Medical Assistants.

## MEDICAL ASSISTANT INTERNAL TRAINING PROGRAM



**Do you want to advance your  
healthcare career?**

### **Medical Assistant (MA) Internal Training Program**

Bronson offers a free, on-site Medical Assistant training program. During this 5-month program, employees learn at work while preparing for a career as a Medical Assistant! The program includes on-the-job training, classroom time, and much more!

### **What Does a Medical Assistant Do?**

Medical Assistants typically work in our primary care or specialty care offices. Some job functions include:

- Prepare patients for their provider visit, including completing patient assessments, histories, vital signs, medication reconciliation, and hearing/vision testing.
- Document pertinent information in the medical record.
- Obtain specimens for urine testing, phlebotomy, etc.
- Set up for and assist with treatments or procedures.
- Perform laboratory tests.
- Schedule outside tests or procedures for patients in other departments such as X-ray, MRI, etc.

**Are you...  
A current Bronson  
employee?**

**Do you...  
Want to learn to be  
a medical assistant  
while at work?**

**Are you looking...  
For an amazing,  
impactful career?**

**Interested in  
learning more?**

**Contact us at:  
BronsonCenterforLearning  
@bronsonhg.org**

**As a Medical Assistant,  
you have the opportunity  
to make a positive impact  
on patients and their  
families every day.**

Questions? Contact [BronsonCenterforLearning@bronsonhg.org](mailto:BronsonCenterforLearning@bronsonhg.org)



# Employee Resource Groups

## Progress Highlights

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are employer-sponsored volunteer groups led by employees. The overall objectives of these groups are to provide insights, solve problems, build leadership skills, and act as “brand ambassadors” in their communities. Bronson’s ERGs are all-inclusive, and all employees can join any group they choose.

- To date, Bronson has eight Employee Resource Groups:
  - Asians
  - African Americans
  - Persons with Disabilities
  - Young Professionals
  - Latinx
  - Women
  - Military Veterans and Allies
  - LGBTQ+ and Allies
- Bronson ERGs have made good strides in 2025 in increasing membership. To date, they have over 200 members. In addition, these groups have participated in community events and have provided education and learning opportunities for their members and Bronson employees.

## Community Events

- PRIDE events in Battle Creek, Kalamazoo, and South Haven
- Disability Network’s Annual ADA Event in Kalamazoo
  - Independent Living Award:  
Trish Shroll, BBC EVS
- Festival Latinx Kzoo
- Urban League and Bronson Battle Creek Hospital Back to School



## Education and Learning Events

### Black History Month

Featured speaker and bestselling author Dr. Sampson Davis (provided by the African American ERG)



Best-Selling Author  
Dr. Sampson Davis is  
Coming to Bronson!



### PRIDE Month

Featured speaker and Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel (moderated by the LGBTQ+ ERG)



### The Power of Choice Leadership Development Program

Members of all ERGs were invited to attend, and nearly 40 members participated in the program. The program is designed to engage participants in making intentional personal and professional choices, empowering them to drive and own their development paths.



### **Barriers:**

The primary barriers faced by Bronson's ERGs as they continue to grow and evolve are improving awareness of the purpose/value and educating leaders so they can provide more support for employee participation. To that end, Bronson's Marketing/Communications team has been engaged in developing a marketing communication plan, targeted at our employee population and leaders.

# Physician Recruitment

## Progress Highlights

- Dashboard to monitor overall provider data and recruiting level data for providers is complete and functional so as to ensure non-discrimination.
- National and statewide benchmarks for physicians, Advanced Practice Providers (APPs), and recent graduate programs are used to compare our past and current states.
- Incorporated latest year of data published on diversity coming out of Medical Schools.
- Bronson remains firmly committed to its policy of non-discrimination in hiring pursuant to federal and state civil rights law and hires the best providers it can find without regard to race, sex, or ethnicity.

## Barriers:

The team is actively working to identify any barriers related to physician recruiting.



**Bronson Methodist Hospital**



**Bronson LakeView Hospital**

**Together, We Advance the Health of Our Communities**



**Bronson Battle Creek Hospital**



**Bronson South Haven Hospital**