

# Boston Community Health Needs Assessment: 2024 Addendum



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## **Introduction**

In 2022, the Boston Community Health Collaborative (formerly the CHNA-CHIP Collaborative) drew together partners from across the local public health system to complete a coordinated, city-wide Community Health Needs Assessment to identify the most important strengths, challenges, and priorities for improving the health of residents of Boston.

Since over time the health needs and trends of the population and the broad range of factors that impact health may change it is important to continually monitor and update the Community Health Needs Assessment to better understand the ongoing health of our community. The following 2024 addendum to the 2022 CHNA reflects our continuous effort to ensure the best and most current data and information is available for decision-making and health planning.

## **Ongoing Monitoring of the CHNA**

The Community Health Needs Assessment is intended to paint a comprehensive picture of a community's current health status, factors contributing to higher health risks or poorer health outcomes, and community resources available to improve health. A comprehensive and collaborative Community Health Assessment (CHA) process, completed at least once every five years, is an essential component for maintaining national accreditation as a local health department through the Public Health Accreditation Board. Additionally, under the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), all non-profit hospitals in the United States are required to complete a Community Health Needs Assessment and Implementation Strategy (IS) every three years, to be filed with the Internal Revenue Service.

Between the 3-year intervals established above, the incorporation of new and emerging health data into the Community Health Needs Assessment ensures that it continues to serve as a foundational resource to better understand the health of Boston residents. Ongoing monitoring of the CHNA includes incorporating new health data and analysis in the CHNA, as well as furthering our analyses of specific neighborhood data and information with an emphasis on health inequities and socioeconomic factors. With the update, the CHNA will continue to support strengthened alignment and multi-disciplinary collaboration across the local public health system in the city of Boston.

## **Collaborative Process for Sharing and Analyzing Data**

The CHNA was developed through a collaborative process of collecting and analyzing data, involving many sectors of the community (local government, healthcare institutions, community-based organizations, academia, human service agencies, and others); and ensuring representation of populations most impacted by health inequities. Partners have committed to using the assessment, in which they have highlighted areas for improvement, identified resources, and prepared to adopt priorities and policies and develop plans to address community health outcomes.

## **Key updates to the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment**

This addendum to the 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment incorporates by reference new health data and analyses by the Boston Public Health Commission relevant to health trends in the following areas:

- Health needs of unhoused residents of Boston
- Mortality and life expectancy
- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Cancer
- Maternal and Infant Health

## **Health Needs of Boston Residents Experiencing Homelessness**

In 2023, Boston Public Health Commission published the report *Unhoused and Uncounted: Highlights from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Among Unhoused Bostonians*. The report aimed to provide residents, medical and public health professionals, health policymakers, and community advocates with actionable information on the health of people experiencing homelessness in Boston. Through a partnership beginning in 2001 between Boston Public Health Commission, Boston Housing Authority, Boston University School of Public Health, and the Community Committee, BPHC enhanced the Boston Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BBRFSS) health surveillance project by conducting a modified version of the BBRFSS with Boston-based residents experiencing homelessness to assess the health, wellbeing, and service utilization of Boston's unhoused adults.

This issue of housing was identified as a key priority in the 2022-25 Community Health Needs Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan. Data from the Unhoused and Uncounted Report have been shared with the Community Health Improvement Plan work group to inform shared health planning and program development.

## Health of Boston 2023 Reports

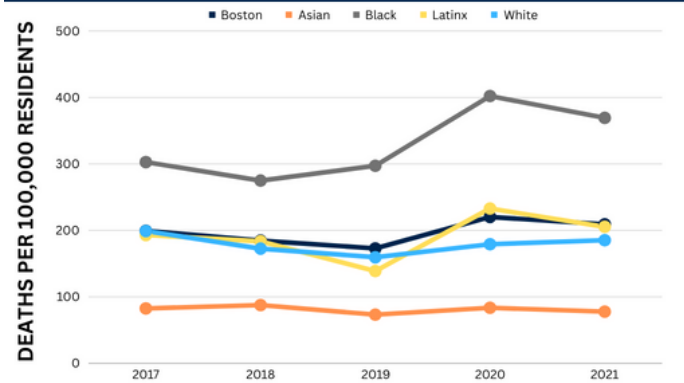
In 2023, the Boston Public Health Commission published a series of issue-based reports examining city health trends to inform public health policy and program interventions to address public health issues and promote greater health equity throughout the city of Boston.

The reports highlighted persistent health inequities in the health of Boston residents, seen clearly when comparing differences in mortality, life expectancy, and chronic disease between demographic groups and neighborhoods.

Below are selected data findings from the reports. Comprehensive issue-based reports can be found on the publicly available Boston Public Health Commission Health Data website at:

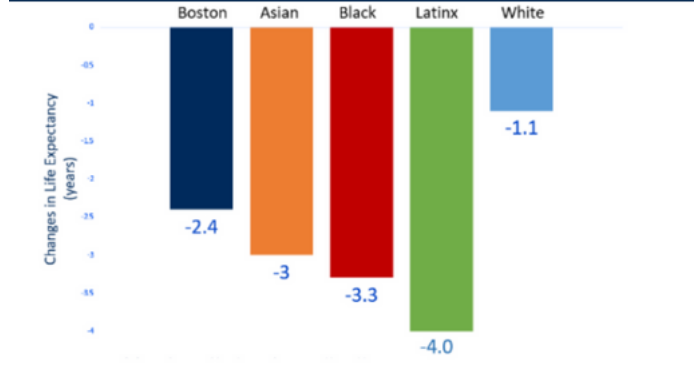
<https://www.boston.gov/government/cabinets/boston-public-health-commission/health-data>

Figure 1: Premature Mortality+ by Race/Ethnicity and Year 2017 - 2021



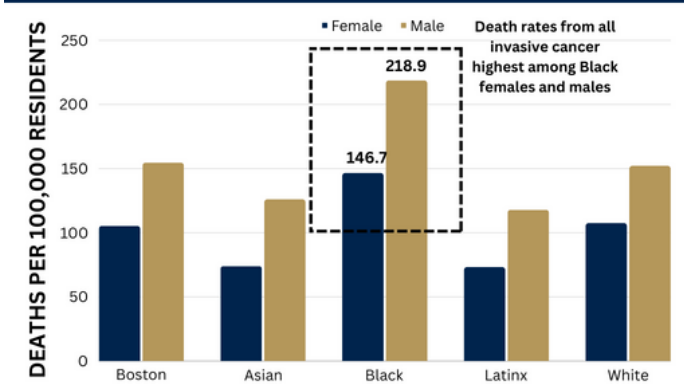
Boston Public Health Commission, Health of Boston 2023: The Provisional Mortality and Life Expectancy Report (Boston, Massachusetts 2023).

Figure 2: Change in Life Expectancy in Boston by Race and Ethnicity 2018-2019 vs 2020-2021



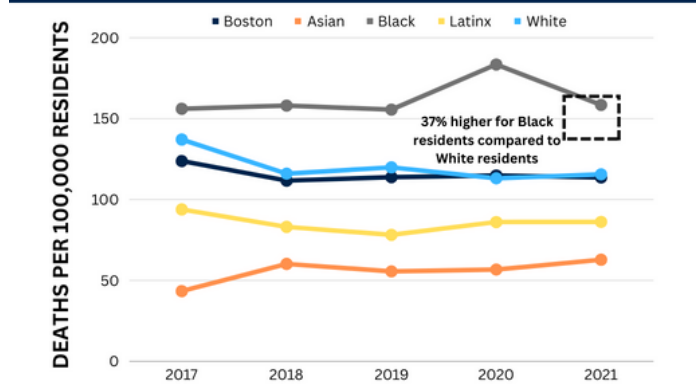
Boston Public Health Commission, Health of Boston 2023: The Provisional Mortality and Life Expectancy Report (Boston, Massachusetts 2023).

Figure 3: Cancer Mortality+ by sex and race/ethnicity 2021



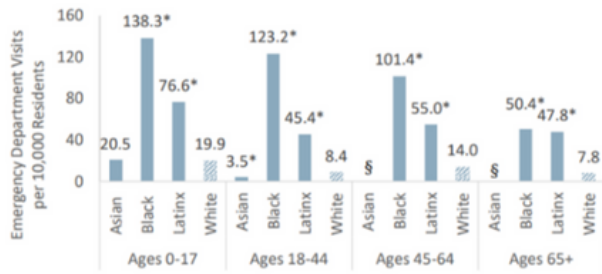
Boston Public Health Commission, Health of Boston 2023: The Cancer Report (Boston, Massachusetts 2023).

Figure 4: Heart Disease Mortality Rate+ by Sex and Race/Ethnicity 2017 - 2021



Boston Public Health Commission, Health of Boston 2023: The Heart Disease Report (Boston, Massachusetts 2023).

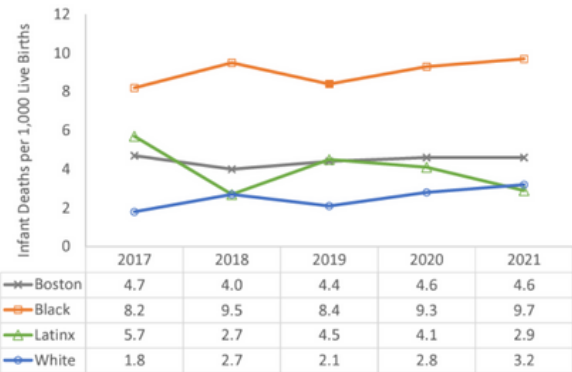
Figure 5: Asthma Emergency Department Visits by Age+ and Race/Ethnicity 2021



\* Statistically significant difference when compared to reference group  
 § The rate for Asian residents ages 45-64 and 65 and over is suppressed due to small numbers (n<11).  
 † Age-specific rates per 10,000 residents  
 NOTE: Bars with hatch marks indicate the reference group within each selected indicator.  
 DATA SOURCE: Acute Hospital Case Mix Database, Massachusetts Center for Health Information and Analysis

Boston Public Health Commission, Health of Boston 2023: The Asthma Report (Boston, Massachusetts 2023).

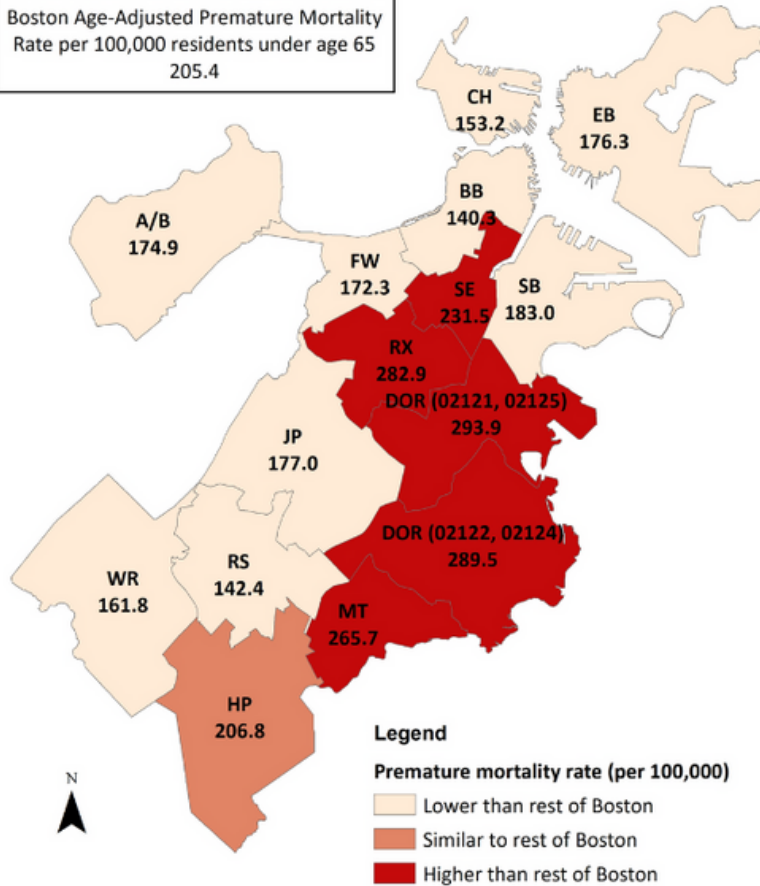
Figure 6: Infant Mortality+ by Maternal Race/Ethnicity and Year, 2017 - 2021



Boston Public Health Commission, Health of Boston 2023: The Maternal and Infant Health Report (Boston, Massachusetts 2023).

Figure 7: Age-Adjusted Premature Mortality by Neighborhood, 2017 - 2021 Combined

Boston Age-Adjusted Premature Mortality Rate per 100,000 residents under age 65  
 205.4



Boston Public Health Commission, Health of Boston 2023: The Provisional Mortality and Life Expectancy Report (Boston, Massachusetts 2023).