



## TAG in Action: Michigan Adolescent Health Initiative

As part of its national call to action, **Adolescent Health, Think, Act, Grow<sup>SM</sup> (TAG)**, the Office of Adolescent Health, in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service has identified a number of successful strategies for improving adolescent health throughout the country.

### *The Goal*

The University of Michigan Health System Adolescent Health Initiative (AHI) advances innovative approaches to adolescent-centered healthcare through practice improvement, education, research, and youth and community engagement.

### *The Game Plan*

AHI's Adolescent Champion Model gives health care providers a framework to make youth-friendly enhancements to their clinic's physical space, policies, and practices. The model improves the care of adolescent and young adult patients through:

- Comprehensive Adolescent-Centered Environment (ACE) assessments, customized implementation plans and robust resources
- Targeted quality improvement initiatives
- Innovative training and professional development opportunities for all staff
- Opportunities for Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Maintenance of Certification Part IV credits
- Ongoing, personalized technical and capacity-building assistance

The Adolescent Champion Model was developed after interviews with health care providers and staff from across the country revealed that most did not feel equipped or prepared to meet the needs of their teen and young adult patients. Many reported that they had not been trained on important issues like confidentiality and minor consent or providing culturally competent care for transgender and gender nonconforming patients. AHI began its effort with funding from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, and was met by an overwhelming demand. The success of the ACE assessment process and Adolescent Champion model quickly spread across Michigan and has recently expanded to other states including Iowa, Mississippi, and Wisconsin, with plans for further rollout.

### *The Winning Plays*

The Adolescent Health Initiative involved their teen advisory council in development of the Adolescent Champion model, which lent credibility and youth perspective. For example, young people made clear that anyone can make or break their experience in a healthcare setting so the model's training and capacity building framework involves everyone—physicians, call center staff, front desk staff, nurses, administrators, etc. Lauren Ranalli, AHI Director, shared that “Teens are often a forgotten population, and health centers aren't necessarily set up to meet their specific needs. We are looking at transforming primary care and school-based health centers into adolescent-centered medical homes, and this involves everyone from the person who answers the phone to the provider who treats them.”

### *Learn More*

Adolescent Health Initiative  
University of Michigan Health System  
<http://umhs-adolescenthealth.org/>

