



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Shapiro Administration Launches PA Navigate, A New Online Tool to Better Connect Pennsylvanians with Food, Housing, Childcare and More**

*PA Navigate's primary goal is to boost communication between health care and social services to improve follow-through on referrals, as well as to act as a support finder for citizens.*

**Lancaster, PA – Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS) Secretary Dr. Val Arkoosh, findhelp Founder & CEO Erine Gray, and Community Action Partnership (CAP) Lancaster CEO Vanessa Philbert** today announced the launch of PA Navigate, an online tool that connects Pennsylvanians with community-based organizations, county and state agencies, and healthcare providers, for referrals to community resources that help them meet their most basic needs like food, shelter, transportation, and more. PA Navigate also allows individuals to refer themselves for services and facilitates greater connection and communication between healthcare providers and organizations that serve shared populations.

“PA Navigate is a groundbreaking resource that will enable greater collaboration between health care and social services organizations by allowing them to more easily and effectively work together to treat and support the whole person. A person’s individual situation is complex, and factors like poverty, lack of stable housing, and food insecurity often impact an individual’s or family’s health,” said **Secretary Arkoosh**. “We must consider the whole person when delivering health care, and no one provider or community-based organization can help someone fully address all their needs. PA Navigate will help by making it easier for health and service providers to coordinate and collaborate, easing barriers to care and improving health outcomes, to provide a better quality of life for all Pennsylvanians.”

A person’s overall health and wellness are influenced by far more than just their physical health. Socioeconomic, environmental, and behavioral factors shape our present and long-term health outcomes. The National Academy of Medicine estimates that social determinants of health like income, access to essential resources, education and employment, social supports, and physical environment contribute up to 90 percent of health outcomes. Despite this, health care providers and social service and community-based organizations that can help people experiencing barriers to essential needs and economic stability are not always closely linked.

PA Navigate bridges these systems through a shared platform where health care providers and social services organizations can track client referrals and better understand and assist with a

client's individual needs, helping them access services and supports. The system will also allow health care and service providers to assess an individual's needs during a physician's office or emergency department visit, when receiving case management services, or seeking assistance from a community-based organization, among others.

"CAP is thrilled to host the Department of Human Services and Secretary Arkoosh for the launch of PA Navigate, a platform we are looking forward to engaging with in order to positively impact individual and community outcomes around social determinants of health," said **CAP Lancaster CEO Vanessa Philbert**. "We believe this platform has the opportunity to bring increased resourcing to individuals living with low incomes here in Lancaster, and we congratulate Pennsylvania for its leadership in this space."

The tool also will gather data that can help the Commonwealth and its partners better understand health and social services needs of Pennsylvanians and identify service gaps or opportunities for better support across the state. By looking at critical social determinants of health, including employment, child care, transportation, food security, access to health care, and housing stability, Commonwealth agencies and partners at the county and local level can help Pennsylvanians achieve better long-term health outcomes.

PA Navigate is a collaborative effort among health information organizations (HIOs) and brings together multiple state agencies, counties, local non-profits and community organizations, health care entities, and social services providers. HIOs participating in the project include ClinicalConnect Health Information Exchange, Central PA Connect Health Information Exchange, HealthShare Exchange, and the Keystone Health Information Exchange. In September 2023, findhelp was chosen as the PA Navigate platform.

"Since findhelp's inception, we have had a mission to connect all people in need to the programs that serve them with dignity and ease. It is refreshing to be aligned with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Health Information Organizations (HIOs) in that mission. While valuable data will flow through the platform, PA Navigate will also ensure that every Pennsylvanian has the opportunity to get the help they need by simply entering their ZIP Code," said **Erine Gray**.

For more information and to find resources in your community, visit [pa-navigate.org](https://pa-navigate.org).

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