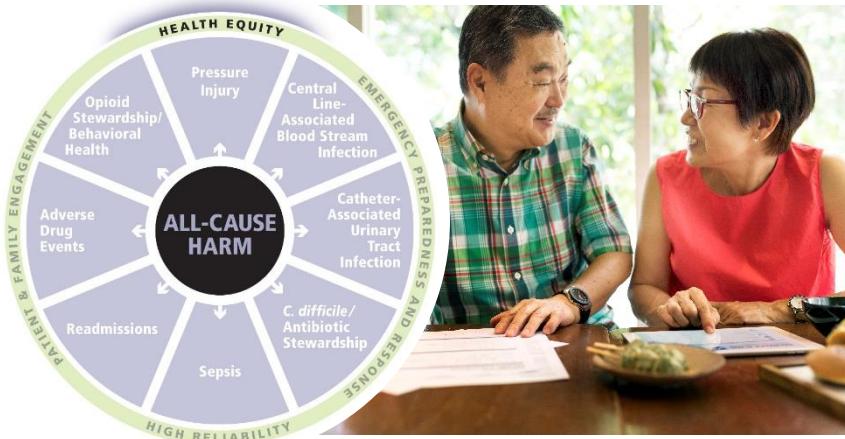


HEALTH EQUITY HIGHLIGHTS

May 2021



Importance of Infrastructure within Hospitals to Assess and Address Health Equity

It is important for all hospitals, whether urban or rural, to understand the importance of creating an infrastructure to assess and improve health equity. Health equity includes the need for structured data collection, specifically REaL (race, ethnicity, and language) information, in order to identify and stratify patient- and clinical-level attributes.

Strategic priorities for identification of inequities and disparities among patient populations allow for staff education and support for clinical process improvements to be implemented.

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) developed a comprehensive resource surrounding health equity and includes best practices for implementation of health equity efforts within hospitals. IHI recommends the following framework for health care organizations to improve health equity in the communities they serve:

- Make **health equity a strategic priority**
- Develop **structure and processes** to support health equity work
- Deploy specific strategies to **address the multiple determinants of health** on which health care organizations can have a direct impact
- **Decrease institutional racism** within the organization
- Develop partnerships with **community organizations** to improve health and equity

View the resource package, including tools, best practices, and white paper: [Improving Health Equity: Guidance for Health Care Organizations](#).

View the latest hospital health equity news, events, and tools to support your efforts in eliminating health care disparities within your health system and communities.

May is Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month!

[View resources](#) from the HHS Office of Minority Health.

Rural/CAH Corner

[CMS Proposes to Enhance the Medical Workforce in Rural and Underserved Communities](#)

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a proposed rule (CMS-1752-P) on April 27 for inpatient and long-term care hospitals.

This proposed rule builds on the Biden Administration's key priorities to close health care equity gaps and provide greater accessibility to care.

Major provisions in the proposed rule would fund medical residency positions in hospitals in rural and underserved communities to address workforce shortages, and require hospitals to report COVID-19 vaccination rates among their workers to contain the spread of the virus.

In the News

[Embedding Health Equity as a Patient Safety, Clinical Quality Issue](#)

The Leapfrog Group has added health equity and ethical patient billing questions to its patient safety and clinical quality surveys.

[CDC's Health Equity in Action](#)

To help the United States succeed against COVID-19, CDC is working with state, territorial, local, tribal partners, and community-serving organizations, to ensure all public health actions address health disparities for all populations. Includes COVID-19 Health Equity Projects, Data, Project Spotlight, and Resources.

[A Guide to Preventing and Addressing Social Stigma Associated with COVID-19](#)

In an effort to prevent and address social stigma, the World Health Organization (WHO) along with partners, have developed an online resource for organizations. The resource includes: defining social stigma, explaining why COVID-19 is causing stigma and the impact, and communication and other techniques for addressing social stigma.

[Rural-Urban Divide Compounds Racial Disparities in COVID-19 Deaths](#)

A new study from Oregon State University found the risk of death from COVID-19 was even greater for racial and ethnic minority groups living in rural areas compared with urban areas. The study, published in the Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities, found a higher number of fatal COVID-19 cases among Black, Hispanic, Latino, American Indian and Asian/Pacific Islander patients. Rural and urban areas were designated by U.S. Census data. Researchers say policies should prioritize rural health and the adequate distribution of health care resources - especially COVID-19 vaccinations - to meet the needs of rural minority populations.



For more health equity news: <https://qi.ipro.org/health-equity-resources/>

Upcoming Events

[Delivering Whole Person Care: Improving Outcomes in Opioid Use Disorder Treatment](#)

May 25, 11AM-12PM EDT

Discuss ways to improve recovery and outcomes for individuals with an opioid use disorder, the role of social determinants of health, and the “twindemic.”

[Virtual National Health Equity Summit](#)

June 7 – 10, 2021

The Commonwealth Fund

The Leading National Forum on Practical Case Studies and Solutions for Advancing Health Equity.