

HEALTH EQUITY GUIDE

June 2022



[HHS Announces \\$90 Million to Support New Data-Driven Approaches for Health Centers to Identify and Reduce Health Disparities](#)

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), announced \$90 million in funding to support new approaches for health centers to identify and reduce health disparities.

The funding can be used for various COVID-19 activities and for modifying, enhancing, and expanding health care services and infrastructure by improving health information technology, enhancing data collection, and supporting related staff training. These efforts will advance broader COVID-19 response, mitigation, and recovery efforts.

Additionally, funds will support patient-level reporting and enable them to better identify, measure, and investigate disparities in health care use and health outcomes by race, ethnicity, age, and other important demographic factors, and to more precisely target their resources.

[New CDC Analysis Reveals Increase in Firearm Deaths and Disparities](#)

The CDC reported an increase in firearm homicide by 35% between 2019 and 2020 – the highest recorded one-year increase in over 25 years. The largest increase in firearm homicides was among Black people (39%). The largest increase in firearm suicides was among American Indian and Alaska Native people (42%).

In 2020, counties with the highest poverty level had firearm homicide rates 4.5 times as high and firearm suicide rates 1.3 times as high as counties with the lowest poverty level.

June: National Safety Month, Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness Month, World Sickle Cell Day (19th), National HIV Testing Day (27th)

CDC has several [resources](#) on Alzheimer’s disease and dementias as well as on [barriers to equity](#).

The National Safety Council will have [resources](#) on National Safety Month.

National HIV Testing Day provides [resources](#) on HIV testing.

The Sickle Cell Disease Association provides [resources](#) on Sickle Cell awareness.

Rural/CAH Corner

[“No Other Option”: Telehealth Could be Rural Healthcare’s Savior](#)

This article highlights a discussion from the National Rural Health Association that discusses the importance of telehealth. However, connectivity, poor digital literacy, and inadequate communication have hampered its uptake.

[Bringing Mental Health Services to Rural Residents](#)

These case studies provide examples of how to address rural access to mental healthcare. Libraries for Health is a 3-year pilot that brings mental health workers to public libraries. Georgia created a statewide crisis line which dispatches mobile teams.

In the News

[Racial Disparities in Mental Health Care: An Explainer and Research Roundup](#)

This research summary highlights the prevalence of mental illness among racial and ethnic minorities and identified barriers to treatment such as structural racism, stigma, access to high quality services, and historic experiences with the mental health system. It also provides a resources and a summary of key research around disparities in mental health care e.g., variance in use by insurance and demographics, trends in access and affordability, COVID-19 and its impact on minorities.

[HHS, Providers View Audio-Only Telehealth as Key Health Equity Strategy](#)

The Department of Health and Human Services hosted its first-ever [National Telehealth Conference](#) where the use of audio-only telehealth emerged as a critical health equity and behavioral health integration tool. Given barriers such as high-speed internet, other modalities such as audio-only are potential ways to improve telehealth access and ensure it does not create additional disparities or widen the technology gap.

[Climate Change and Health Equity: Key Questions and Answers](#)

The Kaiser Family Foundation provides an explainer on how climate and climate change affect health and health equity e.g., redlining that have led to segregation in urban neighborhoods that increase exposure to heat and poor air quality, immigrants with higher exposure to environmental hazards due to their occupations, and low-income communities that are more likely to live in fragile housing. The article also provides an overview of federal government actions that have been taken to address some of these issues.

[Improving Medicaid Data To Advance Racial And Ethnic Health Equity In The United States](#)

This Health Affairs article highlights the importance of improving race and ethnicity data collection for Medicaid given it is missing for more than 10 percent of enrollees and there are other issues with data collected across over 20 states. The researchers identify three strategies to address this issue: 1) additional steps need to be taken to explain race and ethnicity data collection to enrollees, 2) states should partner with community organizations to improve collection and explain its importance, and 3) states should augment the data with other sources e.g., vital records, EHR, and other state programs.



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

Upcoming Events

[Health Equity Organizational Assessment \(HEOA\) Knowledge Builders Series](#)

IPRO

Date: May 19 – Aug 4

Time: 12:00 – 12:30 PM ET

[Achieving Health Equity: Cultural Competency vs. Cultural Safety?](#)

The Beryl Institute

Date: June 14

Time: 5:00 – 6:00 PM ET

[Achieving Health Equity: Tackling the Medical Community's Greatest Care Challenge](#)

U.S. News & World Report

Date: June 23

Time: 12:00 – 1:00 PM ET