

HEALTH EQUITY UPDATES

May 2022



This Month

Asian American & Pacific
Islander Heritage Month
&
Older Americans Month



CMS OMH Announces Health Equity Framework

The CMS Office of Minority Health (CMS OMH) recently released the [CMS Framework for Health Equity](#) with five priority areas to guide efforts to address health disparities as a foundational element across all CMS programs. CMS stakeholders from underserved and disadvantage communities identified each priority area as critical for advancing health equity and requiring CMS action:

- Priority 1: Expand the Collection, Reporting, and Analysis of Standardized Data
- Priority 2: Assess Causes of Disparities Within CMS Programs and Address Inequities in Policies and Operations to Close Gaps
- Priority 3: Build Capacity of Health Care Organizations and the Workforce to Reduce Health and Health Care Disparities
- Priority 4: Advance Language Access, Health Literacy, and the Provision of Culturally Tailored Services
- Priority 5: Increase All Forms of Accessibility to Health Care Services and Coverage

CMS defines health equity as “the attainment of the highest level of health for all people, where everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their optimal health regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, geography, preferred language, or other factors that affect access to care and health outcomes.”¹

This plan will inform CMS’ efforts to embed health equity across all its programs over the next ten years.

¹ Health Equity. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. <https://www.cms.gov/pillar/health-equity>

[CMS Outlines Strategy to Advance Health Equity](#)

On April 20th, CMS outlined an action plan to drive health equity across each CMS Center and Office and made [health equity](#) the first of the six pillars of the CMS 2022 Strategic Plan. CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure invited health care industry leaders to join CMS in transforming “the way patients are cared for in our country.”² The action plan builds upon CMS’ strong commitment to health equity by making it central to all its work. CMS will bring together health care facilities, providers, insurance companies, and other stakeholders to sustain progress and drive innovation. The first session in Summer 2022 will focus on improving maternal health.

² <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/cms-outlines-strategy-advance-health-equity-challenges-industry-leaders-address-systemic-inequities>

In the News

[HHS Health Secretary Extends COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#)

HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra extended the Covid-19 public health emergency another 90 days as cases of the Omicron subvariant BA.2 increase. The renewal, which took effect April 16th, extends expanded telehealth services, state support and Medicaid coverage protections through July. In the meantime, HHS is convening a cross-government task force to plan for managing long-COVID, which is estimated to affect up to 23 million Americans. Because COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted minorities and people of color, it is anticipated these populations will also be inequitably impacted by long-COVID, furthering exacerbating existing healthcare disparities.

[Healthy People 2030 Health Equity Resources](#)

Healthy People 2030 recently announced its Health Equity Resources website offering evidence-based resources and “tools for action” to support individuals, organizations, and communities committed to advancing health equity and eliminating disparities. The website aligns with Healthy People 2030’s focus on health literacy and social determinants of health, two factors that contribute to disparities and need to be addressed to ensure equitable care for all individuals. The website includes the widely-sourced Healthy People 2030 definitions of “health equity” and “health disparities” to promote a shared understanding of these concepts.

[40% Decline in Uninsured Rate Among Black Americans Since Implementation of the ACA](#)

A new HHS report highlights historic gains in health care coverage, access, and affordability among Black Americans since the implementation of the Affordable Care Act in 2010. The report shows that the uninsured rate among Black Americans under age 65 decreased from 20 % in 2011 (approximately 7.1 million people) to 12% in 2019 (approximately 4.4 million people), a decline of 40%. Black Americans’ uninsured rate (12%) is still higher than their White counterparts (9%).

[The Impact of Discrimination in Healthcare for Older Adults](#)

A new Commonwealth Fund study discusses the impact of racial and ethnic discrimination on the health of people of color. The implications include increased mental health issues, hypertension, and early aging and mortality. Older adults in the U.S. are more likely to report that discrimination exists in the healthcare system compared with peers from 10 other high-income countries. More than a quarter of U.S. older adults reported that discrimination resulted in them not getting the care and treatment they needed.

[IPRO Health Equity Organizational Assessment Knowledge Builders](#)

Join IPRO as we kick-off our Health Equity Organizational Assessment (HEAO) Knowledge Builder Series on May 19, 2022!



Visit the IPRO Resource Library: <https://qi-library.ipro.org/>

Upcoming Events

[IPRO Small Talks Education Series](#)

Small Talks are brief presentations that articulate a specific challenge, offer unambiguous interventions that lead to improvement, and guide providers to specific results or outcomes. Each presentation is repeated the following week to accommodate schedules. Small Talks will be offered through August.

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[Undoing “Cool”: Addressing Persistent Disparities in Tobacco Use and Cessation](#)

Center for Health Care Strategies

Date: May 4, 2022

Time: 2:00 – 3:15 PM ET

[Surgeon General Vivek H. Murthy Lecture Series: Addressing Systemic Racism, Mental Health Stigma, and Community Resilience to Achieve Health Equity](#)

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Date: May 11, 2022

Time: 1:00 – 2:00 PM ET