



Healthcentric
Advisors
Qlarant

QIN-QIO
Quality Innovation Network -
Quality Improvement Organizations
CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES
EQUALITY IMPROVEMENT & INNOVATION GROUP



HEALTH EQUITY UPDATES

January 2024



AHRQ National Healthcare Quality and Disparities Report

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) released the annual [National Healthcare Quality and Disparities Report](#), as mandated by Congress. The report summarizes the status of healthcare delivery in the U.S. and how effectively healthcare systems are providing safe, high-quality, and equitable care to Americans. Quality measures are grouped into six priorities:

- patient safety
- healthy living
- care coordination
- person-centered care
- care affordability
- effective treatment

Three key findings from the report:

- The population is aging and has become more racially and ethnically diverse.
- Overall life expectancy decreased for the second year in a row. COVID-19 was a large contributor to the decrease.
- More people are living in metropolitan areas.

Best of CLAS

A tip for implementing culturally and linguistically appropriate services

HHS National CLAS Standards – [Standard 9](#)

Provide Easy-to-Understand Materials and Signage

- Infuse CLAS Goals, Policies, and Management Accountability Throughout Your Organization’s Planning and Operations
- Establish culturally and linguistically appropriate goals, policies, and management accountability, and infuse them throughout the organization’s planning and operations.

This Month

Poverty Awareness Month

Poverty is defined as a shortage of resources relative to needs.¹ The related consequences have a negative effect on health and quality-of-life.

The Census Bureau [measures poverty](#) using an official poverty measure (OPM) that compares pre-tax income to a set poverty threshold that is considered the minimum income amount required to cover basic needs. The threshold varies by household composition and size.

According to the Census Bureau report, [Poverty in America](#), the U.S. poverty rate in 2022 was 11.5% or 37.9 million people. [Healthy People 2030](#) lists poverty as a social determinant of health that contributes to poor health outcomes. The IPRO Resource Library has an entire section dedicated to addressing [social determinants of health](#) including poverty.

¹ Timothy Smeeding, “Poverty Measurement,” *The Oxford Handbook of the Social Science of Poverty*, edited by D. Brady and L.M. Burton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

SAVE THE DATE

CMS Health Equity Conference

Sustaining Health Equity Through Action

May 29-30, 2024

Hyatt Regency, Bethesda, MD

In the News

[HHS MyHealthfinder: Anxiety Disorder Resources](#)

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) MyHealthfinder is a prevention and wellness website featuring a variety of resources that practitioners and their staff can recommend to patients and families. Resources include evidence-based health information in easy-to-understand, plain language appropriate for those with lower health literacy. HHS recently added resources to help adults, age 64 and younger, identify the signs and symptoms of anxiety disorders, treatment descriptions, and actions patients and their families can take to get support.

[Ways Hospitals Can Be More Socially Responsible](#)

The Lown Institute, a nonpartisan think tank advocating bold ideas for a just and caring health system, published a resource identifying five ways that hospitals can become more socially responsible, based on the practices of hospitals that are considered leaders in this area: 1) Review financial assistance and collection policies; 2) Invest in social drivers of health that affect upstream health; 3) Become champions for high-value care; 4) Evaluate new AI tools with an eye toward equity and overuse; and 5) Prioritize equitable pay for employees. Lown also profiles the 2023 winners of the America's Most Socially Responsible Hospitals Index.

[ACL Commit to Connect Campaign](#)

The Association for Community Living (ACL) has partnered with the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health to establish the Commit to Connect campaign, which aims to address the epidemic of social isolation that can be associated with serious health risks. This cross-sector initiative connects people living in isolation with programs and resources to build social connections. The campaign released a new resource, Intergenerational Engagement, with tips for building programs that connect elders and younger people. The resource offers several program examples, testimonials, and advice from participants.

[Preparing for a Successful Joint Commission Health Equity Accreditation Survey](#)

IPRO hosted a webinar with Christina Cordero from the Joint Commission on December 14. Dr. Cordero discussed the health equity standards versus the health equity certification program and ways to prepare for a successful accreditation survey.

View the slides from the event [HERE](#).

View the webinar recording [HERE](#).



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

Upcoming Events

[Health-Related Social Needs Affinity Group](#)

IPRO

The second Wednesday of the month, September – February.

12:00 – 12:45 PM ET

[Bridging the Gap from Hospital to Community through 4 Pillars of Robust SDOH Strategy](#)

CHPSO

January 17, 2024

1:00 – 2:00 PM EST

[Accelerating Health Equity Conference](#)

American Hospital Association

May 7–9, 2024

Kansas City, MO