

CONE HEALTH FOUNDATION
DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION VALUES AND BELIEFS

“Disparities in health care are among this nation’s most serious health care problems. Research has extensively documented the pervasiveness of racial and ethnic disparities.”
(Institute Of Medicine, 2002)

The persistence of such disparities suggests that current approaches and strategies are not producing the kinds of results needed to ensure that all people are able to achieve the same quality and years of healthy life, regardless of social indicators of race/ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual identity/orientation, and other variables. Racial and ethnic health disparities are a result of a complex, interplay of many factors including access to health care, socioeconomic status, income and wealth distribution, environmental issues, the organization of health care, health behaviors and beliefs and institutional racism. (Braveman, 2014)

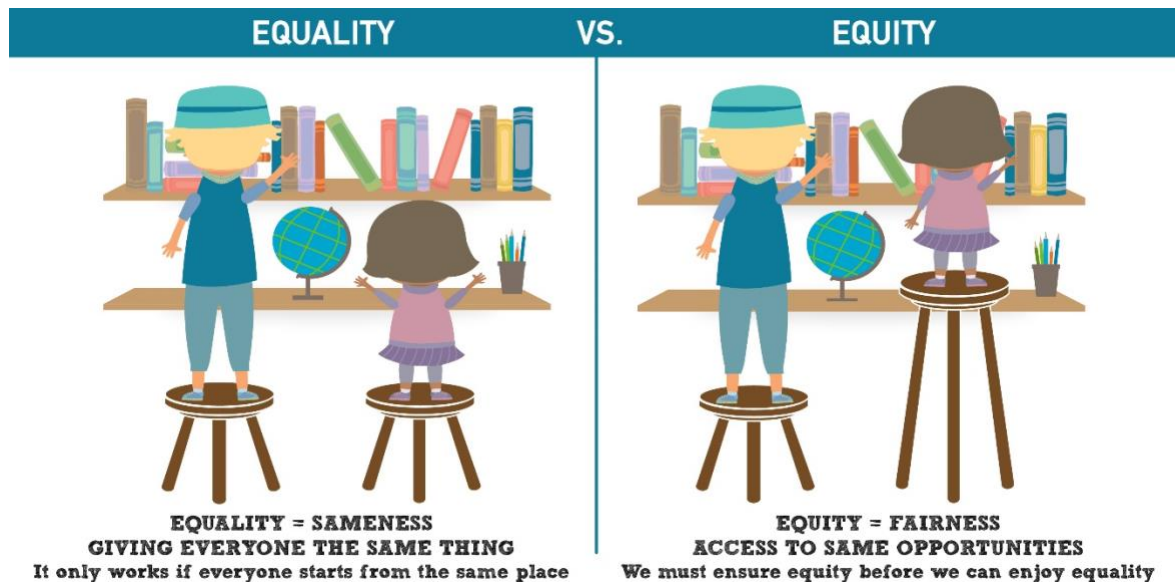
- The Foundation is committed to an environment rooted in the values of diversity, equity and inclusion that we seek in our communities. As such, we value diversity in all its forms.
- The Foundation believes that a major barrier to reducing disparities and creating health equity for all is the lack of access to resources that are required to lead a healthy lifestyle.
- The Foundation believes that affordable health insurance (including closing the health insurance coverage gap through Medicaid) is an essential part of eliminating racial and ethnic disparities in health care but recognizes that it must be coupled with structural changes.
- The Foundation values the empowerment of patients and communities in order to ensure that health care resources are meeting their needs. Patients should be encouraged to participate in treatment decisions. Neighborhoods and communities should be encouraged to share views with leaders about improving access to care.
- The Foundation believes that eliminating health disparities and achieving health equity requires a commitment to improving patient-provider communication while taking into account the health literacy requirements and cultural needs of the patient.
- The Foundation values the achievement of health equity for vulnerable populations in the community and is cognizant of the fact that because of inequitable access to care, these populations are often sicker when they do find a source of care.

The Foundation encourages our grantee partners to identify initiatives and solutions that will address health disparities within their program of work. CHF encourages grantees to promote DEI within their organizations, particularly for Board and staff members.

Relevant Terminology

- **Diversity:** Recognizing people's unique difference(s) and similarities (Roberson, 2004)
- **Equity:** is the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. (Independent Sector, 2016) Concisely, equity is giving everyone what he or she needs to be successful.
 - Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources.
 - Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.
- **Equality:** aims to promote fairness, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same help. (Summers and Smith, 2014)
- **Inclusion:** Valuing everyone's talents, skills and abilities while hearing their voice, giving equal access and opportunity to all and removing discrimination and other barriers to involvement. (Miller and Katz, 2002)

Diversity is inviting me to the party. Inclusion is asking me to dance. Equity is asking me to help develop the playlist. ~ Jada Monica Drew



(Source: <https://www.getsmartoregon.org/about-smart/equity/>)

- **Health Disparities:** preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, or opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by socially disadvantaged populations. (Braveman, 2014)
 - **Health status disparities** refer to the variation in rates of disease occurrence and disabilities between socioeconomic and/or geographically defined population groups.
 - **Health care disparities** refer to differences between groups in health insurance coverage, access to and use of care, and quality of care.
- **Health Inequities:** Differences in health that are avoidable, unfair, and unjust. Health inequities are affected by social, economic, and environmental conditions. (Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion [ODPHP], 2016).
- **Health Equity:** refers to the study and causes of differences in the quality of health and healthcare across different populations. Health equity is the principle underlying a commitment to reduce—and, ultimately, eliminate—disparities in health and in its determinants, including social determinants (Braveman, 2006).
- **Social Determinants of Health:** are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. These circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels. (World Health Organization, 2014)

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