



Health *Equity*



L.A. Care's Health Equity and Disparities Mitigation Plan

2023-2025



Achieving health equity and reducing health disparities is critical part of L.A. Care's mission. It is clear that poverty, implicit and systemic biases and racism adversely impact the health and wellness for many who are lower income, LGBTQ+, immigrants, Latino, Black and mixed-race individuals.

L.A. Care's Health Equity and Disparities Mitigation Plan creates a road map and an action plan on how L.A. Care will work with internal and community stakeholders and align resources to address priority health disparities experienced by residents in Los Angeles County for 2023-2025. To that effect, we have identified four Health Equity Zones that will serve as our areas of focus:

- 1. Address key health disparities:** close racial and ethnic gaps in health outcomes among members.
- 2. Lead change:** actuar como líderes y aliados para que los socios comunitarios promuevan la equidad en la salud y la justicia social.
- 3. Move towards equitable care:** ensure that our members have access to care and services that are free of bias and that our providers are supported in delivering equitable, culturally tailored care.
- 4. Embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion:** serve as a model in supporting an equitable and inclusive work environment, as reflected in our workforce and business practices.

We have also identified key objectives and metrics in each health equity zone. The objectives and metrics listed in this plan do not necessarily reflect all the disparity targets that we know exist. To advance and move towards equitable treatment and health, we will seek input from our members and providers, examine our internal and community data, align our resources with those in the community and seek to evaluate our efforts.

We invite you to read this document in full and participate in our continuous efforts to achieve health equity together.

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L.A. Care has worked to address health disparities and the social barriers that impede a person's equitable access to health care since our inception 26 years ago. L.A. Care plays a significant role in addressing health equity, diversity, inclusion and social justice – not only for our members, but also in our work with our community, safety net providers and our workforce. To us, health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible which starts with having health care coverage. Health equity also means that we must work tirelessly to address social and systemic barriers to health care.

National and tragic events including George Floyd's death in 2020 on top of the pandemic triggered a nation-wide awakening and reminder that racial, economic, and class disparities exist all around us. While we have come a long way as a young and diverse society and nation, there is still much that can be done to create an equitable society. Consequently, L.A. Care issued a board-approved Statement of Principles on Social Justice and Systemic Racism with input from employees and members.

As part of L.A. Care's effort to ensure that L.A. Care takes action on the Statement of Principles on Social Justice and Systemic Racism, L.A. Care's Chief Executive Officer implemented an equity council structure to support equity at the member, employee, and provider level. A decision was also made to create the Chief Health Equity Officer (CHEO) role at L.A. Care. The Health Equity team led by the CHEO, is charged with implementing concrete measures to improve health equity for our members and advancing the principles of social justice, diversity, equity and inclusion in partnership with our providers, delegates, vendors and employees.

L.A. Care's 2023-2025 Health Equity and Disparities Mitigation (HEDM) plan is a multifaceted plan that builds upon our existing mission, efforts and resources in collaboration with external partners to improve health outcomes and reduce disparities.



Mission

To support, guide and inspire staff and providers to provide equitable and accessible health care for all.



Vision

In partnership with our members, community partners and providers, we strive towards making Los Angeles County a leader in ensuring that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.



Plan Approach

Creating health equity and addressing disparities are efforts that require leadership, collaboration, and input from nearly every department at L.A. Care. Some examples of existing departmental efforts include: Community Resource Centers, Community Health, Community Benefits, Health Education, Quality Improvement (QI), and Social Services departments working on organizing community supports such as coordinating housing, offering medically tailored meals or our Elevating Safety Net Initiative addressing workforce shortage challenges.

This document represents our two-year HEDM Plan and will only highlight the key areas where the Health Equity Department is primarily responsible or involved.

The Health Equity team has documented and solicited feedback from numerous leaders, departments, stakeholders and consulted members to produce this framework and list of priorities and work that needs to be addressed or accomplished over the next 2 years.



Health Equity Zones

What follows below are L.A. Care's Health Equity Zones, which serve as our areas of focus. Within each zone, we have outlined several objectives. An appendix with corresponding metrics for each objective can be found at the end of this document.

1

Address Key Health Disparities

2

Lead Change

3

Move Towards Equitable Care

4

**Embrace Diversity, Equity,
and Inclusion**

Health Equity Zone 1: Address Key Health Disparities

Close racial and ethnic gaps in health outcomes among members.

Objective:

1. In collaboration with L.A. Care's QI Department, L.A. County Department of Public Health and other key stakeholders, review L.A. Care and California Immunization Registry data to identify target populations and implement interventions to increase vaccination rates for children 2 years old and younger across various race/ethnicity populations
2. Implement initiatives to improve health of Black birthing individuals and infants, including Generating African American Infant and Nurturers Survival (GAAINS), and the doula and Community Health Worker benefits.
3. Strengthen provider network for the unhoused population by offering street medicine and virtual care.
4. Expand physical and behavioral health wellness programs for school age youth.
5. Address disparities for Black, Latino/Hispanic and American Indian/Alaska Native communities with chronic disease.



Health Equity Zone 2: Lead Change

Provide leadership and be an ally for community partners to promote health equity and social justice.

Objective:

1. Coordinate and collaborate with internal and external partners like L.A. County's educational, health, public safety social service departments and other health plans to create shared agendas and plans.
2. Promote gun violence prevention education and amplify Office of Violence Prevention firearm safety training to L.A. County clinicians.
3. Explore and identify additional areas for focus and advocacy including community investment programs (e.g. Elevating Safety Net and Community Health Investment Fund grants), medical debt relief, as well as community-generated and driven improvements to address health equity.



Health Equity Zone 3: Move Towards Equitable Care

Ensure that our members have access to care and services that are free of bias and that our providers are supported in delivering equitable, culturally tailored care.

Objective:

1. Improve the collection and analysis of data that help us target care appropriately, including race, ethnicity and language (REaL) data and sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) data.
2. Strengthen the collection and linkages of Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) information on need for food, housing, and transportation among L.A. Care members
3. Support efforts to promote patient and provider concordance, where members can select providers with the racial/ethnic background they feel most comfortable with.
4. Recognize providers that promote health equity through the Provider Equity Award at the annual Provider Recognition event.
5. Create a process to review and analyze Appeal and Grievances, Utilization Management and other services with a health equity approach.



Health Equity Zone 4: Embrace Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Serve as a model in supporting an equitable and inclusive work environment, as reflected in our workforce and business practices.

Objective:

1. Prepare, develop, and implement a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) training plan that is specific to the needs of L.A. Care and meets DHCS regulatory requirements.
2. Ensure compliance with all regulatory, contractual, and accreditation health equity requirements in a timely manner.
3. In collaboration with Human Resources, create an environment that supports diverse employees and allows equitable opportunity to advance and thrive.

