

Health Equity Strategy At-A-Glance

A portfolio of efforts to help all people in Harris County attain their full health potential – one that also helps create a Harris County where no person is disadvantaged from this potential due to economics, education, environment, or dis engagement – begins with **four goals** that will lay new groundwork in HCPHES, help change organizational culture, engage allies and communities, and use data to set objectives and monitor impact. These goals and their primary objectives are depicted below:





HCPHES Health Equity Program

Goals

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Build a solid foundation for a coordinated health equity effort in HCPHES

Health equity is a well-codified HCPHES priority, most recently in the 2013-2018 Strategic Plan. The next level will coordinate health equity efforts under a senior staff lead and then build-out a structured health equity program. To maximize the success of this new investment, we will line-up our efforts with *what works*, by identifying models and experts and by creating our own frameworks and communications tools. We will:

- Build a virtual library of health equity plans, profiles, trainings, and other principal guidance materials.
- Review examples of health equity offices, programs, and initiatives at other local government agencies.
- Interview and have on-deck a core panel of national, state, and local health equity experts.
- Develop an HCPHES Health Equity Framework.
- Develop slide decks and infographics on health equity concepts, key health disparities, and examples of the 4 Es in Harris County.

1

Launch projects in HCPHES and in the community to help stem the upstream tide

For HCPHES's health equity mission to translate into health impact, it must manifest throughout our work. Within our walls, we will identify public health practice re-designs in the direction of Upstream Solutions; in the community, we will develop cross-sector projects focused on improving health inequities through policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change. We will:

- Develop Division and Office-specific workplans that apply a social determinants lens to practice.
- Identify new cross-Divisional/Office and cross-sector community-based projects that expand PSE change aligned with best practice and national guidance.
- Reach across County departments that focus on root causes to identify joint systems-focused projects.
- Become the go-to source on health equity through a robust public presence and key collaborations.

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Transform HCPHES's organizational and workforce capacity for health equity

Though health equity has been a high HCPHES priority, there are gaps in HCPHES's internal health equity infrastructure including policies and procedures for staff and programs. These gaps need filling in order to fully articulate HCPHES's vision for health equity, to build HCPHES's workforce capacity, and to create an agency culture of health equity. They also need filling in order to meet national accreditation standards. We will:

- Engage staff in HCPHES's health equity programming by forming a Strategic Plan Health Equity Project Team (Strategy 1C) and Learning Collaborative.
- Develop and adopt an HCPHES Health Equity Policy that outlines the vision, values, internal/external guidance, indicators, and tools for health equity.
- Design a workforce development and training plan, including cultural and linguistic competence.
- Meet Public Health Accreditation Board health equity and cultural competence standards.

2

Monitor the health equity footprint in HCPHES and Harris County

Data on health disparities and root causes provide insight on both the current state and desired future. They reveal needs by population, place, priority health issue, and program. They can also plan and predict health impact. As a local health department, HCPHES is uniquely positioned to use data as a descriptive, monitoring, and predictive health equity data tool. We will:

- Adopt health equity data indicators for: (1) HCPHES performance and quality improvement; and (2) health outcomes, issues, and determinants in Harris County.
- Apply a methodology to current data collection to identify health disparities early and often.
- Generate profiles of high-impact disparities in health outcomes, key health issues, and root causes.
- Pilot a Health Equity Predictability Index for specific priority public health issues, populations, and places.

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