



Health Equity Workshop Terms + Definitions

Equity (HIP definition)

As an outcome: We achieve equity when identity no longer systematically exposes people to risks or grants people privileges with regard to socioeconomic and life outcomes, and when people who need them most are prioritized to receive the resources required to thrive.

As a process: We achieve equity when those most impacted by historic and current structural biases and injustices are leading or meaningfully engaged in efforts to prioritize issues, to craft and implement solutions, to develop accountability measures, and to monitor progress.

Source: Generated by Human Impact Partners and stakeholders as part of an assessment of the equity impacts of lead poisoning prevention policies.

Health Equity (HIP definition; see page 4 for Oregon-specific definitions)

Everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. To achieve this, we must remove obstacles to health — such as poverty, discrimination, and deep power imbalances — and their consequences, including lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.

Source: This definition of Health Equity is slightly adapted from one developed by Paula Braveman and colleagues in the RWJF commissioned paper, “What Is Health Equity? And What Difference Does a Definition Make?”.

Health Disparities

Differences in health status and mortality rates across population groups, which can sometimes be expected. (e.g., Cancer rates in the elderly vs children)

Source: Adapted from Margaret Whitehead, World Health Organization.

Health Inequities

Differences in health status and mortality rates across population groups that are systemic, avoidable, unfair, and unjust. (e.g., Breast cancer mortality for Black women versus White women)

Source: Adapted from Margaret Whitehead, World Health Organization.

Intersectionality

Understanding the interrelationship of systems of oppression or advantage and “how systemic injustice and inequity occur on a multidimensional basis.”

Source: Kimberle Crenshaw, “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color.”

Power

The potential to shape our lives and the world around us. The three interrelated faces of power are:

- Organizing people and resources for direct political involvement in decision-making areas, to win/achieve a election, initiative, policy, decision
- Durable, long-term political infrastructure/networks who are aligned around the same goals and who set/shape the decision making or political agenda
- Ability to change and hold public narratives, and make meaning on the terrain of ideology and worldview

Source: Grassroots Policy Project, The Three Faces of Power.

Social Determinants of Health

Complex, integrated, and overlapping social structures and economic systems that are responsible for most health inequities. They reflect the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, and which are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels.

Source: World Health Organization

Structural Racism

A system of advantage based on race.

Source: David T. Wellman, Portraits of White Racism, Second Edition

A system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on phenotype (“race”), that: unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and undermines the realization of the full potential of the whole society through the waste of human resources.

Source: Dr. Camara Jones, Confronting Institutionalized Racism. 2002.



Transformational Approaches

Initiatives crossing multiple institutions that shift efforts towards proactive solutions. These solutions alter the ways institutions operate thereby shifting cultural values and political will to create equity.

Transactional Approaches

Issue-based efforts that help individuals negotiate existing structures. These solutions “transact” with institutions to get short-term gains for communities, but leaving the existing structure in place.

Source (for both): Content originally seen in a presentation by John A. Powell from the Othering & Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley. Content adapted from Ronald A. Heifetz & Donald L. Laurie, “The Work of Leadership,” Harvard Business Review, January-February 1997; and Ronald A. Heifetz & Marty Linsky, Leadership on the Line, Harvard Business School Press, 2002.



Health Equity Definitions from Oregon

Oregon Health Authority – State Health Agency

Oregon will have established a health system that creates health equity when all people can reach their full health potential and well-being and are not disadvantaged by their race, ethnicity, language, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, social class, intersections among these communities or identities, or other socially determined circumstances.

Achieving health equity requires the ongoing collaboration of all regions and sectors of the state, including tribal governments to address:

- The equitable distribution or redistributing of resources and power; and
- Recognizing, reconciling and rectifying historical and contemporary injustices.

Multnomah County Equity and Empowerment Lens

The Equity and Empowerment Lens (with a racial justice focus) is a transformative quality improvement tool used to improve planning, decision-making, and resource allocation leading to more racially equitable policies and programs. At its core, it is a set of principles, reflective questions, and processes that focuses at the individual, institutional, and systemic levels by:

- deconstructing what is not working around racial equity;
- reconstructing and supporting what is working;
- shifting the way we make decisions and think about this work; and
- healing and transforming our structures, our environments, and ourselves.

Lane County – Prevention website

What is Health Equity and how do we get there?

Achieving health equity requires structural, social, and political changes to create equal conditions that promote health for all people, especially populations that have experienced historical injustices or face socioeconomic disadvantages.

Umatilla County Board of Commissioners' Ordinance

(not a definition but showing regional commitment to equity)

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners firmly believes that systemic racism exists, but has no place, in Umatilla County, and

WHEREAS the Board of Commissioners respect the peaceful protests that have been conducted throughout Umatilla County on behalf of citizens of color, and

WHEREAS the Board of Commissioners recognize the multiple benefits that diversity contributes to the richness of our collective lives, and

WHEREAS we condemn all forms of discrimination on the basis of religion, national origin, race, color, gender, age or sexual orientation as called out in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and

WHEREAS we are in the midst of a transformational period in our history that, if guided properly, could lead to a more enlightened future on behalf of racial equity.

NOW, therefore be it resolved and ordered that the Board of Commissioners adopt this message and the following position paper on moving forward with pro-active initiatives:

1. The Umatilla County Board of Commissioners reaffirms their earlier statement regarding the fact it is important to remember that we live in a diverse county where racial equity must be a critical part of our mission.
2. As one of Oregon's most diverse counties, it is important we reach out to our Hispanic/Latinx, Indigenous, Black, Asian-Americans, and other individuals of color in such a way that we hear their voices and view issues through their lens rather than through the lens of those who would speak for them whether it would be us or others.
3. The tragic death of George Floyd has created an awakening that has resonated across the nation and around the world and we understand and appreciate the outrage that has resulted and the message that we must put an end to racial inequity wherever it exists. We also recognize that an awakening only has value and meaning if it transforms into a greater, more positive future; when reaction is replaced by tangible differences in thought, purpose, action, and reality.