

Health Equity: Resources to Build our Foundation

Defining health equity

“Every person has the opportunity to ‘attain his or her full health potential’ and no one is ‘disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or other socially determined circumstances.’” [Health Equity](#) | CDC

See other definitions here: [Social Determinants of Health](#) | WHO [What is Health Equity?](#) | RWJF



[Let's Talk Health Equity](#)

National Collaborating Centre for Social Determinants of Health (6 pages)



[Health Equity Animated: Equity vs. Equality](#)

Center for Prevention MN (1.25 minutes)



[What is Health Equity Any Way?](#)

Fairness First Podcast (27 minutes)



[Health Equity Training Modules](#)

UW Population Health Institute (40 minutes)

Incorporating health equity into practice

Clearly, there are similarities and differences across communities, counties, and jurisdictions. The steps we take toward the goal of ensuring each person lives a long and healthy life (i.e., how we operationalize health equity) need to reflect and fit our local context and circumstances. Our work will be unique to our jurisdiction. That said, health equity can be woven into any and every aspect of public health. Here are a few examples from different communities in Wisconsin.

Weaving health into all policies



[Legacy Community Alliance for Health](#)

A project of the Wisconsin Partnership Program in Appleton, WI (2 minutes)

Including health equity in a Community Health Assessment



[Community Health Assessment 2021](#)

Health Equity Alliance of Rock County (“Health Equity Spotlights” highlighted throughout)

Incorporating a health equity lens into strategic planning



[2019-2023 Strategic Plan](#) | Marathon County Health Department (pages 4-5)



[Strategic Plan 2020-2025](#) | Wood County Health Department (page 6)

Framing our messages

There also are different ways of talking about health equity, and it’s best to use language and definitions that work for your community. Sometimes this may mean talking about strategies and programs that meet the needs of people who are most

affected by certain health issues. In other spaces, it might mean directly talking about equity, power, or privilege. You know your community. What matters most is implementing strategies that improve health outcomes for those at the greatest risk. The following resources can help frame health equity messaging.



[Advancing Health Equity: A Guide to Language, Narrative, and Concepts](#)

American Medical Association and AAMC Center for Health Justice



[A New Way to Talk About the Social Determinants of Health](#)

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF)



[No Barrier: Health Equity for All Toolkit & Practical Guide](#)

Windsor-Essex County Health Unit (pages 14-18)

Incorporating health equity into programming

Policy and program strategies are often universal or targeted.

Universal strategies serve or are available to everyone, and aim to establish a minimum protection or goal for the entire population.

Targeted strategies are available to specific populations or groups. Benefits or protections are based on some sort of eligibility, like income, for example. People who are eligible receive the benefit, and others in the general population do not.

A third strategy, **targeted universalism**, combines universal and targeted strategies. Universal goals for everyone are identified, and the strategies to achieve those goals are developed to meet the unique circumstances, strengths, and needs of different groups ([Targeted Universalism](#), Othering & Belonging Institute). This strategy focuses on everyone reaching the universal goal while recognizing and accommodating that different people or groups need different interventions to reach the same goal.

These definitions are from [Targeted Universalism Policy & Practice Primer: Categorizing Strategies](#) | Othering & Belonging Institute.

For more information on Targeted Universalism from the Othering & Belonging Institute:



[4-minute YouTube animation](#)



[35-minute podcast with john a. powell](#)

(listen to the first 16 minutes, if you're short on time)



[Go in depth with this 48-page primer](#)