

Health Equity Checklist for Clinicians

STEP 1. Get into a “health equity” frame of mind

Review these concepts that should be considered while reflecting on your work.

Equity	attainment of the highest level of opportunity/engagement/health for all ¹
Disparities/inequities	differences in opportunity/engagement/health based on characteristics of individual or group diversity
Diversity	the varied identities and experiences within our teams and the families and communities we serve
Inclusion	inviting all people to take part in building our processes and structures, a necessary step to achieving best outcomes
Bias (implicit or explicit)	preferences in individuals and systems or processes that can drive differences in opportunity/engagement/health
Racism	system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks (which is what we call ‘race’) ²
Anti-racism	practice of identifying, challenging, and changing the values, structures and behaviors that perpetuate systemic racism ³
Cultural humility and competency	attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed to work effectively with those who are different from us, includes cultural awareness/sensitivity/responsiveness
Social determinants of health	conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age; shaped by distribution of money, power and resources ⁴

1. adapted from Healthy People 2020, <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/about/foundation-health-measures/Disparities>; 2. American Academy of Pediatrics, The Impact of Racism on Child and Adolescent Health 3. Ontario Anti-racism Secretariat; 4. World Health Organization, https://www.who.int/social_determinants/sdh_definition/en/

STEP 2. Think about health equity broadly

There are many characteristics of diversity known to contribute to disparities in opportunity, engagement, and health in our communities and our workplaces. These include:

Age, education, job role, income, neighborhood/ZIP code, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, language preference, literacy, religion, immigrant status, acculturation, and many others.

STEP 3. Reflect on all areas

When considering your work, explore how concepts and characteristics listed in STEPS 1 & 2 relate to your self-understanding, your patient population, and your clinical environment.

STEP 4. Keep track of your thoughts

Please use the worksheet on the next page to record how the concepts above do or don’t apply to your work.

Name: _____

Worksheet for including health equity in your work

Record below your thoughts about how the terms and characteristics listed in the checklist might apply to your work as a clinician.

1. Understanding yourself – What insight do you have into your own cultural perspectives and preferences/biases? How might these affect your interactions with others? How can you learn more?

Thoughts:

2. Understanding your patient population & communities – What insight do you have into your patient population, including their cultural backgrounds, communication preferences, health traditions, social circumstances, and perceptions of you and your practice? Do you collect information on language preference, race and ethnicity, or other social characteristics? Why or why not? How can you learn more?

Thoughts:

3. Understanding your clinical environment – How does health equity relate to your everyday clinical care? How is your practice set up to account for the diversity of patients you see? In what ways do you or could you automatically include a health equity perspective in your clinical encounters? How can you learn more?

Thoughts:

Questions? Not sure how to best use this tool? Please contact the Health Equity Integration Project through the Office of Equity and Diversity at Children’s Mercy Kansas City (oed@cmh.edu).

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