

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Universal Question Sample Set

Universal questions related to DEI, health equity, and the social determinants of health have been used in multiple settings at Children's Mercy to assure that such perspectives are considered every time a given process is carried out. Below are several examples of universal questions adapted to specific activities and processes.

Basic set of universal questions to consider for any process, activity, or tactic

We always begin with a basic set of questions that can be applied to any kind of work or activity in the organization. These questions can be modified to fit the character of work for any individual or team. Below are specific examples of customized universal questions.

1. Could specific groups of patients, families, employees, or others be affected differently by _____ (process/tactic) _____ ?
2. If so, who might be affected differently and how?
3. What questions will help you find and understand these differences?
4. How do you act on your understanding?

Clinical Safety and Quality Improvement

The following question, which includes a brief explanatory preamble, is used as part of 1) the interview script for cause analysis interviews of staff and others following a safety event, 2) hospital acquired event (HAC) huddles, and 3) code blue debriefs that occur after every code blue event.

We have learned in our work that there are many things that can come into play when something unexpected happens, including characteristics of the people involved. For example, a person's background, beliefs, experiences, culture, and other characteristics can affect their behavior, and might play a role in an event. This can be true for patients, family members, or staff.

Because of this, we have begun asking everyone involved whether they think any of the following things might have played a role in some way – language, culture, race or ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, or any other characteristic of anyone involved. How do you think characteristics such as these played a role in this event, if at all?

Education

Educational session presenters request approval for continuing education credits by submitting a standard Gap Analysis form to the Education Department. This form was amended to include the following question, which includes some explanatory text for the user about the terms "diversity and inclusion," "disparities," and "social determinants of health."

When we assess the learning needs for this education activity, we want to regularly think about how diversity

and inclusion, disparities, and social determinants of health might relate to the learning gap(s). Which of these factors listed below might play a role in the gap or the learning outcomes for this activity?

A check in the box indicates that the factor was assessed. Please record explanation for each factor identified as a learning need.

Diversity and inclusion - When we say diversity, we are talking about the differences in who we are as CMH team members and the differences among the patients, families, and communities we serve; we think of diversity very broadly, including characteristics like age, gender, language, race/ethnicity, income, geography, religion, cultural background, job position, and many others. Inclusion refers to how well we include these different perspectives in our work.

Please explain:

Disparities - When we say disparities, we are talking about the differences in how care is given to certain groups of patients and families, as well as differences in their health outcomes.

Please explain:

Social determinants of health - When we say social determinants of health, we are talking about the many social factors, such as where we live, where we work, how much money we have, what communities we are part of, and many others, that directly impact our health.

Please explain:

Service & Performance Excellence

Individuals and teams from throughout the organization send requests for problem-solving support to the Service & Performance Excellence Department using a request portal. These requests are investigated by members of the department through semi-structures conversations with the requesting team so that appropriate supports can be offered. A universal question was added to the script for the semi-structured interviews.

When we look at issues within our work that we hope to address, we have begun regularly thinking about how diversity and inclusion, disparities, and social determinants of health might relate to the issues. Have any of those come up in your conversations so far?

If the investigator feels it might help clarify, they could use one or more of the following to explain the terms further, depending on the requester's reaction to the initial question:

Diversity and inclusion - When we say diversity, we are talking about the differences in who we are as CMH team members and the differences among the patients, families, and communities we serve; we think of diversity very broadly, including characteristics like age, gender, language, race/ethnicity, income, geography, religion, cultural background, job position, and many others. Inclusion refers to how well we include these different perspectives in our work.

Disparities - When we say disparities, we are talking about the differences in how care is given to certain groups of patients and families, as well as differences in their health outcomes.

Social determinants of health - When we say social determinants of health, we are talking about the many social factors, such as where we live, where we work, how much money we have, what communities we are part of, and many others, that directly impact our health.

Possible responses:

[If “no”] – “No problem – if this project gets assigned to one of our teams, we will be exploring these ideas with you as part of our standard work.”

[if “yes”] – “What has come up?” (Record answer) “Great. If this project gets assigned to one of our teams, we will continue to develop these ideas with you as part of our standard work.”