



ACTION PLAN 2019-2024

Collaborative Strategies for Advancing Health & Racial Equity in South Carolina



BACKGROUND

The Alliance for a Healthier South Carolina is a statewide, multi-sector coalition comprised of over 50 organizations that is built on a collective impact platform and committed to aligning efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in our state. The Alliance was created to bring together uncoordinated health improvement efforts in the state; utilizing the strengths of coalitions to minimize duplication and maximize positive health impacts. A core component of this work has been the development of Live Healthy South Carolina, the first-ever State Health Improvement Plan, which was released in November 2018.

As a supporting framework for Live Healthy South Carolina, the Alliance Health Equity Action Team has developed health and racial equity strategies designed to build leadership capacity to promote health and racial equity as core systemic values and to take collective action at the policy and programmatic levels to eliminate equity-based gaps in health outcomes.

HEALTH EQUITY

There is now robust evidence that suggests the greatest health challenge we face in South Carolina is the major equity-based gap in health access and health outcomes. These equity gaps are driven by disadvantages and discriminations most often affecting minorities, children living in poverty, people with different gender identity and sexual orientation, people facing major mental or physical disabilities, and families living in under-served regions, primarily those living in rural communities.

There is growing recognition among health experts that the health and well-being of people and communities is primarily determined by the conditions in which we live, learn and work, our income and economic assets, the impact of systemic barrier to health rooted in history, the services available to use, and the choices we make within those available. While the extent of these social and environmental factors may vary, many South Carolinians of all ages experience daily obstacles to good health.

PURPOSE

This action plan was designed to understand and address the root causes of health inequities by increasing capacity and building infrastructure to collectively respond to current and emerging equity-based issues.

VISION

A South Carolina that is just and equitable, and where every South Carolinian has the opportunity to achieve their optimal level of health and wellbeing

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These health and racial equity strategies are built on the following set of guiding principles:

- We recognize and acknowledge that racism, unconscious and implicit biases, and the discriminatory effects of structures and policies created by historical injustices have an independent influence on all social determinants of health and have a harmful impact on health.
- We understand that every individual and organization in South Carolina is adversely impacted from a social and economic standpoint by the major existing health and racial equity gaps.
- We commit to facilitating equity-stratification of all relevant health and healthcare data/metrics.
- We believe that meaningful engagement of marginalized communities and those most impacted by health inequities as an equal voice in the health improvement decision-making process is vital.
- We actively support diversity and inclusion in the workforce development pipeline.
- We promote using a “health in all policies” approach to promote health and social equity at the community and state levels.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal 1: Build Awareness, Education, & Training



STRATEGIES:

- Build leadership awareness and understanding of the root causes of health inequities including systemic and institutional racism, implicit biases, and other forms of discriminatory practices.
- There is growing recognition among health experts that the health and well-being of people and communities is primarily determined by the conditions in which we live, learn and work, our income and economic assets, the impact of systemic barrier to health rooted in history, the services available to use, and the choices we make within those available.

Key actions:

- Host discussion to increase awareness and understanding of the root causes of health inequities including systemic and institutional racism, implicit biases, and other forms of discriminatory practices.
- Conduct cultural competency education and training opportunities focused on the negative impact of and solutions to institutional racism and implicit biases.
- Host Poverty Simulations for state partners, community partners and the public.
- Develop inventory of resources such as speakers, trainings, books, podcasts, videos, toolkits, etc for awareness and education.
- Collaborate with Alliance members and partners to support and/or promote their equity-related activities and educational opportunities.

Goal 2: Provide Equity-stratified Data for Decision Making



STRATEGIES:

- Implement systems and processes for data collection, analysis and dissemination that effectively guide equity-focused decisions and actions.

Key actions:

- In conjunction with the State Data team, provide community and state level data that is stratified by race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status and other variables.
- Provide education and training to build skills on data collection, analysis, interpretation and dissemination.

Goal 3: Support Policy and System Changes



STRATEGIES:

- Institute specific policy, practice, and system changes that remove barriers to health and racial equity within organizations and communities.

Key actions:

- Recommit/commit to policy, practice, and system changes that remove barriers to health and racial equity within organizations and communities.
- Highlight organizations and leaders that have made policy and system changes that contribute to health improvement.
- Collect and share best practices for advancing equity-focused policy and systems change.

Goal 4: Build Multi-sector Collaborations



STRATEGIES:

- Create sustainable partnerships between health systems and other major employers, secondary education, and institutions of higher learning that maximize diversity and inclusion at all levels of training and employment.
- Establish opportunities at the community level for those with lived experience to have an active voice in decisions and actions designed to eliminate health and racial equity gaps.
- Promote and facilitate equity-focused collective improvement activities at state and community levels in the areas outlined by the Live Healthy SC State Health Improvement Plan.

Key actions:

- Provide opportunities for organizations to connect and share best practices around hiring, training and policy changes that support an inclusive work environment.
- Promote and facilitate equity-focused collective improvement activities in all 46 counties such as Data Walks, Community Health Assessments, Community Health Improvement Plans, Community Dialogues, etc.
- Develop opportunities for capacity building with community leaders around health equity challenges and solutions.
- Partner with organizations and groups to elevate efforts on social justice issues.
- Convene stakeholders to discuss, provide recommendations and/or act on emerging issues that are related to health inequities.



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