

## **Background**

The Public Health Advisory Board (PHAB), established by House Bill 3100 (2015), serves as the accountable body for governmental public health in Oregon. PHAB reports to the Oregon Health Policy Board (OHPB) and makes recommendations to OHPB on the development of statewide public health policies and goals. PHAB is committed to using best practices and an equity lens to inform its recommendations to OHPB on policies needed to address priority health issues in Oregon, including the social determinants of health.

## **Definition of health equity**

Health equity exists when all people can reach their full health potential and are not disadvantaged from attaining it because of their social and economic status, social class, race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or other socially determined circumstance.<sup>1</sup>

Health equity is also defined as the absence of unfair, avoidable, or remediable difference in health among social groups.<sup>2</sup>

## **How health equity is attained**

Achieving health equity requires the equitable distribution of resources and power resulting in the elimination of gaps in health outcomes between within and different social groups.

Health equity also requires that public health professionals look for solutions outside of the health care system, such as in the transportation or housing sectors and through the distribution of power and resources, to improve health with communities.

## **Policy**

PHAB demonstrates its commitment to advancing health equity by implementing an equity review process for all formally adopted work products, reports and deliverables. In addition, all presenters to the Board will be expected to specifically address how the topic being discussed is expected to affect health disparities or health equity. The purpose of this policy is to ensure all

---

<sup>1</sup> Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. (n.d.). Winnipeg Regional Health Authority's Position Statement on Health Equity. Available at <http://www.wrha.mb.ca/about/healthequity/statement.php>.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization, Commission on Social Determinants of Health, (2007). A Conceptual Framework for Action on the Social Determinants of Health.

Board guidance and decision-making will advance health equity and reduce the potential for unintended consequences that may perpetuate disparities.

## **Procedure**

### **Board work products, reports and deliverables**

The questions below are designed to ensure that decisions made by PHAB promote health equity. The questions below may not be able to be answered for every policy or decision brought before PHAB, but serve as a platform for further discussion prior to the adoption of any motion.

The answers to the following questions will be submitted to PHAB for review with the meeting materials prior any official Board action involving a vote to adopt a work product, report or and deliverable. The subcommittee or PHAB member responsible for bringing the work product, report or deliverable forward for a motion will begin by walking through the responses to these questions prior to introducing the work product, report or deliverable for a motion.

1. How is the work product, report or deliverable different from the current status?
2. What health disparities exist among which groups? Which health disparities does the work product, report or deliverable aim to eliminate?
3. How does the work product, report or deliverable support individuals in reaching their full health potential?
4. Which source of health inequity does the work product, report or deliverable address (social and economic status, social class, racism, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or other socially determined circumstance)?
5. How does the work product, report or deliverable ensure equitable distribution of resources and power?
6. How was the community engaged in the work product, report or deliverable policy or decision? How does the work product, report or deliverable impact the community?
7. How does the work product, report or deliverable engage other sectors for solutions outside of the health care system, such as in the transportation or housing sectors?
8. How will data be used to monitor the impact on health equity resulting from this work product, report or deliverable?

### **Presentations to the Board**

OHA staff will work with presenters prior to Board meetings to ensure that presenters specifically address the following, as applicable:

1. What health disparities exist among which groups? Which health disparities does the presentation topic aim to eliminate?
2. How does the presentation topic support individuals in reaching their full health potential?

3. Which source of health inequity does the presentation topic address (social and economic status, social class, racism, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or other socially determined circumstance)?
4. How does the presentation topic ensure equitable distribution of resources and power?
5. How was the community engaged in the presentation topic? How does the presentation topic content impact the community?
6. How does the presentation topic engage other sectors for solutions outside of the health care system, such as in the transportation or housing sectors?
7. How will data be used to monitor the impact on health equity resulting from the presentation topic?

#### Policy and procedure review

The PHAB health equity review policy and procedure will be reviewed annually by the Board. Board members will discuss whether the policy and procedure has had the intended effect of reducing disparities or improving health equity to determine whether changes are needed to the policy and procedure.

#### **Resources**

The City of Portland, Parks and Recreation. Affirmation of Equity Statement.

Multnomah County Health Department (2012). Equity and Empowerment Lens.

Oregon Health Authority, Office of Equity and Inclusion. Health Equity and Inclusion Program Strategies.

Oregon Education Investment Board. Equity Lens.

Oregon Health Authority, Office of Equity and Inclusion. Health Equity Policy Committee Charter.

Jackson County Health Department and So Health-E. Equity planning documents and reports.

