

Statement on Health Equity

Health Equity is the realization by all people of the highest attainable level of health. Achieving health equity requires valuing ALL individuals and populations equally, and entails focused and ongoing societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities by [ensuring] the conditions for optimal health for all groups, particularly for those who have experienced historical or contemporary injustices or socioeconomic disadvantage.

Health Resources Development Service (HRDS) provides services to a community of individuals who require certification for the purposes of employment as Nurse Aides and Home Care Administrators. Gainful employment is a cornerstone in the social determinants of health; without employment other determinants such as housing, food, childcare services, transportation, and health care services are all at risk.

HRDS promotes opportunity. An obstacle that may delay or obstruct an individual from obtaining certification required for employment may contribute to reduced economic opportunity and reduced access to health services. HRDS seeks to identify and minimize those policies and practices that present unnecessary barriers to certification.

HRDS will explore partnering with nurse aide training programs to develop and disseminate culturally tailored public health communication messages to the nurse aide in training, a community that is generally economically disadvantaged.

HRDS will explore partnering with Nurse Aide and Home Care Administrator training programs to include information on educational opportunities and supports for their applicable career ladders.

HRDS performs inspections of Oklahoma's county and city jails. When contacted by inmates and their friends and families regarding jail conditions, HRDS staff will treat these customers with respect. Frequently, this community consists of disadvantaged populations. In these communications, HRDS may have an opportunity to share public health messages and/or direct the caller to other resources. HRDS will explore these opportunities and research those messages and resources that may be appropriately shared and of assistance to this community.

HRDS Health Equity Opportunity Statement: HRDS promotes opportunities for health equity. Anything that delays certification for a job without cause may limit income and reduce access to health care. If you have concerns about the requirements for certification please let us know: HealthResources@health.ok.gov.

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Health Inequity

Health Inequity is based on disparities in health [or health care] that are systemic and avoidable and, therefore, considered unfair or unjust.

Health Disparities

Health Disparities are differences in health status among distinct segments of the population including differences that occur by gender, race or ethnicity, education or income, disability, or living in various geographic localities.

Social Determinants of Health

The social determinants of health are those inter-related social and economic factors that influence health.

Social determinants of health include, but are not limited to: socioeconomic status, discrimination, housing, physical environment, food security, child development, culture, social support, healthcare services, transportation, working conditions, and democratic participation.

The World Health Organization defines social determinants of health as "complex, integrated, and overlapping social structures and economic systems that include the social environment, physical environment, and health services; structural and societal factors that are responsible for most health inequities. Social determinants of health are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national, and local levels, which are themselves influenced by policy choices."