

Increasing Cultural Competency to Reduce Behavioral Health Disparities: Definitions and Resources

This document describes definitions of important terminology and online resources that contain information about understanding, identifying and addressing health disparities through culturally competent approaches. This is not an exhaustive list of the resources on this topic.

Definitions

Behavioral Health Disparity: A particular type of health difference that is closely linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage. Behavioral health disparities adversely affect groups of people who have systematically experienced greater obstacles to health based on their racial or ethnic group; religion; socioeconomic status; gender; age; mental health; cognitive, sensory, or physical disability; sexual orientation or gender identity; geographic location; or other characteristics historically linked to discrimination or exclusion.¹

Health equity: Attaining the highest level of health possible for all people. Achieving health equity requires valuing everyone with focused and ongoing societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities, historical and contemporary injustices, and the elimination of health disparities and health care disparities.²

Cultural competence: The ability of an individual or organization to interact effectively with people of different cultures.³

Resources

Curricula Enhancement Module Series: Definitions of Cultural Competence

The National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) at Georgetown University

<http://nccc-curricula.info/culturalcompetence.html>

Description: This website provides definitions and descriptions of cultural competence and other related terms that have been articulated in the evolving research literature from the fields of health and human services.

Social Determinants of Health: Frequently Asked Questions

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/socialdeterminants/faq.html>

Description: This website features definitions, information about the strategies different centers at the CDC are using to address social determinants of health, and practical suggestions for incorporating those strategies into your own organization.

Closing the gap in a generation: Health equity through action on the social determinants of health

World Health Organization (WHO) Commission on Social Determinants of Health

http://www.who.int/social_determinants/thecommission/finalreport/en/index.html

Description: This 2008 report details the rationale for the global movement toward health equity, and the Commission's approach to finding evidence and making recommendations for actions to promote health equity.

National Information Center on Health Services Research and Health Care Technology (NICHSR) – Health Disparities

U.S. National Library of Medicine

<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/hsrinfo/disparities.html>

Description: This website offers resources on news, data, tools and statistics related to health disparities, as well as links to guidelines, journals and other publications and information about key organizations and programs that address health disparities.

Cultural Competence and Self-Awareness Assessments

The National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) at Georgetown University

<http://nccc.georgetown.edu/resources/assessments.html>

Description: This website provides organizations and their personnel tools to assess individual and collective progress in becoming increasingly culturally competent over time. It offers a rationale for the organizational self-assessment process and describes how such a process can support the development of short-term and long-term organizational goals, measurable objectives, and strategic plans to enhance cultural competence.

Racial and Ethnic Health Care Disparities

The Center for Medicare Advocacy

<http://www.medicareadvocacy.org/medicare-info/health-care-disparities/>

Description: This website answers the question, “what are health disparities?” and describes health disparities as a concept. It also provides factual information about the harmful effects of health disparities on individuals and communities.

Data 2010 – The Healthy People 2010 Database

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://wonder.cdc.gov/data2010/>

Description: “DATA2010 is an interactive database system developed by staff of the Division of Health Promotion Statistics at the National Center for Health Statistics, and contains the most recent monitoring data for tracking Healthy People 2010.”



Healthy People 2010 Snapshots

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/healthy_people/hp2010/hp2010_snapshots.htm

Description: This resource features a series of five reports, one for each of the following racial and ethnic populations: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Hispanic or Latino, non-Hispanic black, and non-Hispanic white.

Webtreats: Health Disparities

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)

<http://www.acog.org/About-ACOG/ACOG-Departments/Resource-Center/WEBTREATS-Health-Disparities>

Description: This website provides a quick guide to internet resources about health disparities prepared by ACOG Resource Center Librarians.

Minority Health and Health Disparities

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)

<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/alcohol-health/special-populations-co-occurring-disorders/diversity-health-disparities>

Description: This website provides resources on NIAAA's areas of research pertaining on health disparities, including epidemiology and prevention, treatment and health services, neuroscience, and infrastructure development.

Behavioral Health Barometer, United States, 2014

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

http://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/National_BHBarometer_2014/National_BHBarometer_2014.pdf

Description: "This is the second edition of the Behavioral Health Barometer: United States, one of a series of state and national reports that provide a snapshot of behavioral health in the United States. The reports present a set of substance use and mental health indicators as measured through data collection efforts sponsored by SAMHSA, including the National Survey on Drug Use and Health and the National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Services."

Specific Populations and Prescription Drug Misuse and Abuse

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

<http://www.samhsa.gov/prescription-drug-misuse-abuse/specific-populations>

Description: This resource highlights the ways in which certain population groups are more vulnerable than others in terms of prescription drug misuse and abuse.

Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities among Communities of Color Compared to Non-Hispanic Whites

Family USA

<http://familiesusa.org/health-disparities>

Description: This website features a series of infographics detailing racial and ethnic health disparities experienced by African Americans, Latinos, American Indian & Alaska Natives, and Asian Americans & Pacific compared with Non-Hispanic Whites.



References

- 1) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Healthy People 2020 (n.d.). *Disparities*. Retrieved from <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/about/disparitiesAbout.aspx>
- 2) Minnesota Department of Health Executive Leadership Team. SHIP Health Equity Implementation Guide FY2014-2015. Retrieved from: http://www.health.state.mn.us/healthreform/ship/2013rfp/docs/HEq-implementation_SHIP3.pdf
- 3) SAMHSA's Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies (2012). Cultural Competence. Retrieved from <http://www.samhsa.gov/capt/applying-strategic-prevention/cultural-competence>

