

**Public Health Advisory Board  
Health equity review policy and procedure  
September 2020**



**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**

Oregon will have established a health system that creates health equity when all people can reach their full health potential and well-being and are not disadvantaged by their race, ethnicity, language, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, social class, intersections among these communities or identities, or other socially determined circumstances.

Achieving health equity requires the ongoing collaboration of all regions and sectors of the state, including tribal governments to address:

- The equitable distribution or redistribution of resources and power; and
- Recognizing, reconciling and rectifying historical and contemporary injustices.

**Equity framework**

Identifying and implementing effective solutions to advance health equity demands:

- Recognition of the role of historical and contemporary oppression and structural barriers facing Oregon communities due to racism.
- Engagement of a wide range of partners representing diverse constituencies and points of view.
- Direct involvement of affected communities as partners and leaders in change efforts.

**Leading with racial equity**

**How health equity is attained**

Achieving health equity requires engagement and co-creation of policies, programs and decisions with the community in order to ensure the equitable distribution of resources and power. This level of community engagement results 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, justice or housing sectors and through the distribution of power and resources, to improve health with communities. By redirecting resources that further the damage caused by white supremacy and oppression into services and programs that uplift communities and repair past harms, equity can be achieved.

### **Policy**

PHAB demonstrates its commitment to advancing health equity by implementing an equity review process for all formally adopted work products, reports and deliverables. Board members will participate in an equity analysis prior to making any motions. 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 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.

Subcommittees or board members will consistently consider the questions in the assessment tool while developing work products and deliverables to bring to the full board.

Subcommittee members bringing a work product will independently review and respond to these PHAB members will discuss and respond to each of the following questions prior to taking any formal motions or votes.

Staff materials will include answers to the following questions to provide context for the PHAB or PHAB subcommittees:

1. What health inequities exist among which groups? Which health inequities does the work product, report or deliverable aim to eliminate?
2. 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?
3. 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?

PHAB members shall allow the questions to be discussed prior to taking a vote. Review questions should be provided to the Board with each vote.

OHA staff will be prepared to respond to questions and discussion as a part of the review process. Staff are expected to provide background and context for PHAB decisions using the questions below.

The PHAB review process includes the following questions:

4. How does the work product, report or deliverable:
  - a. Contribute to racial justice?
  - b. Rectify past injustices and health inequities?
  - c. Differ from the current status?
  - d. Support individuals in reaching their full health potential
  - e. Ensure equitable distribution of resources and power?
  - f. Engage the community to affect changes in its health status
5. Which sources of health inequity does the work product, report or deliverable address (race/racism, ethnicity, social and economic status, social class, religion, age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or other socially determined circumstance)?
6. 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 PHAB meetings to ensure that presenters specifically address the following, as applicable:

1. What health inequities exist among which groups? Which health inequities does the presenter and their work aim to eliminate?
2. How does the presentation topic engage other sectors for solutions outside of the health care system, such as in the transportation or housing sectors?
3. How was the community engaged in the presentation topic? How does the presentation topic or related work affect the community?
4. How does the presentation topic:
  - a. Contribute to racial justice?
  - b. Rectify past health inequities?
  - c. Differ from the current status?
  - d. Support individuals in reaching their full health potential
  - e. Ensure equitable distribution of resources and power?
  - f. Engage the community to affect changes in its health status

5. Which sources of health inequity does the presentation topic address (race/racism, ethnicity, social and economic status, social class, religion, age, disability, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or other socially determined circumstance)?
6. How will data be used to monitor the impact on health equity resulting from this presentation topic?

### Policy and procedure review

The PHAB health equity review policy and procedure will be reviewed annually by a workgroup of the Board. This workgroup will also propose changes to the PHAB charter and bylaws in order ground the charter and bylaws in equity. Board members will discuss whether the policy and procedure has had the intended effect of mitigating injustice, reducing inequities 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](#).