

BEYOND COVID-19



TOOLKIT

**Resources to Address
Health Disparities in
Marginalized Communities**



INTRODUCTION

“It Takes All of Us...” The devastation of COVID-19 has given change leaders on the front lines an opportunity to shine a bright light on unjust beliefs and practices that create health inequities for our most vulnerable communities and populations throughout Texas counties and around the country.

Many churches, philanthropic organizations, businesses, and civic and government entities have worked tirelessly to address the most pressing needs impacting our lives during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Alliance is pleased to share a collection of online resources from change leaders from around the country, including Texas.

The Beyond COVID-19 Toolkit is designed to help change leaders on the front lines of community transformation work with informed perspectives from experts in the field of mental health and well-being, social equity, rural health, minority health and health disparities, and policy. The toolkit is divided into five sections:

Section 1: Why Should We Address Health Disparities

Section 2: What Is Health Equity

Section 3: A Look at Rural Health Inequities and Social Determinants

Section 4: Understanding the Root Causes of Health Inequity through the Lens of COVID-19

Section 5: Making the Case with Data

Glossary of Key Terms

We stand ready to work with you and other partners to identify solutions to beliefs and practices that preserve inequity for people living in marginalized communities. For more information, email us at info@allianceforgreaterworks.org

SECTION 1:

Why Should We Address Health Disparities in Marginalized Communities

"Let's Use the Grief of COVID-19 to Reset the Future of Our Most Vulnerable"
by Sherrye Willis



In the opening scenes of the movie *Just Mercy*, Alice Stevenson is forcefully sweeping the front porch of her family's Delaware home, nervous about the danger her son Bryan could face in southern Alabama.

"What you are doing is going to make a lot of people upset," she says after Bryan Stevenson finally gets his mother to sit and talk.

Bryan, played by actor Michael B. Jordan, gently reminds his mother that it was the example of her heart for others that set him on his path.

"You always taught me to fight for the people who need the help the most," he said.

Right now, in our battle against COVID-19, we must fight for more justice and mercy on behalf of the most vulnerable in our society.

The painful reality is that African-Americans are more likely to die of COVID-19 than any other group in the U.S.

The objective for thousands of African-Americans during the current global pandemic is to simply stay alive.

The facts are oppressive.

A *Washington Post* analysis found that majority-black counties had infection rates three times the rate of majority-white counties.

A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention analysis of nearly 1,500 hospitalizations across 14 states found that black people made up a third of the hospitalizations, despite accounting for 18 percent of the population in the areas studied.

An Associated Press analysis of available death data found that black people constituted 42 percent of the victims, doubling their share of the populations of the states included in the analysis.

In Louisiana, more than 70 percent of the people who have died so far from the COVID-19 pandemic were black, more than twice their 32 percent share of the state's population, and well above the 60 percent share of the population of New Orleans, where the outbreak is worst.

In New York, African-Americans comprise 9 percent of the state population and 17 percent of the deaths. A similar pattern is emerging in North Texas' under-resourced communities, according to Dallas County health statistics.

There's no question that African-Americans suffer disproportionately from hypertension, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, lung disease, obesity, and asthma—chronic diseases that make it harder for them to survive COVID-19.

African-Americans in poor urban and rural areas are all too familiar with food deserts, inferior or non-existent health care, being uninsured or under-insured, being unemployed, living paycheck-to-paycheck, and, sadly, experiencing the bias and stereotypes that poor people of color in America endure. Cumulatively, these all contribute to their poor health outcomes.

Yes, the root causes for the level of suffering too many African-Americans, Hispanics, and other communities of color are enduring from "The Black Plague," as The New Yorker aptly named coronavirus, are no mystery.

The result is that this pandemic is exacerbating unacceptable weaknesses in our society that have existed for decades.

"If we say we are committed to equal justice under law, to protecting the rights of every citizen regardless of wealth, race or status, then we have to end this nightmare," Stevenson says near the movie's end.

Agreed. Let's help end this nightmare for so many of our neighbors by fighting to expose how the COVID-19 pandemic has shone a bright light on the unacceptable racial and ethnic health disparities in under-resourced urban and rural communities and on people living with physical and mental illness.

In the era of COVID-19, Dr. King's words ring especially loud in the truth of these historic days: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

Sherrye Willis is President and CEO of Alliance for Greater Works, a non-profit in the Dallas area devoted to dismantling the systems and practices that perpetuate inequities for people living in marginalized communities.



SECTION 2:

What is Health Equity

“Achieving health equity requires valuing everyone equally with focused and ongoing societal efforts to address avoidable inequities, historical and contemporary injustices, and the elimination of health and health care disparities,” Healthy People 2020 adds.

Ten Equity Implications of The Coronavirus COVID-19 Outbreak in the United States (NACCP)

<https://live-naacp-site.pantheonsite.io/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Ten-Equity-Considerations-of-the-Coronavirus-COVID-19-Outbreak-in-the-United-States-FINAL.pdf>

Rural Americans are Vulnerable to the Coronavirus (Center for American Progress)

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/news/2020/03/05/481340/rural-communities-vulnerable-coronavirus/>

Coronavirus Compounds Inequality and Endangers Communities of Color (Connor Maxwell)

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/news/2020/03/27/482337/coronavirus-compounds-inequality-endangers-communities-color/>

Rural Health Quarterly (Scott Phillips)

<http://ruralhealthquarterly.com/home/>

Systemic Inequality: Displacement, Exclusion, and Segregation (Connor Maxwell)

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/reports/2019/08/07/472617/systemic-inequality-displacement-exclusion-segregation/>

Section 2: Continued

The Economic Fallout of the Coronavirus for People of Color (Center for American Progress)

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/news/2020/04/14/483125/economic-fallout-coronavirus-people-color/>

Talking About COVID-19: A Call for Racial, Economic, and Health Equity (The Opportunity Agenda)

<https://www.opportunityagenda.org/explore/insights/talking-about-covid-19-call-racial-economic-and-health-equity>

Working on Coronavirus Vaccine Trials, Kizzmekia Corbett Is 'Not Your Average' Scientist

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/scientist-kizzmekia-corbett-lead-s-way-covid-19-vaccine-trials-dedication-n1181626>

COVID-19 – Racial Equity & Social Justice Resources

<https://www.racialequitytools.org/fundamentals/resource-lists/resources-addressing-covid-19-with-racial-equity-lens>

Coronavirus and Racial + Social Equity: Centering Justice (The Justice Collective)

<http://www.thejusticecollective.org/main-blog/2020/3/11/coronavirus-and-racial-social-equity-centering-justice-during-times-of-uncertainty-and-four-things-you-can-do-right-now>



SECTION 3:

A Look at Rural Health Inequities and Social Determinants

Rural Policy Research Institute - Center for Rural Health Policy Analysis

Understanding the Social Determinants of Health: A Self-Guided Learning Module for Rural Health Care Team (PDF)

RHIhub – Rural Health Information Hub

Conducting Rural Health Research, Needs Assessment, and Program Evaluation

RUPRI– Rural Policy Research Institute

The Geography of Need: Identifying Human Service Needs in Rural America (PDF)

HealthLandscape

Community Vital Signs and Rural Health Explorer from American Academy of Family Physicians

Rural Health Quarterly (RHQ)

RHQ's U.S. Rural Health Report Card (PDF)

JABFM Journal of American Board of Family Medicine

Primary Care, Behavioral Health, Provider Colocation, and Rurality (PDF)

Home and Community-Based Services

Home and Community-Based Services: Creating Systems for Success at Home, at Work and in the Community

National Rural Health Association Policy Brief

The Future of Rural Behavioral Health (PDF)

Health Resources & Services Administration

Interactive map of Mental Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)

The Texas Observer

Map: Rate of Confirmed COVID-19 cases per PCP in Texas Counties (Updated Frequently)



SECTION 4:

Understanding the Root Causes of Health Inequities through the Lens of COVID-19

How can I play a role in weakening systemic inequities? By uncovering the sources, we will be able to address the issue, appropriately channel resources, and develop a system that creates equity.

COVID-19 Targets Communities of Color – The Harvard Gazette (Dr. Camara Phyllis-Jones, contributor)

<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2020/04/health-care-disparities-in-the-age-of-coronavirus/>

How the Coronavirus Affects Social Determinants of Health (Patient ENGAGEMENTHIT)

<https://patientengagementhit.com/news/how-the-coronavirus-affects-social-determinants-of-health>

To Fight Coronavirus, Fight Poverty (OtherWords)

<https://otherwords.org/to-solve-coronavirus-solve-poverty/?emci=1b531f5a-2e69-ea11-a94c-00155d03b5dd&emdi=4a4cdb47-3769-ea11-a94c-00155d03b5dd&ceid=4057277>

Opinion: U.S. Must Avoid Building Racial Bias into COVID-19 Emergency Guidance (Health News from NPR)

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/04/21/838763690/opinion-u-s-must-avoid-building-racial-bias-into-covid-19-emergency-guidance>

Rural Response to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) – (RHlhub)

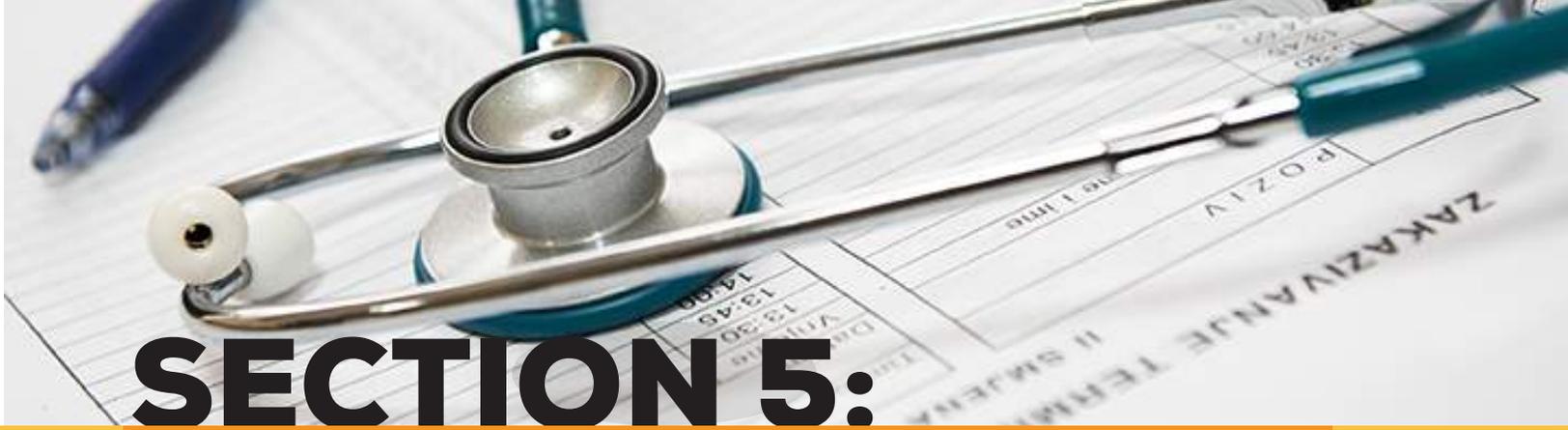
<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/covid-19>

Prioritize Equity in COVID-19 Response (National League of Cities)

<https://citiesspeak.org/2020/03/19/prioritize-equity-in-covid-19-response/>

The Coronavirus Pandemic and the Racial Wealth Gap (Center for American Progress)

<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/race/news/2020/03/19/481962/coronavirus-pandemic-racial-wealth-gap/>



SECTION 5:

Making the Case with Data

Data is a useful tool to tell a community's story. Below are resources to explore health disparities and how data can reflect the story of the communities around you.

The State of Health Disparities in the United States (Communities in Action: Pathways to Health Equity)

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK425844/>

Comprehensive Data by Race and Ethnicity Will Be Key for Understanding the Impacts of COVID-19 across Communities and on Health and Economic Disparities Going Forward (Kaiser Family Foundation Health Policy Research, Analysis, Polling)

<https://www.kff.org/disparities-policy/issue-brief/communities-of-color-at-higher-risk-for-health-and-economic-challenges-due-to-covid-19/>

CDC Health Disparities & Inequalities Report (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

<https://www.cdc.gov/minorityhealth/CHDIRreport.html>

Understanding Health Equity in Value-Based Patient Care (PATIENT ENGAGEMENTHIT, by Sara Heath)

<https://patientengagementhit.com/news/understanding-health-equity-in-value-based-patient-care>

COVID-19 and the Working Class (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/flex2.t01.htm>

All the Data You Need in One Place (POLICYMAP)

www.policymap.com

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Establishing a shared understanding is vital in achieving a common vision and agenda. Here are some key terms often used in dialogues related to community transformational work.

Marginalization is the process of making a group or class of people less important or relegated to a secondary position. When one class of people is grouped together as second-class citizens, this is an example of marginalization.

Marginalized Groups or Populations exist nearly everywhere. They are people who, for whatever reason, are denied involvement in mainstream economic, political, cultural, and social activities. Targeting or ignoring one group can ultimately affect the whole society.

Marginalized Communities are confined to the lower or peripheral edge of the society. Such a group is denied involvement in mainstream economic, political, cultural, and social activities due to their living conditions, lifestyles, or exclusion.

Historically Excluded Groups refer to any group of people that has been historically excluded from full rights, privileges, and opportunities in a society or organization.

Community is any configuration of individuals, families, and groups whose values, characteristics, interests, geography, and/or social relations unite them in some way.

Community-Based Solution is an action, policy, program, or law driven by the community that impacts community-level factors and promotes health equity.

Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease.

Glossary Continued

Health Disparities are differences that exist among specific population groups in the United States in the attainment of full health potential that can be measured by differences in incidence, prevalence, mortality, burden of disease, and other adverse health conditions.

Health Equity is the state in which everyone has the opportunity to attain full health potential and no one is disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or any other socially defined circumstance.

Public Policy is a law, regulation, procedure, administrative action, incentive, or voluntary practice of governments and other institutions that affects a whole population.

Social Determinants are the conditions in the environments in which people live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. For the purposes of this report, the social determinants of health are education, employment, health systems and services, housing, income and wealth, the physical environment, public safety, the social environment, and transportation.

Alliance for Greater Works

www.alliancetxt.org

Alliance for Greater Works is committed to dismantling the systems and practices that perpetuate inequity for people living in marginalized communities.

Toolkit made possible by

