

The Alliance for Health Equity is a collaborative of 30+ hospitals working with health departments and regional and community-based organizations to improve health equity, wellness, and quality of life across Cook County from the neighborhoods of Chicago to the municipalities of the suburbs. Since 2015, leaders from the major hospitals and health systems in Chicago and Suburban Cook County have worked collaboratively with community-based organizations and public health to prioritize health equity. With the support of Illinois Public Health Institute staff, hospital leaders work on community health equity through clinical healthcare strategies, community health partnerships, research and data analysis, anchor institution strategies, and policy action.



Collaborative Community Health Needs Assessment

Alliance for Health Equity partners have worked together with the Illinois Public Health Institute and Chicago and Cook County Departments of Public Health on collaborative Community Health Needs Assessments in 2016 and 2019. The CHNA includes health and social data, systems analysis, and extensive community input; and it is used by hospitals and health systems to prioritize community initiatives, programs, and policies.

Focus Areas

Policy

Data & Assessment

Trauma-informed Hospitals

Social and Structural Determinants of Health

Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders

Housing

Food Access and Food Security

Community Safety

Racial Equity

Mental Health First Aid

Opioid Treatment and Response

Faith Communities



Bringing together community and healthcare expertise to co-design solutions to improve health equity.

SOCIAL AND STRUCTURAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

Food Access and Food Security

Action Agenda focusing on economic development, policy, and screening and referral partnerships

Screening, referral, and partnerships alignment across at least 17 hospitals and multiple FQHC partners

Case studies and example workflows from successful food and healthcare partnerships



Housing and Health

Landscape analysis of health and housing initiatives to identify areas for collaborative action

Partnerships between healthcare and housing on Permanent Supportive Housing, medical respite, affordable housing, & healthy homes

Coordinated data efforts within healthcare to identify and serve patients with unstable housing



Community Safety

Exploring data systems, and lifting up community-partnership solutions



Trauma-informed Hospitals Collaborative

Partnership with Health & Medicine Policy Research Group and the Illinois ACEs Response Collaborative

Implement assessment of trauma knowledge, skills, attitudes, and needs within hospitals



Strategic Alignment and Policy

Coordinating with other collaboratives to reduce silos and duplication of efforts.

Policy collaboration: chronic disease prevention, mental health, housing, food access, healthcare access for immigrants

Cultivation of increased partnership with community based orgs and community members

Capacity building for racial equity initiatives

CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION

Policy, shared best practices, supporting social determinants initiatives for communities impacted by chronic disease, linking to community initiatives, and resource development

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

CHNA identified multiple areas for collaborative action: funding and access to services, quality, care integration, stigma, community-based training and programs, and workforce development.

Coordination across providers of Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

Logic models to guide shared evaluation of mental health first aid.

Development of web mapping applications to monitor and track MHFA and mental health awareness training

Opioid Treatment and Response

Cohort of nine Chicago and Suburban Cook County hospitals focused on shared learning for opioid treatment and response

Focus on naloxone dispensing and medication-assisted treatment/medication for opioid use disorder