

Reframe Using a Health Equity Lens



A Framework Used by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Health equity means everyone in Los Angeles County has the opportunities and resources needed to achieve optimal health and well-being. Achieving health equity across our County asks that we all support and lead policy and systems changes within and outside of our departments. This may require looking at how we align our current activities and resources to address the fundamental causes of health inequities, including economic, social and racial injustices. The framework below briefly describes principles and strategies used by the Department of Public Health to prioritize health equity and determine the best use of our resources and investments.

Guiding Principles

The department adheres to a set of shared principles when working toward health equity, including:

COMMITMENT	Commitment to racial justice and social change.
ACCOUNTABILITY	Accountability to the community and each other.
INTEGRITY	Integrity and transparency in our internal and external processes.
COLLABORATION	Collaboration and shared learning.

Core Strategies

Core strategies needed to apply the principles, include, but are not limited to the following:

- 1) Increasing organizational competency and capacity to engage in sustained equity work.**
 - Developing and implementing training and policies across the Health Agency that create and foster a just culture of learning and respect
- 2) Communicating in ways that amplify community voices and authentic narratives to drive action.**
 - Highlighting community strengths, assets and solutions, and connecting poor outcomes to the need for just distribution of social determinants of health
 - Making sure data is meaningful, actionable, and widely available and understandable to diverse audiences

- 3) Supporting/building community capacity to engage in efforts that eliminate inequities.**
 - Ensuring ongoing opportunities for meaningful community input, leadership, engagement, and mobilization at critical junctures in planning, implementation, analysis and reporting
 - Supporting efforts to address policies, systems, and practices contributing to health inequities
 - Offer community investments

- 4) Forging partnerships to enhance and promote efforts that result in equitable health outcomes.**
 - Using our platform and partnerships to broadly share and strengthen community determined solutions
 - Creating opportunities to pool intellectual, fiscal, human, and other resources with communities
 - Clearly articulating, monitoring, and reporting metrics and outcomes

- 5) Aligning current resources to work that eliminates inequities.**
 - Identifying and using administrative practices and policies that support equity (e.g. staff recruitment and training; procurement; contracting practices)
 - Reframing our questions to ensure that staffing and resource allocations address root causes of health inequities

Simply changing the way we ask questions can reframe the conversation and help us exercise a health equity lens when addressing urgent health problems.

Conventional Question	Health Equity Question
How can we promote healthy behavior?	How can we target dangerous conditions and reorganize land use and transportation policies to ensure healthy spaces and places?
How can we reduce disparities in the distribution of disease and illness?	How can we eliminate inequities in the distribution of resources and power that shape health outcomes?
What social programs and services are needed to address health disparities?	What types of institutional and social changes are necessary to tackle health inequities?
How can individuals protect themselves against health disparities?	What kinds of community organizing and alliance building are necessary to protect communities?

Join the Center for Health Equity’s Listserv:
LACHealthEquity@listserv.ph.lacounty.gov