Government Alliance on Race and Equity and the Minnesota Department of Health: Racial Equity and Health Equity Go Hand in Hand

Minnesota Public Health Association
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Center for Social Inclusion

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Paired discussion –

1. Are you **comfortable** talking about racial equity?

2. Do you have community **partnerships** to pursue racial equity?

3. Do you have the **support** needed to pursue racial equity?
Government Alliance on Race and Equity

A national network of government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all.

✓ A membership network of jurisdictions in leadership
✓ Expanding jurisdictions – in 30 states and more than 100 cities – all levels of government
✓ Providing tools and resources to put theory into action

Center for Social Inclusion

Center for Social Inclusion’s mission is to catalyze communities, government, and other institutions to dismantle structural racial inequity and create equitable outcomes for all
Introductory Track

1) Bloomington – Bloomington Barrier Breakers
2) Dakota County – Be MORE (Movers of Racial Equity)
3) Edina – Edina Green – Making it greener on both sides
4) Golden Valley – Valley Values
5) Hennepin County Courts – Justice 4 All
6) Hennepin County Library – 361.2: Weeding Out Inequity (Dewey Decimal code for social action)
7) League of Minnesota Cities – GRIT (Generating Racial Inclusion Together)
8) Met Council – Regional Change Blazers
9) Met Council Plus – The Outliers
10) Minneapolis Park Board – Team ELMER (Establishing Leaders of Minneapolis to Embrace Race)
11) Northfield – Defeat of Racial Inequity Gang
12) Shoreview – SHREK (Shoreview Racial Equity Kohort)
13) St Anthony – SAVI (St Anthony Villagers for Inclusion)
14) St Louis Park – Park Changers
15) State of Minnesota
16) Three Rivers Park District – TRREAT (Three Rivers Racial Equity Action Team)
17) White Bear Lake – Bear BEAT (Bear Equity Action Team)
18) Woodbury – Inglorious COWARDS (City of Woodbury Advancing Racially Diverse Systems)
Advanced / Implementation Track

1) Bloomington
2) Hopkins
3) Hennepin County
4) Mankato
5) Maplewood
6) Minneapolis
7) Minneapolis Park Board
8) Ramsey County
9) Red Wing
10) State of Minnesota
11) St Louis Park
GARE State of MN
(Beginning and Advanced) Learning Cohorts

• End product of the year-long GARE Learning Cohort is to develop a better understanding of racial equity, speak on racial equity “normalize” and develop a “Racial Equity Plan”
• Develop and implement structure and leadership for a racial equity initiative, working with the community.
• Using the Racial Equity Tools
• Some municipalities are members of GARE, many are not members. Not every municipality in the learning cohort is a member of GARE.
GARE “Advancing Racial Equity” Introductory Train the Trainer Workshop

– The train the trainer “Facilitating Conversations about Race” offers:
  • gain skills at facilitating conversations about racial equity,
  • gain awareness of the history of race, implicit and explicit bias; and individual, institutional, and structural racism and how it impacts our lives,
  • be able to identify examples of implicit and explicit bias and individual, institutional and structural racism and
  • be motivated to facilitate workshops on racial equity
Laying it on the Line

1. People who engage in public meetings are the ones who care most about the issues.

2. Hiring and promotion decisions should be based solely on merit.

3. I believe we can end racial and health inequity.
Role of Government
Values and realities

• All men are created equal
• With liberty and justice for all
• Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth
Three key facts on race

1) **Race is a construct** and is not biologically determined. Race is a modern idea.

2) **Policy drives the social construction of race** and has contributed to changing ideas and definitions of race over time.

3) **We did not choose this system** but we have a responsibility to address it
History of government and equity

Initially explicit

Government explicitly creates and maintains inequity.

Discrimination illegal, but “neutral” policies and practices perpetuate inequity.

Became implicit

Proactive policies, practices and procedures that advance equity.

Government for racial equity
Why we lead with race

- Racial inequities deep and pervasive
- Racial anxiety on the rise – race is often an elephant in the room
- Learning an institutional and structural approach can be used with other areas of marginalization
- Specificity matters
Advancing Racial Equity
A national practice
National best practice

Normalize
- A shared analysis and definitions
- Urgency / prioritize

Operationalize
- Racial equity tools
- Data to develop strategies and drive results

Organize
- Internal infrastructure
- Partnerships

Visualize
Normalize

Shared Analysis and Definitions
Equity? Equality? What’s the difference?
Racial inequity in the U.S.

From infant mortality to life expectancy, race predicts how well you will do...
Racial equity means:

• “Closing the gaps” so that race does not predict one’s success, while also **improving outcomes for all**

• To do so, we must:
  ✓ Target strategies to focus improvements for those worse off
  ✓ Move beyond “services” and focus on changing policies, institutions and structures
Explicit bias

- Expressed directly
- Aware of bias / operates consciously
- Example – Sign in the window of an apartment building – “whites only”

Implicit bias

- Expressed indirectly
- Unaware of bias / operates sub-consciously
- Example – a property manager doing more criminal background checks on African Americans than whites.
Institutional / Explicit

Policies which explicitly discriminate against a group.

*Example:*
Police department refusing to hire people of color.

Institutional / Implicit

Policies that negatively impact one group unintentionally.

*Example:*
Police department focusing on street-level drug arrests.

Individual / Explicit

Prejudice in action – discrimination.

*Example:*
Police officer calling someone an ethnic slur while arresting them.

Individual / Implicit

Unconscious attitudes and beliefs.

*Example:*
Police officer calling for back-up more often when stopping a person of color.
Paired discussion –
Where do you see signs of implicit institutional bias in your work?
**Individual racism:**
- Pre-judgment, bias, or discrimination by an individual based on race.

**Institutional racism:**
- Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently.

**Structural racism:**
- A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color.
Operationalize

Turning theory into action
What is a Racial Equity Tool?

Process

Actively inserts racial equity into decision making processes

Product
What is a Racial Equity Tool process?

1. Desired results
2. Analysis of data
3. Community engagement
4. Strategies for racial equity
5. Implementation plan
6. Communications and accountability
Examples in budgeting, policy, and programming

- Refine complaint-based systems (Seattle Streetlights)
- Restrictions on use of criminal background checks in hiring processes
- Contracting policies and procedures
- Identify unintended consequences (graduate benefits loss from increased minimum wage)
Organize

Internal Infrastructure & External Partners
Building Infrastructure to Create Change

• Change happens when people recognize both why the change is needed and the potential of the proposed solution

• System change requires
  • Powerful advocates for change
  • Interaction – advocates with the apathetic
  • Environment that supports change
Racial Equity Leadership Team

- **Core Team** – leadership development and capacity building across departments
- **Interdepartmental teams** – Contracting equity, workforce equity, community engagement

**Accountability tools**
- Accountability agreements
- Departmental work plans

**Racial Equity Tools**
- Institution-wide work plans

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LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON RACE & EQUITY
Tipping Point

Need a critical mass of advocates to create organizational change

- Advocates
- Apathetics
- Skeptics
- Active Resisters

Strategies to support

Strategies to convert

Strategies to minimize or move
Changing minds

• Most importantly, the best way to change attitudes is to change behavior.
• Attitudinal change tends to follow behavior change.
• Requires both short and long-term approaches.
Next Steps
GARE / MDH Next Steps

• Train MDH leadership and staff
  – MDH leadership participated in GARE-facilitated racial equity training (late 2016/early 2017)
  – GARE will train 300 MDH additional staff (supervisors given priority) in May and June 2017
  – Handful of MDH staff trained as trainers
  – Trained MDH staff will continue to deliver training to all employees

• Review City of Saint Paul model
  – Mandatory staff training
  – Change teams
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