

Health Disparities and Social Justice

List of Definitions

Racism

Race Prejudice + Power = Racism

Source: The People's Institute

“Racism is viewed as incorporating ideologies of superiority, negative attitudes and beliefs toward racial and ethnic out groups, and differential treatment of members of those groups by both individuals and societal institutions.”

Source: Williams DR. 1994. The concept of race in *Health Services Research*, 1966 1990. *Health Serv. Res.* 29:261-74

Institutionalized Racism

“Differential access to the goods, services and opportunities of society by race.

Institutionalized racism is normative, sometimes legalized, and often manifests as inherited disadvantage. It is structural, having been codified in our institutions of custom, practice and law, so there not be an identifiable perpetrator. Indeed institutional racism is often evident as inaction in the face of need.”

Source: Jones, C.P. Levels of racism: a theoretic framework and a gardener's tale.

American Journal of Public Health. 2000 Aug; 90 (8):1212-5.

Health Disparity

A type of difference in health that is closely linked with social or economic disadvantage. Health disparities negatively affect groups of people who have systematically experienced greater social or economic obstacles to health. These obstacles stem from characteristics historically linked to discrimination or exclusion such as race or ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, gender, mental health, sexual orientation, or geographic location. Other characteristics include cognitive, sensory, or physical disability.

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Healthy People 2020 Draft.

2009, U.S. Government Printing Office

A particular type of health difference that is closely linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage that adversely affects groups of people based on race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, age, sexual orientation, geographic location, or disability.

Source: Healthy People 2020. (2011). Disparities. Retrieved from

<http://healthypeople.gov/2020/about/DisparitiesAbout.aspx>.

Health Equity

When all people have "the opportunity to 'attain their full health potential' and no one is 'disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of their social position or other socially determined circumstance.'"

Source: Braveman, P.A., Monitoring equity in health and healthcare: a conceptual framework. *Journal of health, population, and nutrition*, 2003. **21**(3): p. 181.

“attainment of the highest level of health for all people. Achieving health equity requires valuing everyone equally with focused and ongoing societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities, historical and contemporary injustices, and the elimination of health and health care disparities.”

Source: Healthy People 2020. (2011). Disparities. Retrieved from <http://healthypeople.gov/2020/about/DisparitiesAbout.aspx>.

A fair, just distribution of the social resources and social opportunities needed to achieve well-being.

Source: Health Equity and Social Justice Workshop Materials

Health Inequity

A difference or disparity in health outcomes that is systematic, avoidable, and unjust

Sources:

Braveman, P.A., Monitoring equity in health and healthcare: a conceptual framework. *Journal of health, population, and nutrition*, 2003. **21**(3): p. 181.; Whitehead, M. and Whitehead, The concepts and principles of equity and health. *Health Promotion International*, 1991. **6**(3): p. 217.

When disparities in health result from systemic, avoidable, and unjust social and economic policies and practices that create barriers to opportunity.

Source:

Whitehead, M. (1992). The concepts and principles of equity and health. *International Journal of Health Services* 22: 429-45

Social Determinants of Health

The complex, integrated, and overlapping social structures and economic systems that are responsible for most health inequities. These social structures and economic systems include the social environment, physical environment, health services, and structural and societal factors. Social determinants of health are shaped by the distribution of money, power, and resources throughout local communities, nations, and the world.

Source: Commission on Social Determinants of Health (CSDH), Closing the gap in a generation: health equity through action on the social determinants of health. Final report of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health. 2008, World Health Organization: Geneva.

The economic and social conditions that influence the health of individuals, communities, and jurisdictions as a whole. They include, but are not limited to: safe affordable housing, quality education, job security, social connection, safety, availability of food, access to transportation and a living wage.

Source: Raphael, D. (2004). *Social Determinants of Health*. Toronto: Scholars Press.