



WhiteSands
ALCOHOL & DRUG REHAB

Understanding Healthcare Equity



What is Health Equity?

- Equity is the absence of unfair, avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically or by other dimensions of inequality (e.g. sex, gender, ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation). Health is a fundamental human right. **Health equity is achieved when everyone can attain their full potential for health and well-being.**
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Healthcare Equity: The Goal

To ensure that everyone can access affordable, culturally competent health care regardless of:

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Age
- Ability
- Sex
- Gender identity or expression
- Sexual orientation
- Nationality
- Socioeconomic status
- Geographical location (e.g., rural or urban)



Healthcare Equity: Pizza Example

- Health equity is fairly simple in concept. The basic difference between equality and equity in health care can be explained using the common example of splitting a pizza.
- In an equal distribution, a group of four classmates may split a pizza evenly — say, two slices per person. Equality does not always equal fairness, though. Suppose two students had already eaten lunch while the other two students had not eaten anything that day. A more equitable distribution of the pizza may call for the two students who ate lunch to get just one slice of pizza while the hungry classmates get three. That way, each person gets pizza according to their need, even when that means an unequal number of slices distributed among the classmates.
- Many people in the United States are starving, in a figurative sense, for adequate health care. Some groups are disproportionately exposed to a combination of health risks, such as poverty, violence, unsafe living conditions, and environmental health hazards, that can increase the need for healthcare interventions. Racial and ethnic minorities, low-income groups, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community face such risks at a higher rate than the general population.



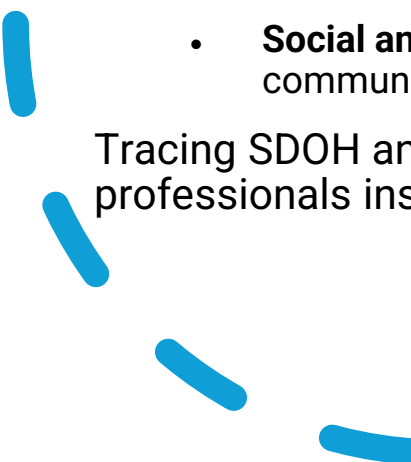
Social Determinants of Health

How equity of access is measured in health care often relates to [social determinants of health](#) (SDOH). Healthcare professionals can use SDOH to consider the external factors that affect any given individual's health.

The CDC defines SDOH as “conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play that affect a wide range of health and quality-of risks and outcomes.” SDOH includes the following:

- **Education:** Language and literacy rates, highest level of education, quality of education
- **Health Care:** Access to primary care, health literacy
- **Economic Stability:** Employment, food security, housing stability
- **Environment:** Quality of housing, proximity to violence and crime, distance from pollutants and environmental hazards
- **Social and Communal Factors:** Negative factors (discrimination, incarceration) and positive factors (sense of community, social cohesion, civic participation)

Tracing SDOH and understanding how specific adverse SDOH lead to health disparities gives healthcare professionals insights into how to improve healthcare equity.



Ways that White Sands is Improving Equity

Improving health equity through evidence-based approaches can make a significant difference in both community health and your company's impact. Here are several ways White Sands' uses evidence to advance health equity:

1. Data Collection and Analysis

- Tracking health disparities with our data from our initial assessments and discharge surveys.

2. Evidence-Based Decision Making

- Utilizing our data to improve our clinical programming, the overall treatment experience, and discharge planning.



Ways that White Sands is Improving Equity

3. Partnerships and Collaboration

- Providing substance abuse and general health resources on discharge and educating our patients on free resources in the area.

- In 2024, we used our alumni data and public health data to recognize the increases in overdose deaths among our patients. We became a Narcan distributor throughout the state and provide Narcan to patients as they leave treatment.

4. Training and Education

- Cultural Competency Training for all employees at hiring and annually.

- Yearly leadership health equity meeting to discuss
Equip your leadership team how to lead with an equity-driven mindset and make data-informed decisions that prioritize vulnerable populations.



The background image shows a sunny day in a tropical neighborhood. In the foreground, a paved walkway leads through a garden with large green plants. Two small, light-colored stone pillars flank the path. In the background, there are several houses with grey roofs and palm trees against a clear blue sky. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

Healthcare Equity is a
“WE” issue and White
Sands strives to be part
of the solution within our
community.