

AMERICAN HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

# ACCELERATING HEALTH EQUITY CONFERENCE

Organized by AHA Community Health Improvement and Institute for Diversity & Health Equity

MAY 10-12, 2022 | CLEVELAND, OH

## Post-Event Playbook



*Advancing Health in America*



**IFDHE**  
AHA Institute for Diversity  
and Health Equity



**ACHI**  
AHA Community Health Improvement

# Welcome

The AHA, through ACHI and IFDHE, has long advanced collaborative approaches to improve the health and well-being of all individuals and communities. But the work to advance health equity is not finished.

For the second consecutive year, the Accelerating Health Equity Conference brought together two key stakeholders — professionals focused on improving community and population health and building partnerships, and those striving to advance diversity and inclusion within hospital management and executive levels. These leaders and organizations need to be aligned to accelerate health equity.

## BY THE NUMBERS



3

Day Event



728

Attendees



169

Speakers



40

Educational Sessions



44

States



It is an honor to support this conference, focused on how hospitals and health systems are working in and with their communities to eliminate disparities and advance health equity. This year's attendees came together to share their stories, their tactics for successful change, and the ongoing opportunities to tackle. We remain committed to facilitating this work to build a just society of healthy communities, where all individuals reach their highest potential for health.

Nancy A. Myers  
Vice President, Leadership and System Innovation  
American Hospital Association

# Forward on the Journey

Accelerating Health Equity: Forward on the Journey, the American Hospital Association's 2022 equity conference in Cleveland, was held during a moment unlike any other that we've hosted.

As the first in-person Accelerating Health Equity Conference hosted since the start of a global pandemic, the event offered attendees from across the country **three days to connect and collaborate in-person to advance community health, well-being and equity** – with a lens made even sharper and more prescient than ever.

It's a known fact that **long-standing health care disparities and inequities have been illuminated and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic**. Systemic inequities, such as structural racism and economic disadvantages within diverse communities, are preventing individuals – and their communities – from achieving optimal health, to an even greater degree.

The need for hospitals and community-based organizations to **connect, collaborate and take action** to directly affect the determinants of health and improve health equity in communities across the country has never been stronger.

And yet, the experiences and lessons learned and shared during the conference have shown us that the resolve to make our communities healthier and more equitable continues undeterred.

In this spirit, **our equity conference playbook is here to serve as an actionable tool** for you to use when working in your organization and with your community. This interactive resource includes the following:

- Actionable learnings from conference sessions and presentations
- Links to tools, resources and multimedia related to the event
- Direct observations, insights and guidance from key attendees that provide multiple perspectives on advancing community health and health equity

We hope you find this resource useful as you reflect on our time together in Cleveland. **Thank you for all you do** to improve health and equity in your community, and see you next year!



Achieving health equity is a collective effort that requires problem-solving and engaging in critical conversations. This conference brought together thought leaders, front-line workers and health care pioneers to push forward in eliminating health disparities. It was a pleasure to take part in the Accelerating Health Equity Conference to continue the discussion of dismantling structural barriers and achieving equitable outcomes for all. A key highlight included the opportunity for members to learn more about the Health Equity Roadmap, IFDHE's innovative framework that supports hospitals and health systems in their efforts to become more equitable organizations and improve overall well-being. IFDHE remains committed to advancing health equity, diversity and inclusion.

Joy A. Lewis  
Senior Vice President, Health Equity Strategies, &  
Executive Director of the Institute for Diversity and Health Equity  
American Hospital Association





**DIVERSITY  
IS OUR  
SUPERPOWER**

## Keynote 1: Heather McGhee

Bestselling author and NBC News contributor Heather McGhee gave the opening conference keynote. McGhee, author of the New York Times bestseller *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*, pulled back the curtain on how racism divides and devastates us, while offering a path forward for creating a just and equitable future for all.



This pandemic has shown us how much racism and our policymaking [and the] lack of racial equity ultimately have a cost for everyone.

My fervent belief ... my hope, my prayer ... is that we will very soon overcome the old lies that no longer serve us, that are costing us so much. That we will come together and recognize that ... we are so much more when we turn to each other — when we fight for each other and not against each other.

No lie can stand forever. And the “zero sum” is a lie. This country’s greatest moment, highest achievements and most breakthrough moments have been when people have come together across race.

the lie of  
**ZERO SUM**  
TELLS PEOPLE WE ARE  
NOT ALL ON THE SAME TEAM





# Keynote 2: Hospital Executive Panel

Cleveland's major health systems – Cleveland Clinic, The MetroHealth System, and University Hospitals – have come together to collaborate on strategies that address the upstream factors that influence health and to invest in the economic development of the community in unique and sustainable ways. In this session, Frank Sesno, former anchor and Washington bureau chief for CNN, moderated a discussion between Cleveland's key health system leaders on the work they have done to advance health equity and the advice they have for those seeking to evolve or strengthen partnerships in their own communities.



 **the FUTURE... HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HEALTH OF THE COMMUNITY THEY ARE IN ...**

The notion of a hospital being held responsible for the health of the community it lives in — that's where we're headed.

Once you begin, good people come out of the woodwork and want to help you. ... Just get started; it's going to be unbelievable.

We're already part of that community [of Cuyahoga County], but we need to understand the details. Do we look like the community we're serving? Do we understand their struggles?



We have to do this and will do this, but this is a very challenging time in health care."

**1 + 1 + 1 = 5**  
**JOINING FORCES**





## Keynote 3: Bechara Choucair

Senior Vice President and Chief Health Officer for Kaiser Permanente and former White House Vaccine Coordinator Bechara Choucair, M.D., gave the closing conference keynote. From his unique experiences helping to shape national health policy and operationalizing strategies within a health system, Choucair shared lessons and offered actionable steps for our move toward a COVID-informed future. As we look to reshape care delivery and community partnerships going forward, he shared key tactics that frontline leaders can adopt.



### COMMUNITY HEALTH TRANSCENDS COMPETITION

The pandemic didn't create inequities. ... It elevated the impact of them in our communities.

We have to bring in the voices of the people in the community to rebuild trust.

For us to be able to lift up and support people to be healthy, we have to support their social health, their mental health and their physical health. ... You can't expect someone to live a healthy life if they don't have a stable roof over their head.





Key Takeaways from

# Data-Driven Strategies



- Be intentional about how and when you screen for social needs – **focusing on starting the conversation with a tone of empathy will result in more honest responses** and therefore more reliable data.
- Every hospital performs a community health (needs) assessment, which includes information and strategies on how to accelerate health equity efforts. **This assessment can be a powerful resource to align efforts**, especially when the CH(N)A uses leading practices to engage community voices.
- Be sure to include clinical perspectives, DEI metrics and (where appropriate) data from employed populations in CH(N)A and implementation plans; **the combination of strategy, story and data is a powerful activator**.
- Online access is a “super determinant” of health – **you need information on the needs and assets of your community** to make sure there is a strategy to address (1) affordability, (2) devices in people’s hands and (3) skills to use the technology itself.
- Collecting **accurate and comprehensive data** on race, ethnicity and language (REAL) and sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) is critical.
- Human-created processes – including data collection and analysis – will include human biases; therefore, **we must examine the assumptions underlying data processes**.



It was truly wonderful connecting with colleagues in-person at this year’s conference. More than one local health official remarked on how valuable it was to meet with hospital counterparts to learn from each other and explore joint approaches to public health improvement and advancing health equity. The key notes and calls to action were inspirational and sessions practical, innovative and timely.

Peter L. Holtgrave  
Senior Director, Public Health Infrastructure and Systems  
National Associations of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)

Key Takeaways from

# Managing Patient Care and Social Needs

- In order to build robust and meaningful partnerships with the communities and people they serve, **health care leaders must continuously discuss how their organizations can strengthen community voices** and serve as a platform for community engagement.
- It's important to understand that **health care consumers should be included in the development and operation of the policies and systems that impact them** and their communities.
- An **equitable health system starts with people with lived experience** engaging in projects that range from research to quality improvement, from beginning to end.
- **Continuously craft and revise strategies** to drive engagement, address social determinants of health, and improve and increase access to care.
- Ensure access to **evidence-based self-care information** and timely referral to patients, caregivers and the general population.



After attending the AHA Accelerating Health Equity Conference in Cleveland, I believe in the power of human innovation to overcome the many challenges that exist in health disparities. In particular, I would love to see how we authentically and effectively partner with those patients/families that are the most vulnerable and bring their ideas, that have been largely untapped, to the surface and act on them. Together, we all can solve this seemingly intractable issue!

Greg Merritt  
Patient is Partner, LLC – Founder





Key Takeaways from

# Building Community Engagement and Partnership

- To foster thriving, diverse, healthy and equitable communities, **health care leaders must ensure deep participation with local partners**, particularly by communities commonly excluded from democratic voice and power. A stronger collaborative and democratic process means greater capacity to address health, economic and social crises.
- Furthermore, **the first step for health systems and hospitals working to build concrete plans to address inequities at the root of health disparities in their communities is deep reflection.** This includes asking questions about how power operates in the community, and what systemic and structural injustices are negatively affecting health outcomes for some communities and not others.



THE SYSTEM IS WORKING AS IT IS DESIGNED TO → **SYSTEMS CHANGE**



COMMUNITY IMMERSION - FIELD TRIP, THE METROHEALTH SYSTEM

I walked away from the conference with a greater appreciation for the health systems in that community and the generational investments they are making in advancing health equity... Understanding that community health is patient health will drive more innovation and improved health outcomes for all.



Key Takeaways from

# Systemic and Shared Accountability and Creating Equitable and Inclusive Workplaces

- Learn from history to move forward – **own your past and be authentic.** No equity without accountability.
- DEI strategies are only as strong as the commitment of organization's middle management leaders. **The key ingredient to organizational DEI success weighs heavily on the inclusive leadership attributes** modeled by middle management.
- Investing in **youth career pathway programs can help diversify, grow and amplify the future health care workforce.** They are an efficient way to train and hire hospital staff who effectively understand the cultural and socio-economic factors that affect patient outcomes.





# Attendee Experience

## We asked attendees:

Taken as a whole, how would you rate the 2022 Accelerating Health Equity Conference?





To continue your health equity journey, please visit:

[aha.org/chweek](http://aha.org/chweek)

[aha.org/pophealth](http://aha.org/pophealth)

[equity.aha.org](http://equity.aha.org)

[equityconference.aha.org](http://equityconference.aha.org)

[healthycommunities.org](http://healthycommunities.org)

[ifdhe.aha.org](http://ifdhe.aha.org)



## Additional Resources



### Video Reel

#### Additional Links

[aha.org/communityinvestment](http://aha.org/communityinvestment)

[aha.org/heal](http://aha.org/heal)

[aha.org/societalfactors](http://aha.org/societalfactors)

[ifdhe.aha.org/health-equity-resources](http://ifdhe.aha.org/health-equity-resources)

[www.pchi-hub.org](http://www.pchi-hub.org)

[ctb.ku.edu/en/toolkits](http://ctb.ku.edu/en/toolkits)

[buildhealthyplaces.org/tools-resources](http://buildhealthyplaces.org/tools-resources)

Crediblemind - Mental Health Webinar

Environmental Justice



**Thank you!**

Designed by

**do tank**

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