

## **INTRODUCTION**

Under the MetroWest Health Foundation's current strategic plan, it will advance health equity with the goal to support broad community resident representation and participation in health-related initiatives and increase diversity and equity of health and social services in the region.

This will be achieved by 1) supporting health equity and inclusion transformation in MetroWest organizations; 2) training the region's health and social service workforce to meet diversity, equity and inclusion needs; and 3) increasing the diversity pipeline of future leaders in the health and social sectors.

Specific actions will include:

## **FUNDING**

The foundation will, through its semiannual request for proposals process, solicit grant applications from area organizations that focus on the following:

- 1) Development and implementation of comprehensive Health Equity Plans that include input from all stakeholders, including Board, staff, and those using agency services.
- 2) Strategies for the recruitment and retention of diverse staff.
- 3) Strategies for increasing the number of staff fluent in Spanish and Portuguese.
- 4) Capacity building grants that coach/mentor emerging leaders of color or build the capacity of agencies led by people of color.

In addition, the foundation will apply a health equity lens to its review of all grant proposals submitted to the foundation to better understand how area organizations are addressing issues of health equity and how grant funding may further impact this work.

## **CONVENING**

The foundation will continue to support the MetroWest Racial & Ethnic Disparities Workgroup, which has become a community of practice where representatives of area health and human service organizations can openly discuss the opportunities and challenges in making the region more open to issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. The foundation will use the Workgroup as an advisory group to shape its health equity programming and co-sponsorship of workshops and trainings focused on health equity.

## **TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

The foundation is committed to providing training and technical assistance to area health and human services staff and board members on issues of health equity. The foundation will underwrite and sponsor workshops on the following:

- 1) Understanding basic issues of equity (racism, inherent bias, etc.).
- 2) Understanding how issues of race and ethnicity impact health (health equity).
- 3) Tools for implementing diversity, inclusion and equity strategies within community organizations.
- 4) Understanding the changing demographics of the region.

In addition to training, the foundation has developed a guidebook for advancing health equity in the region ([Building Inclusive Communities](#)), which includes tools and resources that agencies can use for addressing health equity.

The foundation will also offer more intensive assistance with the development of Health Equity Plans for select grantee organizations.

## **POLICY & ADVOCACY**

The foundation will use its position in the community to advocate on issues related to health equity. The foundation will produce a health equity blog (*Equity Matters*) six times per year. The blog will highlight equity issues as well as the work being done in the region to address such issues. The foundation will also develop appropriate online and printed materials that reinforce the importance of focusing on health equity and the foundation's work in this area.

The 2020 federal census has the potential to undercount significant population groups in MetroWest including people of color. In response the foundation will support education and outreach efforts to ensure an adequate count in MetroWest through funding and convening.

The foundation will also seek to engage other area funders in helping to support and address equity in their efforts to support local health and human services.