

Equity in Access

Longstanding policies and systems across communities have led to differences in health status and outcomes based on race, socioeconomic status, language barriers, and disabilities. Health systems have the unique opportunity to break down some of the systems and promote equity in access to information and care. When developing an access strategy, consider these questions to ensure you're addressing equity as part of your comprehensive plan.



AS A PROVIDER

How does your access strategy promote equity in access to all patients in the community? How do you measure success in providing equitable access?

Have there been any assumptions about access preferences and needs applied to particular classes or groups (e.g., willingness to wait for an appointment, likelihood to arrive)? How can your organization adjust current and future access initiatives to avoid unconscious biases that promote these assumptions?

AS AN EMPLOYER

What strategies are in place to promote recruitment and retention for under-represented populations at all levels of the health system?

What types of training is available and encouraged related to diversity, inclusion, and unconscious biases for your providers and access staff?





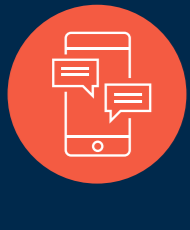



AS A COMMUNITY PARTNER

How are your access efforts supported through partnership with social services?

How do you gather and leverage the consumer insights gathered from patients, families, and caregivers across the community to inform your approach to patient access?

TOP 6 CONSIDERATIONS

-  Implement operational flows within your call/intake center to support multi-language requirements
-  Position health education efforts to the benefit of all your consumers, with specific attention to those with low healthcare literacy
-  Design digital channels and solutions that are accessible to people of all abilities across generations
-  Ensure physical locations are accessible to underserved populations
-  Examine connection alternatives for those without reliable phone and internet access
-  Measure and monitor performance on health access to understand equity in access

Many health systems across the country are creating new access roadmaps: setting the direction for access initiatives to improve timeliness of care and information for patients, employees, and the community.

It is important to anchor these initiatives on specific and measurable goals that promote equity across races, socioeconomic statuses, languages, and disabilities.

