

2021 Application

Note – [Online](#) applications submission required. This document is for information purposes only

Background & Directions

The Carolyn Boone Lewis Equity of Care Awards recognize hospitals and health systems that have moved beyond plans to achieve a high level of success in advancing diversity, health equity and equitable health care through data, leadership, governance, cultural awareness and partnerships. These efforts have benefits, including improved patient experiences, outcomes of care, high reliability, reduced per capita cost and improved workforce preparedness.

The American Hospital Association's vision of a society of healthy communities, where all individuals reach their highest potential for health, is our commitment to advancing equity, diversity and inclusion in health and health care. The #123forEquity pledge asks hospitals and health system leaders to take concrete action to advance progress in the following goal areas:

- Increasing the collection and use of race, ethnicity and language (REaL) preference data
- Increasing cultural competency training
- Increasing diversity in governance and leadership
- Improving and strengthening community partnerships

The coronavirus pandemic further unmasked the inequities in health and society, raising them to the national consciousness. The data show Black, Indigenous and Hispanic communities are disproportionately affected both in terms of infection rates and mortality. In light of these current realities, 2021 applications for the Equity of Care Award includes highlighting strategies hospitals and health systems are taking to address inequities related to COVID-19 and inequities rooted in various – isms (racism, classism, sexism, etc.). These are in addition to application information included in previous years.

Application Requirements

- 1) Applicants must be a member of the [American Hospital Association](#)
- 2) Applicants must have signed the [#123forEquity pledge](#).

Hospital Size and Type

The Equity of Care (EOC) Awards Committee recognizes that efforts in the equity of care occur across the continuum of care and throughout a diversity of institutions and geographic locations. As such, the committee considers the availability of resources and the effectiveness in relation to hospital size and location. For this reason, it is important that to answer questions in the application regarding hospital size and location.

Terms and Definitions to Consider

Diversity is defined as a workforce and patient population composed of varying characteristics including, but not limited to race, ethnicity, language preference, gender identity, sexual orientation, veteran status, physical and mental disabilities, faith or religious groups.

Health equity, as defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is the 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.

Leadership is defined as individuals in the hospital or health system at the level of director, vice president or executive office.

Governance is defined as the board of directors and its role in relation to accountability, evaluation, policy development, compliance and implementation.

Factors to Consider

It is important for applications to highlight the following:

1. The *quantifiable impact* that your diversity, inclusion, and health equity work has made in your hospital, health care system and in the communities you serve. The review committee values applications that especially **highlight outcomes, metrics**, descriptions of the **results of success, and the impact to equity for patients and communities**.
2. Describe how the work in diversity and health equity has been integrated into the organization's business strategy and plans.
3. Clearly identify why your organization and community are more equitable because of the work and strategies enacted.

Please answer the following questions to describe your organization's efforts related to health equity. Responses to each question are limited to 500 words. You may also submit supplemental materials with your application, such as dashboards and score cards. Brief reports, no longer than two pages, may also be submitted. Please limit supplemental documents to 15 additional pages total. All supplemental materials should be uploaded with your application. All applications MUST be submitted using this online application.

Submission Deadline:

Please submit your [online application](#) and optional supplements by **4pm CT, Tuesday, December 8, 2020**

Questions can be directed to equityofcare@aha.org.

Application Questions

Data Collection & Application: Provide the organization's *results or metrics* on collecting, validating, and using race, ethnicity and language preference (REaL) data and other socio-demographic characteristics to address disparities, to address patients' social needs, or to improve patient quality, safety, or satisfaction outcomes for diverse populations. Particular attention will be given to evidence supporting how the utilization of the data is advancing equity.

Cultural Competency: Describe the organization's results with regard to advancing culturally competency. When describing programs and progress, ensure that the outcomes are clearly identified. If obstacles have been encountered in the process, articulate how the organization overcame them and specify the outcome and achievement.

Please include efforts related to the Office of Minority National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health and Health Care ([CLAS Standards](#)), all scorecards, dashboards and results as evidence of your effort. (500 words or fewer; directions for attachments are below)

Leadership: Describe the organization's results related to increasing leadership diversity and inclusion in health management. In particular, note diversity and inclusion strategies, pipeline development, and quantifiable information pertaining to senior and executive leadership for the organization. If describing program goals, barriers and progress, ensure that responses highlight the impact and outcomes of actions taken. (500 words or fewer)

Governance: Describe the organization's results related to advancing diversity and inclusion in governance. Responses should include descriptions of how governance supports and advances equity. If describing program goals, barriers and progress, ensure that responses highlight measurable outcomes of actions taken. (500 words or fewer)

Community Engagement & Alliances: Describe how the organization engages with its local community on equity of care initiatives including community partnerships and innovative engagement approaches. Examples may focus on efforts to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic; programs to focus on improving the social determinants of health such as housing, transportation, food insecurity, workforce development and similar topics; or examples of how community health needs assessments are incorporated into a population health strategy. (500 words or fewer)

Action: Other than the examples already cited in other questions describe the most significant progress by the organization in the last 12 months to advance any of the four priority goals in the #123forEquity pledge. Responses are encouraged to include outcomes and the impact of strategies enacted by the organization. (500 words or fewer)

Bonus Initiatives: Describe actions taken and progress made (especially providing metrics and specific outcomes) in the last 12 months toward advancing health equity beyond the four goals outlined in the #123forEquity pledge campaign. Applicants are especially encouraged to highlight initiatives pursued in response to the coronavirus pandemic and/or inequalities rooted in social injustices such as and not limited to racism, classism, sexism, etc.

Areas of focus may include: (500 words or fewer)

- Applying and reporting REaL data on patients with COVID-19
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- The office of Minority CLAS Standards
- Maternal and child health
- Initiatives to address vulnerable populations
- Human Rights Campaign's Healthcare Equality Index
- Quality improvement, patient safety, and high-reliability organizations
- Value-based care

We encourage applicants to submit supplemental materials, such as dashboards and score cards. Supplemental documents will be limited to 15 total pages. All supplemental materials should be uploaded with this [online application](#) by **4pm CT, Tuesday, December 8, 2020.**

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