

Advancing Systems of Services Network Café Notes

Racial Equity

July 17, 2020

Key Discussion Questions

1. What is your state doing to address health equity?
2. Any specific, concrete strategies to share with fellow CSHCN directors?
3. How is your state using funds to support work around health equity and to address racism and racial injustice?
4. What effective strategies has your state employed to communicate with families of color to increase access to COVID testing and care?

Poll Question Responses

1. Does your state have an Office of Minority Health or Health Equity?
 - o Yes- 75%
 - o No- 5%
 - o Not Sure- 20%
2. Is your state CYSHCN/Title V program connected to the Office of Minority Health or Healthy Equity?
 - o Yes- 50%
 - o No- 25%
 - o Not Sure- 25%

Indiana Title V CYSHCN and Office of Minority Health

- Dr. Shirley Payne, Indiana's Title V CYSHCN director, welcomed Antoinette Holt, Indiana's Office of Minority Health's director, to lead the café discussion, noting the important collaboration between the two agencies.
- Antoinette explained that almost every state, territory, and tribal nation has an Office of Minority Health or Health Equity. Indiana's Office of Minority Health (OMH) has a statewide Minority Health Coalition as well as local coalitions, working on a range of issues including maternal and infant mortality, domestic violence, HIV/AIDs, mental health and addiction, and more. Their Office of Minority Health also engages in research and evaluation, TA, and education efforts.
- Antoinette encouraged all Title V programs to work with their OMH, and she shared a link to the National Association of State Offices of Minority Health (see resources section below for relevant contact information).

Examples of State Partnerships with Faith Communities during COVID-19

- VA: The Governor's office published faith-based guidelines: <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/Forward-Virginia-Phase-Three-Guidelines.pdf>
- IN: Partnered with churches to improve COVID-19 testing.

CYSHCN Program Strategies to Address Health Equity

- Several states commented on seeking and use of new Medicaid waiver flexibilities to pay for parents providing personal care assistance.
- Include cultural competency training in the work plan; consider what outcomes should be used for evaluating health equity.
- Work with the state Minority Health Program to better capture demographic data of families to identify disparities.
- Assist families seeking asylum who are sent out of state by serving as a point of contact.
- Embed strategies to address health equity into care coordination programs. Care coordination programs can focus on social needs (e.g., finding a food pantry, transportation) as well as medical needs.
- Translate resources into multiple languages that reflect the state population.
- Sponsor or attend community health fairs to outreach to underserved communities.
- Dr. Payne encouraged states to consider how they would determine whether activities designed to address health equity are working.

COVID-19 Specific Strategies

- One state mentioned making available transparent masks for the deaf and hard of hearing community.
- Another state noted they are seeking funding to develop a communication strategy about CYSHCN return to care, representing the diversity of families.
- Participate in future immunization planning as it relates to CYSHCN.
- Obtain feedback about COVID-19 testing difficulties among families with CYSHCN. With increasing long waits and severe heat, NM families report difficulties. This is likely to emerge as an issue when vaccines become available as well.

State Strategies for Partnering with Families to Address Health Equity

- Work with Family-to-Family Health Information Center to expand a Parent as Partner project, where family leaders are trained to support local programs in a variety of pediatric settings. Parents serve as a support/resource for other families and provide referrals to community resources. Within the last year and a half, they recruited a refugee parent to become a Parent Partner, which has helped to engage the refugee community in the area.
- Title V program providing financial supports to a state transition conference annually, and this year they plan to survey participants to gauge the best methods of digital resources for the transition to adulthood.
- Partner with Family Voices to have monthly calls with Medicaid managed care organizations. The calls are in both English and Spanish, and parents have talked about their concerns about COVID-19, which include having nurses come to their homes without changing their scrubs.

- When working with families and communities, Antoinette Holt encouraged states to engage in a deliberate and strategic process to build and sustain trust and demonstrate commitment to the communities they are trying to engage.

Resources Shared

- National Association of State Offices of Minority Health: <http://www.nasomh.com/>
- Antoinette Holt, Director, Indiana Office of Minority Health: aholt@isdh.in.gov
- Morehouse School of Medicine was just awarded a large multi-year HHS' Office of Minority Health (OMH) cooperative agreement, "The National Infrastructure for Mitigating the Impact of COVID-19 within Racial and Ethnic Minority Communities Initiative." Beginning in July 2020, Morehouse and OMH will coordinate a strategic network through:
 - Coordinated development and dissemination of culturally and linguistically diverse information.
 - Dissemination of information on available COVID-19 testing and vaccination, other health care, and social services, especially in communities highly impacted and at highest risk for adverse outcomes.
 - Dissemination of effective strategies for COVID-19 response, recovery, and resilience.
 - For questions and inquiries regarding this initiative, contact info@minorityhealth.hhs.gov.