# Employer Strategies in Health Equity: Building and Sustaining a Culture of Inclusion

December 19, 2023



#### **Moderator & Panelists**



Christina Bell National Alliance



**Denise Giambalvo**Washington Health Alliance



Mario Harper
HIV Programming
U.S. Business Action to End HIV



**David Hines**Metro Nashville Public Schools



Michael Thompson National Alliance



**Rosa Novo**Miami-Dade County Public Schools



**Ian Shea** I M Human



## Health Equity: *The Building Blocks*



## Understand Impact of Differences

- Engage diverse communities
- Obtain data at community and organizational level
- Analyze "variation" not "averages"
- Examine business case to address

## Integrate Equity into Strategy

- Break down silos (e.g., D&I, HR, benefits, wellbeing)
- Establish equity metrics for programs
- Improve program responsiveness
- Extend cultural focus (e.g., culture of health, safety & equity)

## Evaluate & Engage Supply Chain

- Include equity & inclusion in accountabilities
- Focus on direct (health plans, vendors) and indirect (providers) influence
- Create transparency on performance
- Align incentives with expectations

## Sustain Culture of Inclusion

- Makeup of governance & key advisors
- Inclusion in balanced scorecard
- Organization values & objectives
- Investment consistent with needs & strategy



## **Understand Impact of Differences**

#### **Recognizing Implicit Bias and Using Data to Overcome It**

Assess

Understand the underlying root causes of health inequities (i.e., bias, structural flaws, ESG)

Analyze Data Insights

Leverage insights from both qualitative and quantitative data

Strategize & Deploy

Prioritize a data-driven health equity strategy

Data you should be evaluating



Voice of the Employee



HRIS (climate, race, gender, income, region)



Pharmacy & Medical Claims



Community level (e.g., census, etc.)

Aggregated data on subgroups can inform program design to mitigate implicit bias and reduce variation in outcomes



Tip:

Take a human-centered, **culturally humble** approach to identify drivers of health inequities within your population

#### Integrate Equity into Strategy

#### **Accelerating Health Equity Using Workplace Policies & Benefits**

1

#### **Understand Equality vs. Equity**

Providing everyone a fair and just opportunity to reach their full potential

2

#### **Evaluate Influences & Impacts**

Use an equity lens to existing benefit levers (e.g., health and wellbeing programs, PTO, disability, caregivers, etc.)

3

#### **Address Potential Pushback**

Provide education, challenge assumptions, and take collective action to reduce variation

#### Highlights of actionable strategies...

- Tailor benefits based on need
- Remove/lower copays
- Tier premiums based on salaries
- Improved HSA contributions
- Integrate mental health benefits
- Expand bereavement coverage
- Education and communication

and more...

Strive for greater personalization in policy and program implementation



"Who did you have in mind when you designed it?"

### **Evaluate & Engage Supply Chain**

#### **Improving Health Equity Accountability for Vendor Partners**

**Clearly Define Expectations** 

Align vendor/partner contracts to enhance your impact in addressing health equity

**Set Performance Metrics** 

Determine appropriate KPIs (e.g., reduced health disparities, improved access to care, or culturally competent services) to drive accountability

Reporting and Accountability

Institute regular monitoring of vendors performance and associated penalties for not meeting goal

Continuous Improvement

Re-evaluate and adjust based on outcomes and the evolving needs of your employees

Collaborate with partners who can enhance your impact



## Health Equity: *The Building Blocks*



## Understand Impact of Differences

- Engage diverse communities
- Obtain data at community and organizational level
- Analyze "variation" not "averages"
- Examine business case to address

## Integrate Equity into Strategy

- Break down silos (e.g., D&I, HR, benefits, wellbeing)
- Establish equity metrics for programs
- Improve program responsiveness
- Extend cultural focus (e.g., culture of health, safety & equity)

## **Evaluate & Engage Supply Chain**

- Include equity & inclusion in accountabilities
- Focus on direct (health plans, vendors) and indirect (providers) influence
- Create transparency on performance
- Align incentives with expectations

## Sustain Culture of Inclusion

- Makeup of governance & key advisors
- Inclusion in balanced scorecard
- Organization values & objectives
- Investment consistent with needs & strategy



#### Sustain Culture of Inclusion

#### Leadership

- Organizational commitment to diversity
- Reassess board governance make-up to be reflective of an inclusive culture
- Develop new skills to manage "macro moments" to foster cultural change daily

#### **HR and Talent Strategy**

- Embed DEI language into the on-boarding process
- Offer anti-bias training, culture competency classes
- Build a sponsor program for raising diverse leaders

#### **Employee Experience**

- Empower employees to be their authentic self
- Acknowledge employee lived experiences
- Embrace employee input (e.g., create/leverage ERGs/BRGs, establish champions)

Sustainability is achieved only when it's integrated in both culture and organization



## **Driving Business Outcomes**

#### **Making the Health Equity Case**

Improve overall health outcomes

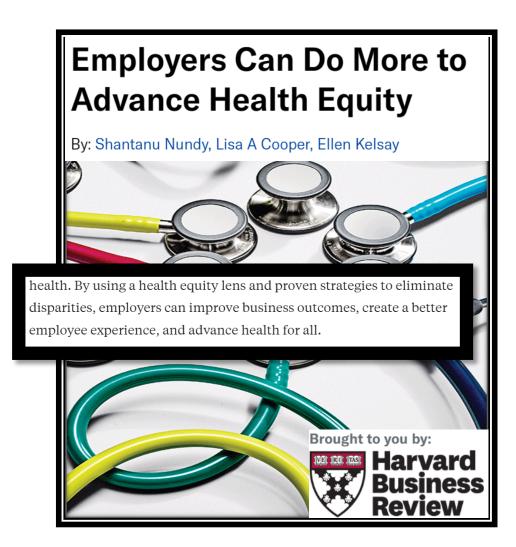
Re-enforce the people strategy

Become employer of choice

Align with organizational values

Demonstrate financial returns





Employers Can Do More to Advance Health Equity | Harvard Business

## Sustaining an Inclusive Culture

Inclusive Programs, Strategies, and Resources

- People-Centered Design
- Intentional Communications
- Metrics & Accountability
- Diversity in Providers & Vendors





## Final Thoughts



**Denise Giambalvo**Washington Health Alliance



Mario Harper
HIV Programming
U.S. Business Action to End HIV



**David Hines**Metro Nashville Public Schools



**Rosa Novo** Miami-Dade County Public Schools



**Ian Shea** I M Human

