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

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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

Health Equity: The Building Blocks
Understand Impact of Differences

Recognizing Implicit Bias and Using Data to Overcome It

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

2. **Analyze Data Insights**
   Leverage insights from both qualitative and quantitative data

3. **Strategize & Deploy**
   Prioritize a data-driven health equity strategy

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**Data you should be evaluating**

- **Voice of the Employee**
- **HRIS** (climate, race, gender, income, region)
- **Pharmacy & Medical Claims**
- **Community level** (e.g., census, etc.)

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**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

“Who did you have in mind when you designed it?”
~ Kulleni Gebreyes, Deloitte

Strive for greater personalization in policy and program implementation
Evaluate & Engage Supply Chain

Improving Health Equity Accountability for Vendor Partners

1. Clearly Define Expectations
   Align vendor/partner contracts to enhance your impact in addressing health equity

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

3. Reporting and Accountability
   Institute regular monitoring of vendors performance and associated penalties for not meeting goal

4. Continuous Improvement
   Re-evaluate and adjust based on outcomes and the evolving needs of your employees

Collaborate with partners who can enhance your impact
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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

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve overall health outcomes</td>
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<td>Re-enforce the people strategy</td>
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<td>Become employer of choice</td>
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<td>Align with organizational values</td>
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<td>Demonstrate financial returns</td>
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Employers Can Do More to Advance Health Equity

By: Shantanu Nundy, Lisa A Cooper, Ellen Keisay

...health. By using a health equity lens and proven strategies to eliminate disparities, employers can improve business outcomes, create a better employee experience, and advance health for all.
Sustaining an Inclusive Culture
Inclusive Programs, Strategies, and Resources

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

Evaluating People-Centered Design Practices
Engaging individuals in product development and delivery

VENDOR ENGAGEMENT TEMPLATE
Final Thoughts

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