

The MetroHealth System Board of Trustees

HEALTH EQUITY & DIVERSITY COMMITTEE REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, March 27, 2024

1:00pm – 2:00pm

via Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Present: Inajo Davis-Chappell-R, John Corlett-R, Maureen Dee-R, John Moss-R, Vanessa Whiting-R ¹

Staff: Airica Steed, Ed.D.-R, Ifeolorunbode Adebambo, M.D.-R, Christine Alexander, M.D.-R, Arlene Anderson-R, Bridget Barrett-R, Jim Bicak-R, Robert (Doug) Bruce, Kevin Chagin-R, Nabil Chehade, M.D.-R, John Chae, M.D.-R, Karen Cook-R, Justin Gallo-R, Joseph Golob, M.D.-R, Olusegun Ishmael, M.D.-R, Kimberly Green-R, Derrick Hollings-R, Ryan Johnson-R, Melissa Kline-R, Charles Modlin, M.D.-R, Tamiyka Rose-R, Dalph Watson-R

Guest: Ms. Bridget Barrett-R, Ms. Jasmine Boutros-I, Ms. Shannon Boutros-I, Ms. Suzanne Boutros-R, Ms. Tess Boutros-R, Ms. Gail Long -I, Mr. Dalton Perry-R, Ms. Sabrina Roberts-I

Ms. Whiting called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm, in accordance with Section 339.02(K) of the Ohio Revised Code.

(The minutes are written in a format conforming to the printed meeting agenda for the convenience of correlation, recognizing that some of the items were discussed out of sequence.)

I. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the December 20, 2023, Committee meeting were approved as presented.

II. Information Items

A. Opening Comments

Ms. Whiting expressed excitement to start the Health Equity Committee's work which will focus on creating a national model to eradicate health disparities and ensure quality healthcare access for everyone, regardless of zip code or demographics.

¹ I-In-person, R-Remote

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B. Introduction of New Health Equity Team Members

Dr. Modlin introduced two new members of the Health Equity team, LaShon Carson and Michele Davis-Ishmael.

Ms. Carson is a 20-year veteran project manager who has worked on creating Employee Business Resource Groups (EBRGs) and facilitating implicit bias training and cultural competency education for MetroHealth caregivers. She is currently a Master of Public Health student at Baldwin Wallace University and will graduate with her MPH degree this May.

Michele Davis-Ishmael joined the team as the Executive Director of Health Equity and Community Engagement, working with Dr. Golob's teams to achieve Joint Commission health equity accreditation. Ms. Davis-Ishmael has a MBA in healthcare management is a Registered Nurse.

C. Review of Enterprise Health Equity Strategy

Dr. Chehade introduced Dr. Srinivas Merugu, the incoming SVP and President for the Institute for H.O.P.E. (the "Institute") and discussed the Institute's strategy for improving health outcomes of underrepresented populations, particularly in the Glenville neighborhood.

The Institute will be the cornerstone for achieving MetroHealth's health equity strategy by integrating health equity into the center of everything they do. This will include working with clinical practices to identify specific care gaps and developing plans to not only close these gaps, but to also measure, monitor, and improve processes that address these disparities.

Dr. Steed challenged the Institute to become a global model in addressing and eradicating health inequities and discussion focused on making it a priority to align efforts with businesses, private and public partnerships, faith-based organizations, government, and schools.

Dr. Steed also challenged the organization to build a Health Equity Information Center, which is already in development. It was noted that Ryan Johnson and Kevin Chagin have significantly contributed to this work over the past four years, emphasizing that this work is iterative and will continue to evolve as new data becomes available, new partnerships are formed, and expanded geographic areas are connected. The Center will act as a hub for all available information to support the health equity goals of the Institute.

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The Committee discussed the overarching goal to outline a bold vision for health equity and demonstrate how MetroHealth is working towards eradicating healthcare disparities through the Center using a purposeful, data-driven approach.

Furthermore, it was discussed that the focus on Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) remains crucial, as more than 80% of the impact on health equity lies beyond the walls of the hospital system. The Committee noted that fundraising support from both public and private funding sources will be required to achieve the desired impact and highlighted ambitious goals of the Health Equity Cleve Fund.

D. Health Equity Marketing Overview

Ms. Barrett and Dr. Modlin discussed the marketing strategies and interventions at MetroHealth's fairs and wellness clinics. MetroHealth is committed to addressing healthcare disparities and increasing trust in the nation by ensuring access to care, enhancing it with wraparound services like transportation and social services. Further, the People-First Culture at MetroHealth emphasizes combining clinical excellence with a commitment to equity, ensuring every innovation and treatment is developed with people's needs at the forefront.

The Institute is focusing on scaling initiatives through the Health Equity Cleve Fund, including investing in community health workers and establishing community advisory councils. MetroHealth is partnering with local small businesses, often minority-owned, to offer door-to-door services, mirroring a white-glove service model. The Cleve Fund is currently in its soft launch phase, with a fundraising event scheduled for September 2024.

Dr. Modlin discussed health and wellness interventions, including the Men's Health Fair, which will mark its 20th anniversary on April 27th. Further, MetroHealth has introduced Multicultural Health Equity Centers of Excellence within every clinical department across the organization to promote health equity.

E. Update on Joint Commission and CMS Health Equity Accreditation

Dr. Golob and Dr. Chehade discussed the Joint Commission CMS Health Equity accreditation, which has evolved significantly to become a national patient safety goal. MetroHealth meets and exceeds these standards, including designating a hospital leader for Health Equity activities, gathering SDOH data, identifying disparities using data, having a written plan to address disparities, and regularly educating hospital leaders and staff about Health Equity.

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The accreditation standards highlight MetroHealth's early stages of Health Equity on a national scale and its prioritization of initiatives.

The Joint Commission introduced the Healthcare Equity Certification program in July 2023, and MetroHealth is actively pursuing this certification. The effort will involve all teams, including the accreditation office, as health equity needs to be integrated into daily operations. The goal is to establish MetroHealth as the gold standard in health equity.

With no further questions from the Board members in attendance, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:02 pm.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, July 31, 2024 – 1:00pm - 3:00pm
MetroHealth Brooklyn Hts. Campus and via Zoom

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Vanessa Whiting, Chairperson