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IHI RELEASES HEALTH EQUITY GUIDE FOR HEALTH CARE ORGANIZATIONS

New white paper offers actionable guidance, self-assessment tool, case study, and other key information for health care organizations to improve health equity

Cambridge, MA – August 8, 2016 – The [Institute for Healthcare Improvement \(IHI\)](#) aims to ignite new thinking and activity by the nation’s hospitals and health systems to address the ongoing, decades-long reality of disparities and inequities in health and health care. With the publication of a new white paper – *Achieving Health Equity: A Guide for Health Care Organizations* – IHI identifies numerous strategies health care systems can adopt to address equity in their communities, as well as in the access, treatments, and outcomes of health care. The white paper also describes how the time-tested tools of quality improvement can accelerate the elimination of inequities by race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, and more.

IHI’s new white paper, available [here](#), is grounded in the belief that one of the most significant ways to improve health and health care in the US is to focus on equity. Organizations can more effectively pursue the Triple Aim of better care, better health, and lower per capita costs if equity is central to these ambitions.

According to lead author, Ronald Wyatt, MD, MHA, Patient Safety Officer and Medical Director, Office of Quality and Patient Safety, The Joint Commission, for too long equity has been the “forgotten aim” in the quality improvement movement, even though it was identified as a key priority by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) in 2001. Dr. Wyatt states: “The data clearly show that inequities exist, and we believe that armed with the tools and guidance in this white paper, health care leaders have ways to elevate equity as a strategic priority in their organizations and to take immediate action to improve health equity at the point of care and in the community. Together, we can reduce unjust, costly, and persistent inequities in health and health care across our nation.”

Designed to be actionable with numerous starting points, the white paper includes a 5-part framework for health care organizations to improve health equity in the communities they serve, a list of key considerations when measuring health equity, a case study of Henry Ford Health System, and a self-assessment tool for health care organizations to evaluate their current state related to each component of the framework.

Derek Feeley, IHI CEO, remarks in the foreword to the white paper that no matter where a health care organization decides to put its energy, improving health equity requires a fundamentally new outlook on the work ahead. He states that the framework urges organizations to “work both within our walls, dismantling the institutional racism and implicit biases that hold us back; and beyond our walls, creating and nurturing new partnerships in our communities that can make an impact on all the social determinants

of health.” Feeley adds, “Improving only what we’re doing now isn’t enough; real improvement will require broadening and deepening our connections to our patients, our staff, and our communities.”

Additional authors of the white paper include Mara Laderman, MSPH, Senior Research Associate, IHI; Laura Botwinick, MS, Director, Graduate Program in Health Administration and Policy, University of Chicago; Kedar Mate, MD, Chief Innovation and Education Officer, IHI; and John Whittington, MD, Senior Fellow and Lead Faculty for the Triple Aim, IHI.

IHI strives for a future free of health inequities, and is committing its tools, talents, and team to this essential human pursuit. Working in collaboration with like-minded organizations, communities, and individuals, IHI aims to accelerate the elimination of inequities in health access, treatments, and outcomes across our nation. Visit IHI’s [Health Equity topic page](#) for more information and resources.

About the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI)

IHI is a leading innovator in health and health care improvement worldwide. For more than 25 years, we have partnered with visionaries, leaders, and front-line practitioners around the globe to spark bold, inventive ways to improve the health of individuals and populations. Recognized as an innovator, convener, trustworthy partner, and driver of results, we are the first place to turn for expertise, help, and encouragement for anyone, anywhere who wants to change health and health care profoundly for the better. To advance our mission, IHI’s work is focused in five key areas: Improvement Capability; Person- and Family-Centered Care; Patient Safety; Quality, Cost, and Value; and Triple Aim for Populations. Learn more at ihi.org.

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