



ACD, CDC

Advisory Committee to the Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

June 7, 2023

The Honorable Xavier Becerra
Secretary
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Mister Secretary:

The Advisory Committee to the Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (ACD, CDC) met publicly on May 11, 2023. During this meeting, the Co-chair of the Committee's Health Equity Workgroup (HEW) and the Chair of the ACD and member of the HEW presented its findings for Task Areas 1 and 2 in the report entitled, *Health Equity Workgroup Report*.

The Health Equity Workgroup (HEW) provides input to the ACD, CDC on agency-wide activities related to the scope and implementation of CDC's health equity strategy. The HEW is composed of both ACD members and those selected through an open application process. The members are subject matter experts in public health science and practice, policy development, analysis, and implementation, and health equity and reflect different sectors of public health, including state and local jurisdictional government agencies, non-profit organizations, academia, and the private sector. As such, the HEW assists the ACD, CDC in its development of advice and recommendations regarding the effective execution of its health equity strategy, ultimately influencing the agency's internal operations, as well as its work with state, local, tribal, and territorial public health agencies and other constituents and partners.

At the conclusion of the Committee's discussions and deliberations, we are pleased to report that the ACD voted unanimously that the action steps for Task Areas 1 and 2 be adopted as official recommendations as presented. A summary is provided for your consideration.

Background

In February 2021, CDC Director Dr. Rochelle P. Walensky, directed the creation of CDC's first ever agency-wide health equity science and intervention strategy. Known as CORE, this bold and innovative approach is framed around four (4) pillars – science, interventions (including programs, policies, systems change, and environmental justice), partnerships, and internal organizational change efforts. The work of the HEW assists the ACD, CDC in identifying innovative and promising health equity practices that align with the principal pillars of CORE, as well as opportunities to enhance the framing and implementation of CDC's CORE Health Equity Strategy.

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The HEW requested and received briefings from CDC officials and external experts and reviewed documents and reports. Through this thorough review and in-depth discussions, the HEW expands on the prior recommendations of the HEW (previously submitted to HHS as *Task Area 3 Recommendations*) to provide suggested actions regarding the ways in which CDC engages with communities and partners and the policies and practices that guide the design and delivery of public health programs within CDC and influence public health research and practice externally. These two Task Areas are described below:

Task Area 1: Enable and assure the meaningful involvement of communities in agency decision-making, the development of health equity policies, program implementation, and evaluation.

Task Area 2: Align and restructure, as necessary, CDC policies, resource allocation, and program practices to maximize the ability for staff and partners to address health inequities in their day-to-day work.

The ACD's recommendations based on the findings and outcomes submitted by the HEW are outlined in the attached report. When fully implemented, these action steps, together with the other elements of CDC's CORE Commitment to Health Equity, will transform how the agency practices public health and will accelerate the progress towards the achievement of health equity. We greatly appreciate your review and thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

David Fleming

Dr. David Fleming, Chair

cc:

Dr. Rochelle Walensky
Director, CDC

Daniel Dawes, JD
Monica Valdes Lupi, JD, MPH
Co-chairpersons
Health Equity Workgroup/Advisory Committee to the Director

Enclosure:

Health Equity Workgroup Report |