> The Partners for Advancing Health Equity Collaborative hosted its inaugural webinar, *Many Voices, One Goal: Next Steps in Advancing Health Equity*, on March 8, 2022. Panelists engaged in compelling discussions concerning the challenges related to pushing health equity forward and the need for collaborative, community-centered approaches to create space where everyone can live their healthiest lives.

This report provides a synthesis of key takeaways, solutions, and action steps identified from the webinar.

P4HE Objectives

Foster the co-creation and spread of knowledge.

Sharpen our research tools to focus on solutions; facts and stories.

Disrupt traditional research approaches.

Harmonize our voices.

Shine light on practices that are indefensible, irrational, and inconsistent.

Challenge the status quo.

Webinar Voices

The webinar featured panelists representing a variety of organizations that touch the health equity space. Panel discussion centered around the following key questions:

- Why does inequity exist?
- What works for whom and under what conditions?
- How do we make change?
- What does power mean in this moment and how can we leverage it?
- How do we collectively organize and lift community voices?

PARTNERS for **ADVANCING HEALTH EQUITY**

Panelists

Sharrelle Barber
Assistant Professor, Director of The Ubuntu Center on Racism, Global Movements, and Population Health Equity

Sinsi Hernández-Cancio
Vice President for Health Justice, National Partnership for Women and Families

Cara James
President and CEO, Grantmakers In Health

Al Richmond
Executive Director, Community-Campus Partnerships for Health

Featuring

Thomas LaVeist (Host)
Dean, Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, Weatherhead Presidential Chair in Health Equity

Andrew Anderson (Presenter)
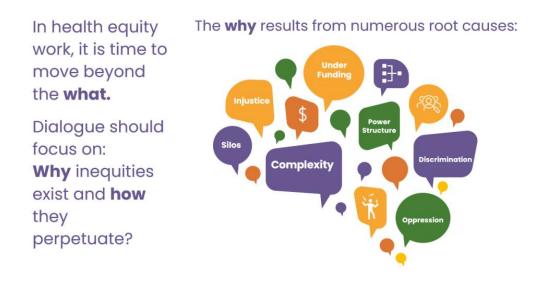Associate Director, Partners for Advancing Health Equity, Assistant Professor, Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine

*"There has been a lot of research on the problems and not on the solutions… it was necessary… to document the inequities, but i think that in doing so, we have almost over-relied on looking at the pain and not appreciating the power of these communities that have been harmed by these systems and structures of oppression. We have also not recognized the ways in which communities who have been most harmed have come up with solutions – pretty powerful ones – in the face of this great harm." S*harrelle Barber, The Ubuntu Center on Racism, Global Movements, and Population Health Equity

Identified Barriers

Panelists stressed that rather than continuing to focus on the "what" (i.e., what challenges or barriers exist), dialogue should center on why inequities exist and how they perpetuate. They cited discrimination, inequitable power structures, and ongoing oppression and injustice as some of the root causes for these challenges. Health equity research & practice need to better study the mechanisms of the root causes.

In health equity work, it is time to move beyond the **what.**

Dialogue should focus on:
Why inequities exist and **how** they perpetuate?

The **why** results from numerous root causes:

Solutions

Panelists discussed the value in shifting the health equity conversation from an overreliance on research (which has historically been paternalistic) to one of leveraged community power and future impact. Panelists shared that health equity is not just a moral goal, it is what is best for communities, including businesses, the private sector, and places of higher education.

Solutions for the future of health equity work center on **community power.**
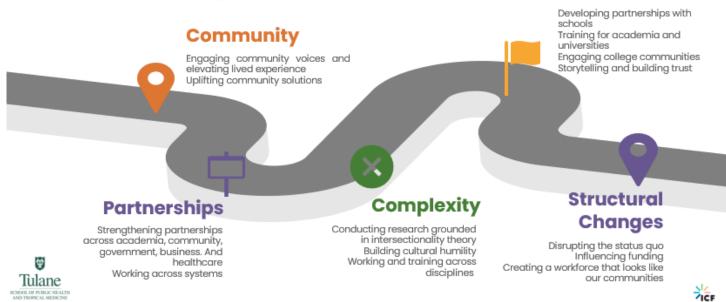
Future Action

To shift research agendas and health equity practice for the future, panelists pointed to communities (which are already developing solutions). Partnerships – across systems and sectors – are critical to the future of health equity. Community members with lived experience and local educational institutions can help identify solutions and build trust within and across communities. Incorporating intersectionality into analyses and practice is an important part of the roadmap forward. This complexity requires culture humility and the need for cross-disciplinary analyses. All of these factors will lead to structural changes that disrupt the status quo. Approaches to disrupt the status quo include research and policy development; asking the right questions to interrogate the structures; and going to the experts – those with lived experience.

The graphic below represents a living theory of change that will be reviewed and adapted over the course of the Collaborative's engagement and work.

The Roadmap Forward: A Theory of Change for Health Equity Research

Community
Engaging community voices and elevating lived experience
Uplifting community solutions

Education
Developing partnerships with schools
Training for academia and universities
Engaging college communities
Storytelling and building trust

Partnerships
Strengthening partnerships across academia, community, government, business. And healthcare
Working across systems

Complexity
Conducting research grounded in intersectionality theory
Building cultural humility
Working and training across disciplines

Structural Changes
Disrupting the status quo
Influencing funding
Creating a workforce that looks like our communities

Tulane
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
AND TROPICAL MEDICINE

ICF

Advancing the Health Equity Field

In summary, key tips from the inaugural webinar are included below.

Next steps for advancing the field of health equity:

1 Move away from identifying and researching challenges to dig deeper on learning why inequities exist and how they perpetuate.

2 Focus on solutions by highlighting the successes within communities.

3 Leverage the power of lived experience experts to inform the future of the field.

4 Focus on collaboration and community; acknowledge and seek to understand complexities and intersections of communities.

5 Use research, education, and field experiences to tell stories and build trust.

6 Leverage community tools and strategies – and lived experiences – to interrogate and change systems.

To learn more about these issues, or Partners for Health Equity's calls to action, a resource library including a full recording of this, and all P4HE webinars can be found on the P4HE website.