

Cooperative Extension Health Equity Competency Model [DRAFT - August 2024]

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Prerequisite: Cooperative Extension's National Framework for Health Equity and Well-Being	0.1 Review of the framework for understanding foundational concepts related to health equity and well-being.
	0.2 Review of Extension's past (land grants based on taking land from indigenous peoples, etc.)
Domain 1: Data, Assessment and Planning Domain	
Proficiency includes: conducting needs assessments, utilizing formal and informal data sources, and/or creating data visualizations to inform evidence-based decision-making.	
Competency	Description
1.1 Needs Assessments	Conducting thorough evaluations of community requirements and disparities across social determinants of health, environmental impacts, or other community needs to inform equitable interventions.
1.2 Identifying and Using Formal and Informal Data Sources	Recognizing and utilizing diverse data streams, both official and informal, to capture a comprehensive understanding of local health equity challenges.
1.3 Action Planning	Strategizing and implementing targeted initiatives and interventions tailored to address identified resource and equity gaps within specific communities.
1.4 Data Visualization	Presenting complex data sets in accessible and compelling formats to facilitate understanding and engagement in addressing health equity issues within communities.
Domain 2: Communicating About Equity	

The domain of Communicating About Equity entails adeptness in fostering collaboration, advocating for policy changes, and ensuring inclusivity through tailored messaging. This proficiency involves adapting communication styles to engage diverse audiences and considering accessibility for inclusive outreach. Moreover, leveraging evidence-based data remains pivotal for advocating equity, even amidst challenging conversations.

Competency	Description
2.1 Internal Communication	Expertise in facilitating effective communication within organizations or teams to foster collaboration, alignment of goals, and shared understanding of health equity priorities. Ability to develop and implement strategies for disseminating information internally, promoting engagement, and encouraging feedback and dialogue.
2.2 External Communication	Proficiency in engaging with external stakeholders such as the public, media, and policymakers to raise awareness about health equity issues, advocate for policy changes, and mobilize support for initiatives. Skill in crafting messages and narratives that resonate with external audiences and drive action towards achieving health equity goals.
2.3 Adaptable and Accessible Communication	The ability to adjust communication styles and language to suit diverse audiences and contexts. This skill ensures effective engagement internally within organizations, as well as externally with stakeholders such as the public, media, and policymakers, fostering greater understanding and driving action towards equitable health outcomes while ensuring inclusivity and effective engagement across all audiences.
2.4 Casemaking - Using Evidence-Based Data for Decision-Making	Constructing compelling arguments based on robust evidence and data to advocate for policies and actions aimed at advancing health equity, grounded in local contexts.
2.5 Historical and Systemic Awareness	Knowledge of history and current equity issues (internal and external to extension), understanding health systems, dynamics of power, and structural racism.
Domain 3: Leadership and Systems Thinking	

Proficiency in leadership skills, applying systems thinking, and managing change, including internal collaboration, feedback loops, conflict management/resolution, and potential involvement in policy initiatives.	
Competency	Description
3.1 Leadership	Ability to inspire and motivate others towards a shared vision of health equity, demonstrating empathy, integrity, and inclusivity in leadership practices. Skill in fostering a culture of continuous learning, innovation, and accountability within organizations or communities.
3.2 Applying Systems Thinking	Capacity to analyze complex systems and understand the interconnectedness of various factors influencing health equity, including social determinants, policies, and power dynamics. Skill in identifying leverage points for systemic change and developing strategies that address root causes of health disparities.
3.3 Change Management	Proficiency in managing organizational change processes, including assessing readiness, communicating effectively, and mitigating resistance to change. Ability to facilitate dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders to navigate transitions and implement sustainable solutions for advancing health equity.
3.4 Policy Engagement	Skill in engaging with policymakers and educating on policies, both public (governmental) and private (non-governmental) that promote health equity, based on evidence and community input. Capacity to navigate political landscapes, build alliances, and influence decision-making processes to achieve equitable policy outcomes.
3.5 Understanding Health Literacy in a Systems Context	Understanding health literacy, theories of health behavior change, and educating on structural racism and health equity issues.
3.6 Organizational Skills	Developing interdisciplinary teamwork, project management, facilitation and evaluation skills, and leveraging technology.
Domain 4: Community Partnership	

Proficiency in building and sustaining community partnerships to address health equity challenges to promote collaboration and mutual benefit. This domain encompasses understanding, applying, and sustaining the right types of partnerships, engaging in community-engaged scholarship, and effectively mobilizing resources to support community-driven initiatives aimed at achieving equitable outcomes.	
Competency	Description
4.1 Understanding, Applying, and Sustaining Strategic Alliances	Proficiency in identifying, cultivating, and sustaining strategic alliances to address health equity challenges, ensuring alignment of goals and mutual benefit. This competency involves assessing the current landscape of partnerships and strategically moving forward to strengthen collaborative efforts.
4.2 Community-Engaged Scholarship	Community-Engaged Scholarship involves actively involving community members in research and academic endeavors to address health equity challenges. This competency requires meaningful engagement with communities to ensure their voices are heard, priorities are addressed, and solutions are co-created.
4.3 Coalition Building	Coalition Building encompasses the ability to forge and maintain effective coalitions and collaborative efforts that bring together diverse stakeholders, including community organizations, government agencies, and academic institutions, to address health equity challenges. This involves fostering trust, shared decision-making, and mutual accountability within coalitions or collaborative efforts, recognizing the importance of inclusivity and diversity in achieving collective goals.
4.4 Resource Mobilization	Skill in identifying and leveraging resources, including funding, expertise, and networks, to support community-driven initiatives aimed at advancing health equity. Ability to cultivate partnerships and secure sustainable funding sources to sustain long-term efforts towards achieving equitable outcomes.
Domain 5: Cultural Competence	
Proficiency in understanding, respecting, and effectively working with diverse communities to address health equity challenges. This domain encompasses cultural humility, cultural literacy, cultural responsiveness, and effective translation efforts for diverse populations, including non-English	

speakers.	
Competency	Description
5.1 Cultural Humility	Demonstrating ongoing self-reflection and self-critique to understand personal and systemic biases and engage with diverse communities respectfully.
5.2 Cultural Literacy	Understanding and valuing the diverse cultural contexts of communities to inform health equity interventions.
5.3 Cultural Responsiveness	Adapting health equity interventions to be culturally relevant and effective for diverse communities.
5.4 Understanding and Working with Diverse Communities	Engaging with racial, cultural, and rural communities to address health equity challenges.
5.5 Language Integration for Non-English Speakers	Ensuring accessibility of health equity interventions for non-English speaking communities.
5.6 Cultural Components of Health	Incorporating cultural components into health equity interventions to ensure relevance and effectiveness.