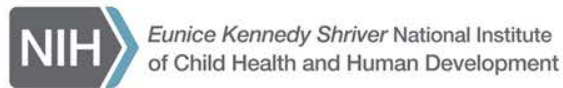


Recommendations Regarding the Office of Health Equity





Panel Members

- Lawrence Agodoa MD, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
- Maria Rosario (Happy) G. Araneta PhD, University of California, San Diego
- Pamela Y. Collins M.D., M.P.H., National Institute of Mental Health
- Lou De Paolo PhD, NICHD
- Melissa Gilliam MD, MPH, The University of Chicago (Chair)
- Brenda Hanning, NICHD
- Carl V. Hill PhD, MPH, National Institute on Aging
- Joyce Hunter PhD, National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities
- Chazeman S. Jackson PhD, MA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, HHS
- Candace Tingen, PhD, NICHD
- Sheila Zimmet, JD, Georgetown University



The Panel was asked to consider the following questions:

- What areas should NICHD focus on to address and eliminate health disparities?
- To address these areas of focus, what activities should NICHD consider? How can the OHE assist in promoting or enhancing these activities?
- What opportunities exist for OHE to enhance collaboration within NICHD DER and DIR, and NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices?
- How can OHE assist the DER/DIR to increase the number of underrepresented individuals participating in the scientific workforce? Are there opportunities to collaborate with other organizations, such as professional societies, nonprofits, universities, or other government agencies?
- In what ways should the OHE inform and educate the public about issues related to health equity?



The Changing US Demographic



The Need for Health Equity

- The changing US demographic has implications for health, science, and the scientific workforce.
- Disparities in health are complex and intergenerational.
- Science must meet the needs of a diverse population.
- A vibrant STEM and health workforce requires a diverse STEM and health pipeline.
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The Panel's Areas of Focus

- Three areas of recommendations:
 - Health disparities research
 - Creating a diverse workforce
 - Communications
- Recommendations are organized as
 - Global vision for OHE
 - Major role for OHE
 - Additional ideas for OHE to consider
- Goal is to present many ideas



Main ideas

- Position OHE as a DI&E “think tank” for NICHD
- Address diversity within NICHD itself.
- Create strategies to increase diversity of investigators.
- Link NICHD to diversity activities within NIH.
- Foster bidirectional communication between NICHD and external stakeholders.
- Identify goals and establish metrics for measuring progress.



Health Disparities





Background: Health Disparities

- Half of infants (<1 year) and preschool age children (<5 years) are racial or ethnic minorities.
- By 2020, half of the nation's children and adolescents (<18 years) will be racial or ethnic minorities.
- There will be changing prevalence of the diseases and issues to which NICHD attends.





Role of OHE in Health Disparities Research

- Lead the discussion of health disparities at NICHD.
- Serve as coordinator of the health disparities portfolio across NICHD.
- Lead the process for identifying needed studies.
- Reframe the goal of the portfolio to realizing health equity as a cross-cutting theme.
- Educate colleagues within NICHD on health disparities issues.



Role of OHE in Health Disparities Research, cont.

- Identify innovative ways of propelling health disparities research forward and integrate these ideas into NICHD.
- Expand NICHD's expertise in diversity beyond race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality.
- Lead NICHD in identifying goals and establishing metrics.



Additional Ideas for Health Disparities

- Integrate health disparities into the continuum from basic to clinical research.
- Particular areas include: maternal health and pregnancy, fetal and childhood origins of adult-onset disease, perinatal health disparities, violence, disabilities, adolescent health, and reproductive and gynecologic health.
- Encourage secondary data analyses for relevance to health disparities.
- Consider biomedical as well as structural factors.



Workforce





Background: Workforce

- A diverse workforce improves the health of diverse communities.
- A diverse STEM and health workforce requires a robust pipeline of diverse science and health students.
- There is a need to develop interest among young people.
- There is a need for diverse mentors.
- Race has also been shown to be a factor in awarding NIH funding.



The Role of OHE Regarding Workforce:

- Lead the discussion on workforce diversity within NICHD.
- Focus on diversity within NICHD; provide training to members of NICHD (e.g., bias, cultural competency, health equity).
- Set goals for workforce diversity and focus on creating the programs and practices to achieve it.
- Ensure NICHD stays abreast of research on inequities in funding and create appropriate trainings and policies to enhance equity of grant making process.



The Role of OHE Regarding Workforce, cont.

- Link NICHD to diversity efforts across NIH, in particular the National Institute for Minority Health and Health Disparities.
- Use external collaborations to enhance the diversity of the scientific workforce.
- Create more diversity supplements and reduce hurdles to obtaining them.



Additional Workforce Ideas

- Use and perhaps expand intramural opportunities – summer trainees; “developing talent” program for grad students, post-bac levels; PIs to encourage post-doc recruitment.
- Consider additional pipeline development in pre-baccalaureate programs, including programs in elementary, junior and senior high schools in STEM fields. Collaborate with the Science Education Partnership Award program to identify pipeline programs.
- Bring students and junior researchers to NIH to meet with program staff.
- Identify promising scientists and bring them into the NIH system.



Additional Ideas for Workforce

- Offer grant writing workshops, online programs, mock study section, through NICHD and non-traditional venues.
- Include programs for grant administration and management to increase the capacity of institutions with diverse faculty and students.
- Track, engage and encourage unfunded URM investigators to revise and resubmit.
- Look to organizations that are working with minority investigators (e.g., Robert Wood Johnson, NSF pipeline programs at universities, Leadership Alliance, White House OSTP, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, professional societies, etc.).
- Consider creative methods to recruit into and **retain** funded faculty at minority institutions, with packages that include funding for junior or mid-career faculty and trainees and for administrative infrastructure to manage an increased research portfolio.



Communications





Background: Communications

- Health communication can be a powerful tool for eliminating health disparities.
- Health communication promotes awareness, facilitates partnerships, and shapes social norms and individual behaviors.
- .Using strategic communications, partnerships, and evidence-based information, the OHE can play a major leadership role within NICHD to distinguish, elevate and prioritize equity in health across the Institute's mission areas.



Role of OHE in Health Communications

- Lead the Institution in increasing awareness of how health disparities research is shifting from solely documenting health differences towards understanding root causes of differences and ideas to improve health equity.
- Lend expertise to incorporate health disparities into NICHD communications plans.
- Identify and promote potential partners/collaborators and engage them on behalf of the Institute, where appropriate. Partnerships provide frameworks for shared learning and strengthening the collective impact of NICHD's work.



Role of OHE in Health Communications

- Facilitate connections and serve as a NICHD liaison to internal and external partners, as it pertains to health disparities communication activities.
- Assist DIR and DER with dissemination of their research findings relating to health equity beyond the academic community. The NICHD should serve as an amplifier of research on health equity.



Additional Ideas for Communications

- Represent NICHD in collaborating with other agencies and private sector partners on health disparities activities and support the Institute by identifying significant opportunities for impact.
- Build upon relationships with advocacy groups and community groups to encourage their involvement in NICHD's health disparities activities.
- Participate in knowledge generation by participating in research collaborations, event sponsorships, and community tie-ins to support and reinforce the NICHD comprehensive communication efforts.



Additional Ideas for Communications

- Establish and maintain effective communication channels specifically between NICHD Communication and OHE.
- Foster accountability by reporting on relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of pro-equity interventions and methodologies.
- Create social media activities (e.g. Blog, Twitter, Facebook) to communicate priorities and emerging directions for NICHD health disparities activities.



Conclusions



Conclusion

- Tremendous opportunity to build on NICHD's commitment to health equity
- OHE should be positioned and empowered to lead
- OHE should address NICHD's daily operations, its research, the current and future workforce, and health communications.
- The process should establish goals, metrics, and accountability



Thank you NICHD

- Christine Rogers, MA
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- Jennifer Guimond, PhD



Thank you