

Linking Diversity and Quality to Achieve Health Equity

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Abstract: To achieve health equity, public health agencies and systems must build capacity at all levels for culturally appropriate practice. This includes accountability to communities most affected by health inequities. The results of three years of work by the Diversity and Quality Team (DQT) at Clark County Public Health are presented, with examples of tools to build local public health infrastructure that links diversity and quality. Methods to demonstrate progress and success are included, with examples of assessment tools, training formats, organizational policies, and outcome measures. The presenters will propose and advocate that cultural competence be part of Washington public health standards and accreditation of public health programs. Presenters will discuss how competencies for diversity and quality are essential to build community coalitions and partnerships to achieve health equity. Critical junctures and ongoing development of the diversity and quality initiative at Clark County Public Health will be used as illustrations, and ways that public health agencies can move from self assessment to demonstrated success on any organizational scale will be suggested. Resources for individuals, work teams, programs and organizations to define and measure success will be shared with participants. Through discussion, participants will share ways they can apply concepts from this session in their own professional settings to become more effective advocates for diversity and quality in public health practice.