

Domain: Our People

Metric 1: Board, Management, and Workforce Resemble Our Community

Focus Area: Organizational Staff Diversity

Leading Practice Standard

Healthcare institutions should establish and measure processes promoting diversity that address recruitment, retention, and organizational culture. Implementing proactive recruitment strategies can help foster an inclusive work culture and empower staff to contribute their unique perspectives to patient care. Healthcare institutions ought to conduct regular assessments of diversity metrics and feedback mechanisms to support ongoing improvement efforts in creating a diverse and equitable workforce. These assessments/processes may include the following:

1. Increase racial/ethnic recruitment strategies among primary care providers, nurses, long-term care providers, and mental health providers.
2. Provide grants and other assistance to healthcare professionals at institutions with a history of serving diverse populations.
3. Build a culture of accountability.

Example

The University of Chicago Medicine (UCM) has goals to increase workforce diversity along with the promotion and development rates of People of Color to create a workforce that is more reflective of their patient and community demographics. These data are stratified by employee demographics to identify existing disparities and take proactive steps to address them. One key initiative to advance a more racially diverse leadership team is their 12-week Rise Higher Program to upskill entry-level employees within the organization.

If you are interested in learning more about the Rise Higher Program, please contact Audrey Gamet at Audrey.Gamet@uchicagomedicine.org

Background

Diverse healthcare teams are essential for providing equitable and effective healthcare services. Diversity in healthcare staff can enhance patient satisfaction, trust, and communication, ultimately leading to improved health outcomes². For example, patients from minority backgrounds may feel more comfortable and understood when interacting with healthcare professionals who share similar cultural backgrounds or language skills, leading to better engagement with healthcare services and treatment adherence. Promoting diversity in the healthcare workforce can help reduce disparities by fostering culturally competent care and challenging biases within healthcare systems¹.

Creating an inclusive environment that values diversity can help attract and retain a diverse workforce while enhancing innovation, problem-solving, and overall organizational performance³. Diversity in healthcare staff should be prioritized not only for addressing the needs of diverse patient populations but also for advancing healthcare quality and improving quality of life.

Resources

1. [American Hospital Association – Strengthening the Health Care Workforce](#)
A guide to help hospitals navigate workforce challenges and opportunities, as well as highlight strategies and resources to assist on these pivotal efforts.

References

1. Betancourt, J. R., Green, A. R., Carrillo, J. E., & Owusu Ananeh-Firempong, I. I. (2003). Defining cultural competence: a practical framework for addressing racial/ethnic disparities in health and health care. *Public health reports*.
2. Hunt, V., Prince, S., Dixon-Fyle, S., & Yee, L. (2018). Delivering through diversity.
3. Nivet, M. A. (2011). Commentary: Diversity 3.0: A necessary systems upgrade. *Academic Medicine*, 86(12), 1487-1489.