



Roadmap to HEALTH EQUITY

The Need

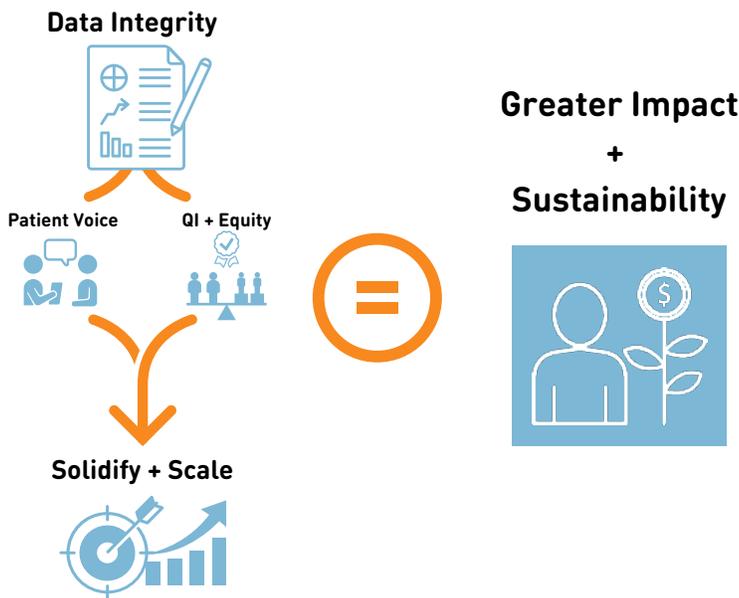
Quality means doing the right thing, for the right patient, at the right time, in the right way to achieve the best possible results. Equity is care that does not vary in quality because of someone’s race, gender, income, abilities or location. We cannot have quality without equity. We know that free and charitable clinics provide high-quality care. We also know that inequities within healthcare do exist. We know that if you can’t measure the care that is being provided, you cannot improve it. But there is a lack of evidence on the quality of care provided by free and charitable clinics nationwide.

Our Response

In 2017, Americares, the National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics, Loyola University Chicago, and a consortium of stakeholders including state-level FCC associations and individual free and charitable clinics from across the country, launched Quality of Care in Free and Charitable Clinics: Roadmap to Health Equity (Roadmap). The goal of Roadmap is to improve the quality of care and reduce health inequity for the millions of patients who seek care in free and charitable clinics nationwide. We thank Becton, Dickinson and Company and Quest Diagnostics Foundation for their generous support of the Roadmap to Health Equity initiative.

The Approach

Until Roadmap to Health Equity, there has never been a nationwide method of collecting data to measure the quality of care provided by free and charitable clinics. To do so, we developed a national data repository to capture quality measures and stratify them by demographics to identify and address inequity. By facilitating internal and external benchmarking, Roadmap supports clinics as they break down barriers to equitable care and position internal systems and workflows to support the delivery of quality care. Currently there are 43 pilot clinics participating in Roadmap and 10 workgroups made up of stakeholder volunteers who help inform our progress.



Why Roadmap?

"For me it's the true belief that this is important. I think that for those who've been in the free clinic sector for a little bit of time, this is the next frontier to legitimize what we do."

"I was excited for our clinic to join forces as a way of being able to tell our story more effectively."

"Funders are looking for results. They want to know, as they should, if they're investing a lot of money in these human services in our communities, they want to know if patients are healthier."

"Free clinics don't get the credit they deserve. So I was really excited about getting to compile that information, which then empowers the conversation to go back to our Senators and Representatives to convey the massive scope of the care that we're actually providing to people."

Learn More:



Don't Let Perfect Be the Enemy of Good: A Proof of Concept for a Custom National Data Repository of Quality Measures for Free and Charitable Clinics

Julie S. Darnell, Michael Perry, Nicole Lamoureux, and Edith Lee
Health Equity. Oct 2022.708-716. | <http://doi.org/10.1089/heq.2022.0078>

"Our findings demonstrate a proof of concept. By standardizing quality measures alongside patient characteristics, clinics can become aware of racial/ethnic inequalities in health outcomes. This information can motivate clinics to investigate the causes and implement solutions. In an environment where outcome data from FCCs are scarce, the new national data repository lays the foundation for routine stratified reporting of a range of quality outcomes for an important safety net for the uninsured."

Full article:



What's Next

Quality Improvement + Peer Learning Network



Launching in November 2022, AmeriCares will support nine free and charitable clinics as they work to address disparities in patient health outcomes. Participating clinics will receive financial support and also have access to one-on-one coaching to support selected current and future improvement initiatives focused on addressing care disparities. To complement improvement coaching support, participating clinics will engage in a monthly peer learning network where they will spotlight their breakthroughs and challenges along the way to a wider network of clinics. The monthly Peer Learning Network calls are open to any interested Roadmap clinic.

Patient Voice: Person-Centered Primary Care Measure



The Person-Centered Primary Care Measure (PCPCM) is a validated 11-item patient-reported measure that assesses the delivery of primary care with a focus on population health, equity, quality, and sustainable expenditures. The PCPCM is free and available in a number of languages. The measure has received endorsement from both NQF and CMS. A small cohort of clinics engaged in Roadmap have piloted the PCPCM and plans to expand the utilization of PCPCM are underway for 2023. AmeriCares staff provides analysis of the PCPCM data for participating clinics.

Interested in joining or learning more? Contact: Ashley Edwards | amedwards@americares.org