

Racial Equity Community of Practice Program Overview

Background

California's public healthcare systems (PHS) have long focused on health equity, given their role as large safety net providers in communities of color. However, the pandemic and racial unrest of 2020 have exposed the need to address structural racism in more deliberate and meaningful ways. In interviews with SNI in early 2021, PHS shared that they are looking to strengthen their organizational commitment to anti-racism and develop strategies that embed equity in all aspects of care. The interviews also revealed that PHS have varying levels of experience acting on racial and health equity, with a handful of systems at the early stages, a few with several years of experience, and many in between.

SNI engaged national experts to design a learning program that would support advancement of racial equity efforts at all PHS, with the acknowledgement that PHS are in different stages of action and with the understanding that this is a relatively nascent field and "off-the-shelf" curricula are not readily available. SNI considered the pros and cons of different program designs and their alignment with member needs and progress. SNI also conducted extensive due diligence of external partners/consultants who could bring expertise leading anti-racism system change efforts *across* a cohort of organizations.

Based on this design phase, SNI selected a Racial Equity Community of Practice approach and chose the [National Equity Project](#) (NEP), an Oakland-based leadership and systems change organization focused on advancing equity objectives, to co-design and facilitate the program with SNI.

The objective of the Racial Equity Community of Practice is to **advance the efforts of systems to improve racial equity and embed equity in all aspects of the organization** by:

- Developing leadership capacity to make organizational change
- Facilitating a shared understanding and language, peer learning and action

The Community of Practice approach:

- Creates an environment where PHS share learning, test new approaches, and problem-solve together and with equity experts
- Allows PHS to strengthen and advance their current equity efforts
- Allows PHS systems earlier in their equity journey to access structured support and 1:1 consulting with NEP
- Will customize content and resources based on PHS interest and progress
- Will ensure the Community of Practice is able to move to action by leveraging successful practices to advance racial equity in health systems. SNI and NEP will help to identify and curate the most relevant resources.

Program Structure and Timeline

The Racial Equity Community of Practice will consist of a pre-launch phase, a level-setting phase, and a learning and action phase. The phases will build upon each other to assist PHS in forming racial equity teams, laying the foundation for the Community of Practice, and entering into action.

Phase	Expected Member Participation
<p>Pre-Launch Phase: Team Building (October – December 2021)</p> <p>PHS leaders will form a team to participate in the Community of Practice.</p>	<p>With support from SNI and NEP, PHS leaders will identify 3-5 individuals to participate in an 18-month Community of Practice. (SNI will send a team formation form to systems in October for completion.)</p>
<p>Phase 1: Level Setting (January – April 2022)</p> <p>Teams will build awareness and knowledge about racism and equity, and develop trusted connections with peers and consultants within a safe environment.</p>	<p>Teams participate in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Virtual* program kick-off in January 2022 - 3 monthly virtual sessions (2-3 hours each) <p><i>*SNI will assess opportunities for in-person meetings in 2022 and 2023 to build critical connections and trust with other participants, facilitators, and coaches.</i></p>
<p>Phase 2: Learning and Action (May 2022 – June 2023)</p> <p>Teams will engage in peer learning, testing, and sharing of successes and opportunities within each system based on their established racial equity goals.</p>	<p>Teams participate in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In-person kick-off (COVID-permitting) in May 2022 - 5-6 virtual sessions every other month (1-2 virtual sessions may be replaced with in-person meetings if possible) - Optional coaching sessions - Final in-person sharing session in June 2023 <p>In between sessions, teams will also test/pilot approaches that work towards their racial equity goals and track progress.</p>

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