

CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY

2023

EQUITY REPORT



**Children's Hospital
of Philadelphia®**

Center for Health Equity





REFLECTIONS ON OUR YEAR

From the Chief Health Equity Officer

I truly believe that, as one of the best children's hospitals, when Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) partners with others to address root causes of health disparities, we can achieve health equity for our children. My vision is to lead the Center for Health Equity team in exploring and implementing strategies that result in every child in Philadelphia being among the healthiest in the nation. This vision helps me to be cautiously optimistic that if we all do our part to actively change our city and our nation, someday the color of our skin won't matter.

Health equity means that everyone has what they need to achieve their best health. As the Center for Health Equity begins its third year, we seek to build upon our earlier efforts. We will continue to bring the expertise and efforts of CHOP to improve the health of children in communities that have for centuries suffered from disinvestments in their neighborhoods, homes and schools. Because 80% of children's health is impacted by social determinants such as housing, food security, education and financial stability, we must now invest in these communities in order to give the children a chance to become healthy, independent adults.

The CHE serves as a central hub for health equity efforts across the CHOP enterprise and seeks to synergistically leverage the collective strength of the hospital's clinical expertise, research and community-based programming in order to improve the lives of the most vulnerable children. In this report, we share our early successes and our plans for the future.

The center is first targeting West Philadelphia, which is in the hospital's backyard. Our narrow focus is the Cobbs Creek neighborhood. The good news is that most children in West Philadelphia have health coverage. In addition, West Philly has many daycares, public schools and playgrounds (although many are in poor condition).

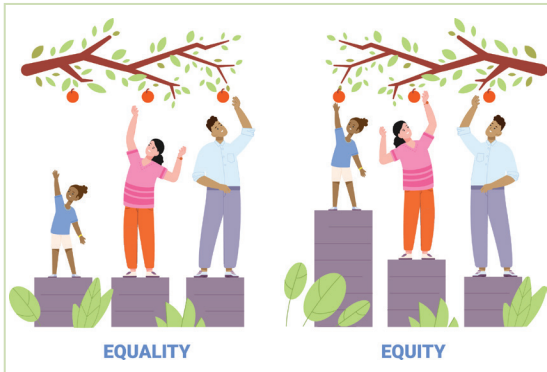
Despite these resources, West Philadelphia is one of the poorest areas in the country. About three-quarters of the children live in poverty. One in four children has been diagnosed with asthma. West Philadelphia currently has the highest rate of increase for opioid use as well as alarmingly rising crime rates. Philadelphia has the highest infant mortality rates of any large city, with West and North Philadelphia suffering the most. Poor housing conditions and food deserts make living conditions hard, stressful and hopeless.

The CHE seeks to give children hope through partnerships with others inside and outside of CHOP to improve housing, foster safe neighborhoods and economic stability, provide unbiased care, and advocate for quality education. We will continue to partner with community-based organizations in West Philadelphia that keep fighting and advocating despite their circumstances.

There is much work to be done. We look forward to working with the entire CHOP enterprise and community organizations to improve health for Philadelphia children.

Tyra Bryant-Stephens, MD, is the Associate Vice President and Chief Health Equity Officer at CHOP. She brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the center. Dr. Bryant-Stephens founded our nationally renowned Community Asthma Prevention Program, and she serves as its Medical Director.

CHOP'S COMMITMENT TO HEALTH EQUITY



EQUALITY *doesn't mean* EQUITY

The apple tree metaphor illustrates the distinction between equality and equity.

The Center for Health Equity (CHE) at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) seeks to discover, implement and disseminate evidence-based practices and policies so every child in Philadelphia has equitable care and that every child in Philadelphia achieves their best health.

Health equity is when everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible (RWJF, 2017). The difference between disparities and inequities is that the latter are rooted in injustices.

In order to achieve health equity, obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination and their consequences must be removed.

Ultimately, we need to eliminate disparities in health by addressing the determinants that adversely affect excluded and marginalized populations.

The CHE mission is to achieve health equity by delivering **HOPE** to children:

- **H**elp to create safe and healthy housing and communities
- **O**pportunities to thrive and options to succeed in achieving their best health through unbiased clinical care
- **P**artnerships with communities to achieve health equity for all children in Philadelphia
- **E**ducation in safe and healthy schools to encourage children to become economically independent adults



CHOP EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP'S COMMITMENT TO HEALTH EQUITY

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia is the first children's hospital in the nation and has a long history as a leader in child health. We continue to care for children all over the world, and we strive to make a stronger commitment to our local community, where health disparities have existed for years.

As an institution, we commit to ensuring every child in our care and in our community has an opportunity to be as healthy as possible. We understand that we must focus on Black and Brown children who are victims of systemic and structural racism and suffer from greater disparities in health outcomes. We are accountable for driving the progress needed to fulfill this commitment to all children and their families, regardless of skin color, language, ethnicity or income.

We will advance strategic and collaborative efforts that measurably reduce healthcare disparities and maximize health equity throughout our health system and our community, with a sharp focus on:

Community Partnership

- Partnering with communities and agencies to achieve health equity for all children in Philadelphia
- Developing, implementing, sustaining and sharing evidence-based interventions in our community to reduce healthcare disparities

Clinical Care

- Creating a clinical environment to ensure equitable clinical care and to achieve the best health possible for each child
- Developing tools to track measures of healthcare disparities and health equity, and improve them

Education

- Educating trainees and staff to understand the determinants of healthcare disparities and health equity
- Educating trainees and staff to provide equitable care

Research

- Providing mentorship and research resources for CHOP scientists to pursue research that uncovers healthcare disparities and identifies strategies to eliminate these disparities and achieve health equity
- Applying a health equity lens in making decisions about research projects and research approaches

PATIENTS WHO RECEIVE CARE AT CHOP

CHOP takes care of children from across the nation and beyond, yet most of the children who are admitted to the Philadelphia campus hospital or emergency room live in Philadelphia.

Socioeconomic Status for Philadelphia Patients

Many neighborhoods across Philadelphia, particularly those in the North and West, have a higher proportion of residents living below the federal poverty line (FPL) compared to the national average.

Philadelphia Patient Population & Racial/Ethnic Demographics

The majority of CHOP patients come from West Philadelphia, with a substantial number coming from the Cobbs Creek neighborhood. In those areas, CHOP sees a high concentration of non-white patients, whereas CHOP patient populations from Northeast and South Philadelphia tend to be majority white.

Child Opportunity Index (COI)

The Child Opportunity Index measures many features of a child's lived environment and provides a score (0 to 100) that represents access to a wide variety of opportunities. West Philadelphia in general, and Cobbs Creek in particular, scores in the lowest quartile of the COI, indicating poor access to socioeconomic, educational and health-related opportunities.

Patient Experience

CHOP monitors our patient and family experience across our care settings, using insights from a third-party vendor, Press Ganey. We collect qualitative and quantitative feedback from our patients and families using electronic surveys, which are reviewed by our Patient & Family Experience team. The CHE is committed to ensuring there are no disparities in patient care experience scores. We are working with partners to understand the current state and develop plans that will ensure all of our patients have the best patient care experiences possible.



Emergency Department Visits for Focus Diagnoses

Patients living in West Philadelphia and the Cobbs Creek neighborhoods make a significant contribution to CHOP Emergency Department visits for several major conditions/diseases. In the CHOP population, **sickle cell anemia, diabetes, asthma, behavioral health, trauma** and **infant morbidity** are known to be highly correlated with race, ethnicity, poverty and limited access to resources. For this reason, the CHE places specific emphasis on these conditions and the care provided to patients who suffer from them.

CENTER CORES

Community Translational Core

“Boots on the Ground”

Mission: to promote synergy among its members in order to leverage strengths and to support “boots on the ground” collaboration, fostering the dissemination and sustainment of prevention interventions that advance health equity in the community

Clinical Quality & Safety Core

“More Equitable, Less Harm”

Mission: to assure health equity across the enterprise by proactively seeking opportunities to eliminate health disparities

Advocacy & Justice Core

“Speak Truth to Power”

Mission: to identify opportunities and mentorship to advocate for racial justice and health equity

Research & Education Core

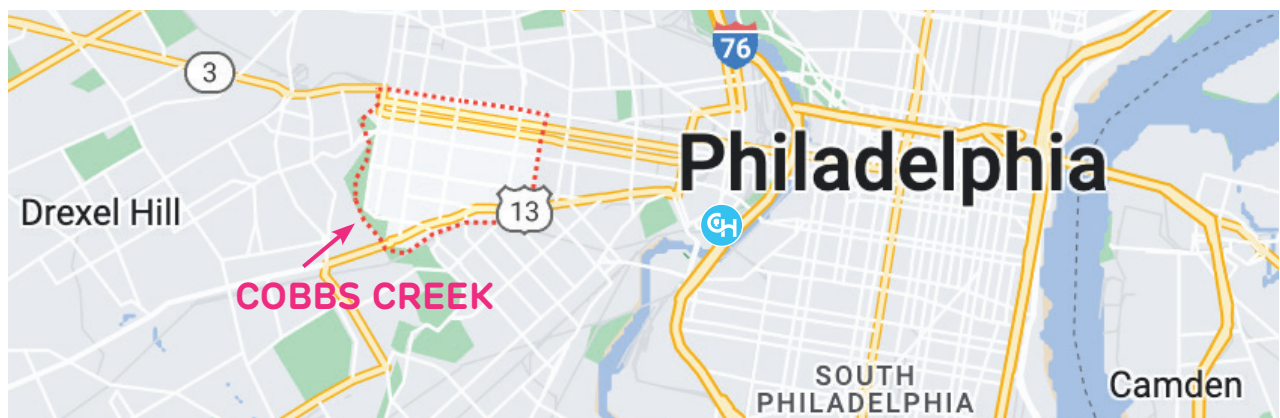
“Nothing About Us Without Us”

Mission: to provide mentorship and tools for CHOP researchers to implement best practices to achieve health equity through research and to recruit junior faculty to health equity research

Strategic Plan for the Next Three Years

The Cobbs Creek neighborhood will be the initial community focus. Outcomes in health disparities in the clinical areas of trauma, asthma, behavioral health and infant morbidity will be targeted through programming that tackles healthcare access, economic stability, neighborhood and homes, and social and community context. After piloting our initiatives in Cobbs Creek, we plan to move to other West Philadelphia neighborhoods by 2025.

This will be accomplished through working with the CHE cores, stakeholders across CHOP and the Philadelphia community with concentrated interests in health equity. Where evidence is lacking, we will support innovative work to identify best practices in response to community concerns and needs. Our aim is to promote health equity for children and youth who receive care in CHOP’s clinical care and research environments.



SUCCESSSES

4 Community Health Partnership Clinics with 1,600+ attendees



The CHE's first year was spent developing our strategic plan, assembling staff, defining our mission and vision, identifying community partners and creating programming priorities. That work allowed the center to hit the ground running in Year 2. Here are some of the CHE's accomplishments and plans going forward.

Back to School *(August 2022)*

Distributed fresh produce and more than 800 backpacks filled with school supplies; conducted sports physicals; and provided CPR training and COVID-19 vaccinations.

Supporting Parents for Success *(November 2022)*

Conducted developmental screenings and warm handoffs to Early Intervention; provided COVID-19 vaccinations, breastfeeding support and connections to home visiting family programs; offered early childhood literacy, infant safe sleep, financial counseling and benefit services education; and distributed diapers, pack 'n plays and fresh produce.

Providing Tools to Address Community Trauma *(February 2023)*

Provided trauma-focused education sessions, enrollment in youth peer grief support groups and connections to substance use treatment; conducted CPR training, Stop the Bleed training, COVID-19 and flu vaccinations, and overdose prevention and Narcan training; and distributed fresh produce and gun locks with training.

Setting Teens up for Success *(May 2023)*

Provided information on teenage and family communication, career development, financial counseling and benefit services, and STD testing and counseling; conducted CPR training, Stop the Bleed training, asthma education and medication use; and distributed sports equipment, work- and interview-appropriate clothing, gun locks and fresh produce.



42

Students

Youth Summit

Students from West Philadelphia schools heard from and met CHOP and Penn physicians from backgrounds underrepresented in medicine (URiM) with the goal to inspire URiM students to study medicine.

PROJECTS IN PROGRESS

Teen-Infant Clinic

This program seeks to reduce health disparities in infant morbidity by providing vital primary care services to teenage mothers and their babies in the same appointment. This program also connects them to support systems that can set them up for success.

Community Health Navigator Connections

Community health navigators (CHNs), who are residents of West Philadelphia and are familiar with the stressors and social needs of the community, connect families to the social and health services they need. These services address the root causes of health disparities and work toward achieving health equity.

REaL Data Capture

The REaL Data Capture Quality Improvement project aims to increase the accuracy and consistency in racial, ethnic, and language data collection. This project standardizes collection processes to provide quality data about CHOP patients and improve healthcare equity. This will help CHOP provide equitable care for all patients regardless of race, ethnicity and language.

Community Integration of Medical Financial Partnership

Expand the number of families that take advantage of free financial counseling, tax preparation and public benefits application assistance from the several community organizations that partner with CHOP as a way to help families build their wealth – and thereby improve their health.

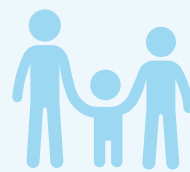
Addressing Missed Care Opportunities

Develop an updated policy and best practices document to address missed primary and specialty care appointments and care opportunities for all patients receiving services regardless of race, ethnicity, language and payor.



Block Builds

Recognizing that healthy homes are foundational to healthy outcomes, 20 homes are projected to receive free exterior repairs for qualified homeowners in the Cobbs Creek neighborhood. The repairs will help prevent water intrusion and include replacing damaged roofs, installing new gutters and downspouts, and repairing broken windows. This program is an extension of Community Asthma Prevention Program Plus (CAPP+).



170+
Families

Social Needs Screening in Primary Care

Cobbs Creek primary care families have been screened at appointments by CHNs to connect them to identified social needs, including resources related to food, housing, child care, transportation, financial stability and more.

EXTERNAL PARTNERS

Our external partners are key collaborators for the CHE's strategy and include:

- African Family Health Organization
- Bright Horizons
- Cobbs Creek Neighbor's Association
- Community Legal Services
- Community of Compassion Community Development Corp.
- Free Library of Philadelphia
- Habitat for Humanity
- The Impact Center
- Maternity Care Coalition
- Overbrook Environmental Education Center
- Penn Center for Public Health Initiatives
- Penn Netter Center for Community Partnerships
- Philadelphia Department of Public Health
- Rebuilding Together Philadelphia
- School District of Philadelphia
- Together for West Philadelphia
- Uplift



2023 Back to School, Community Health Partnership Clinic

CENTER FOR HEALTH EQUITY TEAM

Tyra Bryant-Stephens, MD
Associate Vice President, Chief Health Equity Officer

George Dalembert, MD, MSHP
Associate Director

Tanya Groomes, MBA-HCA, LSSGB
Clinical Program Operations Manager

Doug Strane, MPH
Senior Evaluation Manager

Tyneshia Harris Howzell, MSHS, LSSGB
Senior Enterprise Improvement Adviser

Kiona Hines, MS
Program Coordinator

Julia Heller, MID, MPH
Program Coordinator

Mercedes Bellinger
Community Health Navigator

Sharda Butler
Community Health Navigator

Vyanna Melvin
Community Health Navigator

Paige Prince
Community Health Navigator

Tyshira Wright
Community Health Navigator

National Advisory Board

Our National Advisory Board is comprised of experts in racism and health, health equity, housing, evidence-based interventions, implementation science, policy, and advocacy. They guide the development of CHOP's Center for Health Equity. Members include:

Shavon Arline-Bradley
Health Equity Expert, Political Strategist

Trenita Childers, PhD
Researcher in Racism and Health

Donna Cooper
Children First, Advocacy Expert

Tamir Harper
Southwest Philadelphia native, Eighth-grade teacher, Pursuing master's in education at University of Pennsylvania

Benjamin Danielson, MD
Clinical professor of pediatrics, University of Washington, Former Senior Medical Director for the Odessa Brown Children's Clinic

Tiffani Johnson, MD, MSc, FAAP
University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Assistant Professor of Pediatrics

Jean Raphael, MD, MPH
Baylor University, Health Policy and Disparities Researcher

Megan Sandel, MD, MPH
Boston University, Housing and Child Health Researcher

Neighborhood Council

The Neighborhood Council consists of CHOP staff who live in West Philadelphia. Their essential task is to communicate needs and concerns of the community to inform the planning process for the CHE.

Jamila Kinsey, RN
Registered Clinical Nurse

Karen Topping
Project/Operations Manager

Darrah Matthews
Grievance Specialist

LaTonya Boyd
Certified Medical Assistant

Charmane Braxton
Lead, Community Asthma Prevention Program

Robin Williams
Community Asthma Prevention Program

Monet Brown-Reed
CSA, Academic Coordinator

Daisha Ball
Clinical Research Coordinator

APPENDIX

Definitions

Health disparities are the differences in health outcomes between groups within a population. They denote differences, unjust or not.

Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health. These include poverty, discrimination and their subsequent consequences, such as powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and healthcare.

Institutional Racism is the policies and practices within institutions that benefit white people to the disadvantage of people of color. This extends beyond prejudice to encompass discriminatory treatments, unfair policies or biased practices based on race that result in inequitable outcomes for whites over people of color.

Redlining is a historical discriminatory policy that denied neighborhoods of color access to mortgage investments.

Social determinants of health, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO), are “the circumstance in which people are born, grow up, live, work and age, and the systems put in place to deal with illness. These circumstances are in turn shaped by a wider set of forces: economics, social policies and politics.”

Systemic Racism is racism that is deeply embedded in political, economic and social systems and structures. This includes laws, written or unwritten policies, and widespread, deeply rooted, established practices, beliefs and attitudes that produce, condone and perpetuate widespread unfair treatment of people of color.

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FUTURE DIRECTION

The success of the Center for Health Equity requires a long-term commitment from hospital leadership to support and build sustained infrastructures to guard against racism in health. We know we cannot do it alone, and we are counting on our CHOP colleagues and community partners to be a part of the team to achieve health equity for the children in Philadelphia. We will continue to approach this neighborhood by neighborhood, learning along the way best practices and disseminating these practices to partners and others.



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healthequitycenter@chop.edu
www.chop.edu/health-equity

3401 Civic Center Blvd. • Philadelphia, PA 19104

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