

Health Equity Week is here!

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**HEALTH
EQUITY
WEEK
2019**

March 27, 2019

Welcome to Penn Medicine Health Equity Week!

All week long we are connecting staff on the front lines of healthcare delivery and our community of trainees and learners with resources and tools to increase knowledge and skills to achieve health equity.

Penn Medicine is committed to providing the best patient and family centered care to all patients regardless of their personal characteristics. During this week, we hope to advance our understanding of health and health care disparities and inspire solutions for achieving equitable care.

Continue reading to learn more about what you can do help us achieve this mission.

Health Equity for People with Disabilities

What is it?

Over 60 million adults (1 in 4) in the United States have a disability. These disabilities include but are not limited to:

- Physical impairments (difficulty with movement)
- Vision impairments
- Hearing impairments
- Intellectual or cognitive impairments (difficulty with learning)

Different types of disabilities can coexist or can occur together in the same person. Disability affects people of all races, ethnicities, genders, languages, sexual orientations and gender identities. The number of people with disabilities is likely to increase as the populations ages and people live longer with chronic conditions.

Why is it important?

People with disabilities have worse health outcomes than those without a disability, including higher rates of obesity, arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart attacks and strokes. Historically this population has had difficulty accessing adequate health insurance due to preexisting conditions, cost of policies and benefit limits.

The needs of people with disabilities are often ignored or overlooked by the health care systems. Medical practices are often not wheelchair-accessible and don't have the equipment and trained staff to perform thorough examinations that many of us take for granted. The Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities.

What you can do

- **Put the person before the disability** – Always say “person with a disability” or “person with blindness,” not “disabled person” or “blind person”.
- **Don't make assumptions** – Having a disability does not mean someone is not healthy or cannot take care of themselves. Ask questions to learn about someone's disability and what they can and cannot do.
- **Demonstrate disability etiquette** – Treat people with disabilities with respect.
 - Speak to the person with the disability, not the person who may accompany them.
 - Respect the individual's ability to make decisions and judgments on their own behalf.
 - If you offer assistance, wait until the offer is accepted. Then listen to or ask for instructions.

***Together we can ensure our culture
and climate are inclusive for everyone.***

To learn more:

- [Living with a Disability in America](#), [The Dose podcast](#), [The Commonwealth Fund](#)

- [National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Disability and Health](#)

Celebrate Health Equity All Week Long!

Unable to make one of the in-person events? [Click here](#) to view the events that will be live streamed. Also, connect with your colleagues from across Penn Medicine by following [PennCHEA](#) on Twitter and posting using [#HEW2019](#)!

[Click Here to Learn More and See the Full Schedule of Events](#)