



Health Equity Steering Committee | *Charter*

Purpose

The Health Equity Committee exists to guide and champion the implementation of Northwest Kidney Centers' Health Equity Strategy. This committee ensures our work is aligned with our mission to deliver inclusive, trauma-informed, and equitable care, centered around our patients, people, and communities. The committee also plays a key role in regularly reviewing and refining the strategy to respond to emerging needs, lessons learned, and community feedback.

Mission

The Health Equity Committee exists to advance the goals outlined in Northwest Kidney Centers' Health Equity Strategy by actively working across the organization to reduce disparities, remove barriers to care, and promote equitable outcomes for all. Our mission is to:

- Provide inclusive, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive care that supports people in living their healthiest lives;
- Identify and address social determinants of health that affect kidney care access and outcomes;
- Strengthen data collection and analysis to inform equitable care delivery and drive quality improvement;
- Cultivate an inclusive and supportive workforce that reflects the communities we serve;
- Foster meaningful community partnerships to co-create responsive strategies and improve health outcomes; and
- Engage in advocacy and leadership that drives systems-level change and builds accountability for health equity.

We are committed to building a healthcare environment where everyone has a fair and just opportunity to thrive. We are committed to promoting institutional change within the organization to better serve the community.

Values

The Health Equity Steering Committee will commit to:

- **Centering community and patient voice:** We will make sure the voices of the people we serve are heard and included in decision-making.
- **Cultivating cultural humility:** By staying open and being respectful, we will approach our work with curiosity, self-awareness, and a willingness to learn from others. Holding space for others from different cultures, experiences, and perspectives.
- **Practicing transparency and accountability:** We will communicate openly, share updates about our progress, and hold ourselves and each other accountable for following through on our commitments.
- **Creating shared learning and leadership opportunities:** We will create space for everyone on the committee to grow, share knowledge, and create leadership opportunities for staff to spearhead organization wide projects and initiatives
- **Driving long-term change that reflects our mission and values:** We will focus on making changes that last, aligned in our purpose and truly improve equity for patients, staff, and communities.

Scope & Responsibilities

The Health Equity Committee is a collaborative, multidisciplinary group responsible for:

- Advising and supporting the implementation of initiatives within NKC's Health Equity framework, across the seven domains:
 - o Addressing Determinants of Health Equity
 - o Facilities, Systems & Technology Innovations
 - o Data Collection & Analysis
 - o Quality Improvement
 - o Advocacy & Leadership Engagement
 - o Workplace & Workforce Development
 - o Community Investment & Partnerships
- Review, refine, and revise the NKC Health Equity Strategy on an annual basis to respond to emerging needs, lessons learned, and community feedback.
- Amplify ongoing investment in building community relationships and partnerships to reduce health disparities, among priority populations identified, and enhance health outcomes for people living with kidney disease.
- Review and share health equity data and recommendations with clinic leaders, using key performance indicators stratified by social determinants of health
- Participate in self-directed project teams focused on specific health equity priorities.
- Report regular progress and updates to the executive sponsor and executive leadership team.

- Develop and share best practices, resources, and insights across NKC.
- Support ongoing cultural humility and health equity learning throughout the organization.
- Identify and present two health equity-related resources annually to the full committee to deepen shared knowledge.
- Report quarterly to NKC's Operations Committee to ensure alignment and integration with organizational priorities.

Committee Projects

All committee members will actively participate in at least one self-directed project team. Project teams will meet independently and are responsible for setting their own goals, timelines, and deliverables.

Potential projects include:

- Site-Based Health Equity Trainings
- Patient Advisory Council Support
- Optimizing Transplant Outcomes
- CKD Education Revamp
- Community Engagement & Outreach

Professional Development

Health Equity Committee members are encouraged to invest in their own learning and growth:

- Each member will participate in at least one external professional development opportunity from a pre-determined list per year related to equity and inclusion.
- Committee members will also contribute to collective learning by sharing key takeaways at team meetings.
- An annual Health Equity Committee Retreat will provide time for reflection, collaboration, and future planning.

Membership

Committee membership will reflect NKC's cross-functional, community-centered approach and will be comprised of 10 leadership and staff from across the organization that serve in a

patient-facing capacity. Members will apply to sit on the committee and will be selected by a committee of NKC leadership.

- **Committee membership will be open, but not limited to, representatives from the following functions:**
 - Medical Director
 - Nursing Leadership (Representation from: Home & In-center)
 - Social Work
 - Nutrition
 - Palliative Care
 - Patient Finance
 - Dialysis Technicians
 - Home Program & CKD Team
 - People Team
- Members will serve rotating terms, with opportunities to rejoin after a break in service. The term will be 2 years long.
- For non-exempt employees, manager sign-off is needed for participation.
- The following teams will be consulted on a case-by-case basis:
 - Quality & Safety (Krystle)
 - Hospital Services (Erica) -- Spend time in monthly meetings reporting committee activity
- **Chair:** The committee will be led by one chairperson, the Equity and Partnerships Director, responsible for:
 - Scheduling and facilitating meetings
 - Setting agendas
 - Supporting project team coordination
 - Acting as a liaison to the executive sponsor and executive leadership team
 - Share monthly meeting notes with executive sponsor
- **Executive Sponsorship:** The executive sponsor will attend meetings on a bi-monthly basis.

Meetings

The committee will meet monthly for 90 minutes. Project teams will set their own schedules and provide bi-weekly updates to the committee chair. Notes and key takeaways will be documented and shared with the Committee Chair and Executive Sponsor.

Decision-Making and Accountability

The Committee operates with a spirit of collaboration and consensus. If needed, decisions may be made by a majority vote.

- Progress and recommendations will be shared quarterly with NKC's executive sponsor and leadership team.
- The Health Equity Steering Committee will report to the Operations Committee on a quarterly basis to ensure accountability and alignment with NKC's strategic direction.
- Annual reports will be shared with staff and stakeholders to build transparency and trust.