Health inequities among specific population groups and geographic areas have long been identified as one of the major deficiencies of the U.S. healthcare system. It’s time for concerted action.

As a national leader in healthcare quality, Sutter Health considers health equity a **measurable, key component** of quality healthcare. We are committed to eliminating health disparities within our system and beyond by engineering **data-driven, innovative solutions**. Sutter’s Institute for Advancing Health Equity has been created to enhance this commitment—building on the benefits of our integrated, coordinated network of care to further health equity for our patients and those across the country.

**What is the Institute for Advancing Health Equity?**

Sutter’s Institute for Advancing Health Equity is an innovation incubator, facilitating pragmatic research that can be directly applied into clinical settings to foster more equitable outcomes for all.

**A Convener**

The Institute serves as a convener of **experts, advocates and patients** to identify inequities, explore ideas and create solutions.

**An Innovation Incubator**

- **Research & Data**
- **Clinical & Community-Based Initiatives**
- **Training & Consultation**
- **Collaboration & Partnerships**

**Health Equity Solutions & Shared Expertise to Improve Patient Outcomes**

**Sutter’s Unique Position**

**Leader in Quality:**
As a recognized national leader in healthcare quality, we consider health equity to be a key measurement of care quality. Our work to continuously improve the quality and value of care we provide our patients has resulted in Sutter hospitals consistently ranking in the top 10% in the U.S. for overall healthcare quality.

**An Experienced Team:**
Sutter has an experienced team of clinicians, researchers and administrators focused on advancing health equity across our integrated network. Over the past several years this dedicated team has developed a proven track record in generating data-driven insights, groundbreaking methodologies and pragmatic solutions to improve outcomes for all patients.

**Diverse Patient Population:**
Sutter serves more than 3 million patients in a wide variety of care settings across 22 Northern California counties, arguably the most geographically and demographically diverse region in the country. We are a microcosm of the nation.

**Strength of the Integrated Network:** Through our integrated network, Sutter Health has the resources, data and reach to generate robust findings and test new models and innovations that can be shared and implemented nationally.
A Proven Track Record
Sutter Health has been working for more than a decade to advance health equity through research and patient-focused care. Over the past several years, a dedicated health equity team has examined our own data to identify ways we can provide better outcomes for all patients in a number of areas, including maternal health, chronic disease management, opioid prescribing behavior, cancer screening and, most recently, COVID-19.

Conducting & Facilitating Research

Health Equity Index (HEI)
This groundbreaking metric developed by Sutter uses analytics and dynamic population data to measure health disparities. Sutter applied the HEI within our own network and shares the tool with other health systems so they too can better understand and address health inequities.

Advancing Health Equity Report
In 2019, Sutter published its inaugural “Advancing Health Equity” report analyzing 18 quality measures from birth to the end of life, stratified by race and ethnicity, to create a snapshot of health equity across the spectrum of clinical care. It is our goal to leverage available quality data to target interventions.

Maternal CARE Study
In July 2020, our researchers launched a study to help shed light on the prevalence of COVID-19 in pregnant patients. Among the first of its kind in the nation, Sutter’s Maternal CARE (COVID-19 Antibody Race and Ethnicity) Study aims to increase understanding of whether and how COVID-19 exposure during pregnancy differs by race and ethnicity.

COVID-19 Disparities
Sutter’s thorough data analysis of our system’s COVID-19 patients revealed that black patients are 2.7 times more likely to be hospitalized than their non-Hispanic white counterparts and that they may be waiting to get tested in the emergency room when their symptoms tend to be more severe. The research is yielding a better understanding of COVID-19’s disproportionate impact on communities of color and socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals and has contributed to the national conversation on disparities in COVID-19.

Developing Data-Driven, Innovative Solutions

COVID-19 Disparities
The Health Equity team’s efforts have led to collaboration with and support of community-based programs that aim to expand testing and contact tracing for the most vulnerable in our community.

Asthma in Oakland’s African American Community
The HEI identified higher than expected rates of emergency visits for asthma among African American patients. To address this, Sutter collaborated to create an innovative, community-based program for African American patients in East Oakland and Berkeley to support asthma management.

Maternal Health
By using best practices, Sutter Health’s C-section rates and our maternal mortality rate currently sit well below California’s average, which is among the best in the country, and our maternal mortality rate demonstrates no inequity in race or ethnicity. Through a statewide partnership called the California Maternal Quality Care Collaborative (CMQCC), Sutter worked with policy makers, hospitals and integrated health systems to lower maternal deaths and reduce disparities by 55% in the past 10 years.

Unconscious Bias Training
We have begun to provide unconscious bias training for clinicians throughout Sutter’s network, beginning with those in OB-GYN and emergency medicine. Ultimately all clinicians will be trained.

Diabetes in Salinas’s Latino Community
Sutter’s HEI helped Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System identify patient populations at higher risk for diabetes, leading to investments in programs like new diabetes clinics and bilingual certified diabetic educators.

What’s Ahead
The unprecedented events the world is facing today—the COVID-19 pandemic, systemic racism facing people of color and the removal of transgender health protections—underscore the urgency of addressing health equity. We believe that as a provider network we must do all we can to advance health equity for our patients, and we are committed to collaborating with healthcare partners, policymakers, community leaders and patients throughout the state and nation in these efforts to transform healthcare and save countless lives.

Contact us to learn more about opportunities to partner and connect.
The philanthropy of our donors helps drive our health equity research and clinical and community-based solutions that are saving lives. Learn more about ways to contribute to Sutter’s health equity work.
Learn more at www.sutterhealth.org/healthequity or email us at healthequity@sutterhealth.org