

News Brief

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CMS Outlines Strategy to Advance Health Equity

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recently outlined an [action plan](#) to provide Americans with high-quality and affordable health care. This plan will further drive health equity across the Department of Health and Human Services. Health equity refers to everyone having a fair and just opportunity to attain optimal health.

Each CMS Center and Office is entrusted to build health equity into their core work. The overall goal is to better identify and respond to health outcome inequities, coverage barriers and care access. As such, the CMS' strategy aims to achieve the following:

- Close gaps in health care access, quality and outcomes for underserved populations.
- Promote culturally and linguistically appropriate services to ensure understandable and respectful care.
- Increase outreach efforts to enroll eligible people across Medicare, Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program and the Health Insurance Marketplace.
- Expand and standardize the collection and use of data across CMS programs.
- Evaluate policies to determine how the CMS can support safety net providers caring for underserved communities and ensure care is accessible to those who need it.
- Ensure the CMS engages with the communities it serves and is held accountable to them.
- Incorporate screening for health-related social needs and promote access to address these issues.
- Guarantee CMS programs serve as a model to advance health equity through the nation's health care system, including with states, providers, plans and other stakeholders.
- Advocate for the highest quality outcomes and safest care for all people.

“We can’t achieve our health system goals until everyone can attain the highest level of health. That’s why I am inviting the health care industry to work alongside CMS as we transform the way patients are cared for in our country. Health equity will be embedded within the DNA of CMS and serve as the lens through which we view all of our work.”

- CMS Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure

What's Next?

To ensure sustained progress, the CMS will regularly assemble industry stakeholders—including health care facilities, insurance companies, state officials and providers. This summer’s inaugural gathering will focus on improving maternal health outcomes. We'll keep you apprised of any updates.

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