



# Health Equity in Research, Evaluation, and Other Data-gathering Activities: Developing Data-driven Health Equity Guidelines



Paul Camarena, MPH, Cynthia Robles, MPH, Will Nicholas, PhD, MPH, Walt Senterfitt, PhD, MPH, Alysia Kwon, ScM  
The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Office of the Institutional Review Board

*"Did you check in with community members and a diverse set of community members? Because I think what happens oftentimes is we assume that one organization has a pulse on an entire community, but they may only interact with a segment of it."*  
-Key Informant

## WHO ARE WE?

- Our IRB serves the Los Angeles (LA) County Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Department of Health Services (DHS), in addition to select Community Based Organizations (CBOs).
- We review all projects involving human subjects, including needs assessments, evaluations, some quality improvement projects, as well as research.

## WHY DID WE DO THIS?

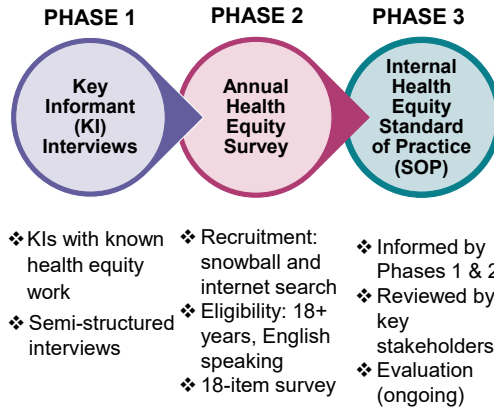
### Background

- The role that IRBs play in advancing health equity is not clearly defined.<sup>1-6</sup>
- The value of IRBs in promoting health equity has been underrecognized, and their authority underutilized.<sup>7-10</sup>
- Addressing health equity in research can impact the soundness of research, and ultimately the health outcomes that may result from the application of research findings in the real world.<sup>11</sup>

### Objectives

- To launch a Health Equity Initiative (HEI) to gain a better understanding of health equity in the LA County research landscape and develop data-driven health equity guidelines that:
  - Guide researchers on how to address health equity
  - Integrate health equity considerations into the IRB's review process
  - Establish metrics for assessing and tracking health equity practices

## METHODS



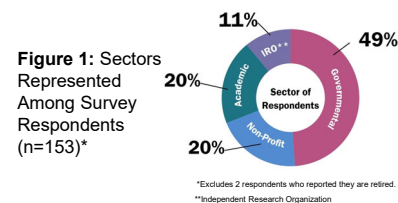
## RESULTS

### Phase 1: Key Informant Interviews

- 14 key informants
- Highlighted need for:
  - All aspects of research to adhere to principles of health equity
  - More funding for and guidance on addressing and measuring health equity
  - Increased community engagement at all levels
  - Researchers to overcome a lack of trust between community members and researchers

### Phase 2: Health Equity Survey

- Response rate of 25% (n=155)



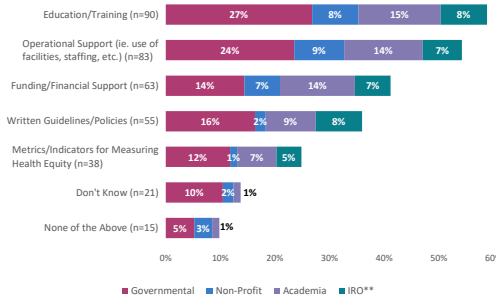
## RESULTS, CONTINUED

- 72%** reported their organization "Definitely" values health equity.
- 36%** reported their organization has **written guidelines/policies** for addressing health equity in research.

**Figure 2:** Compared to all other sectors, respondents from **non-profit organizations** were more likely to report:

- Establishing Advisory Boards
- Convening Townhalls
- Disseminating findings through TV, Radio and Newspaper outlets

**Figure 3:** Resources Provided by Organizations for Addressing Health Equity In Research According to Survey Respondents (by sector)[n=153]\*\*



\* Respondents were able to select multiple responses for this question  
\*\*Excludes 2 respondents who reported they are retired  
\*\*Independent Research Organization

**Figure 4:** Suggested Actions the IRB Can Take to Support Efforts Aimed at Addressing Health Equity (n=150)+

- 81% Providing written guidelines/policies
- 81% Education/training
- 69% Guidance on metrics/indicators

+ Respondents were able to select multiple responses for this question. Five (5) out of the total 155 respondents skipped this question.

*"When you're engaging residents to help in the design, the implementation and then the analysis of it - it just lends more credibility to the community."* - Key Informant

## CONCLUSIONS

- The research process should engage the community to better inform action at all levels.
- Lack of funding, a lack of other resources, and a lack of trust between community members and researchers must be addressed.
- IRBs can play a role by providing training and written guidelines for incorporating principles of health equity in research.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

- Implementation of a Health Equity SOP (Phase 3) informed by KI interviews and survey findings.
- The SOP provides written guidance for DPH researchers.
- The IRB review process will examine investigator's plans to adhere to the SOP and collect health equity metrics.
- The IRB will track health equity metrics.
- Evaluation in progress to assess the SOP's impact and any additional time it takes researchers to integrate health equity into their projects.

Contact: Alysia Kwon, ScM, Director, Office of the IRB  
Los Angeles County Department of Public Health  
akwon@ph.lacounty.gov | <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/irb/>

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