

REPORT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Submitted by: Patricia Canessa, Chair

Date: October 1st, 2022

The key functions of the Committee on Health Equity (CHEQ) are:

- a. To inform the APHA membership about the availability of positions and facilitate or engage potential members in the membership selection and application process.
- b. To conduct a Diversity and Inclusion study assessing how representative is APHA of the membership interests and commitment in Public Health practice with equal representation. Additionally, to learn from the membership feedback on APHA functions directed to facilitate accomplishing diversity and inclusion as a key goal of the organization.
- c. Prepare and deliver a session during the American Public Health Association National meeting to focus on the promotion of Health Equity at all levels of the Public Health system, therefore fostering transformative Public Health conversations at national and local systems.
- d. Conduct training of new members and a monthly business meeting.

Activities conducted during the year 2022.

- Four new members were appointed to the CHEQ and began attending business meetings during the December business session. A special training session was delivered to the new participants. And an assessment of motivation and skills contributed to the group work conducted during the December session. Participants were informed about the Committee's responsibilities, attendance requirements and teamwork. The chair and co-chair announced the structure necessary to comply with the APHA Diversity and Inclusion study.
- The design and completion of the Diversity and Inclusion study was completed by the time of the past Annual Meeting (October 2021) although a discussion about the delivery of information lasted until the following March (2022) because, additionally to the quantitative data a long segment of qualitative responses was included in the document. The group struggled over the disclosure of this information, the need to reach the organization leadership and conduct advocacy on behalf of the individuals who offered significant and often transformative comments. A consultation was made with the outgoing APHA President (Dr. Fernandez Pena) who advised to contact the new President and the CEO for a report session. After various attempts the meeting with Dr. Benjamin was carried, and he has suggested to have a similar conversation with the Governing Council. Some critical concerns address inclusion, diversity and cost of the membership and Annual meeting.
- Every year CHEQ delivers an Invited session addressing topics of concern randomly collected among APHA members. The review of the prior year sessions has been excellent, not only representing current topics but also selecting highly qualified Public Health leaders (including various former Presidents of APHA). This year the topic of Social Determinants re-appeared as Health Equity post COVID19 and in various health programs. However multiple voices questioned the pervasive presence of unresolved determinants that can hinder the advanced agenda of Equity or simply these advanced recognitions are of limited reach in many communities.

Therefore, the group has reached to public health scientists who have pursued the interwoven relationship between the determinants and equity conducting research, revising recent legislative inclusion, and assessment of community consensus at national and international levels. Our expectation is to set a scenario of critical thinking and transformative frameworks to accelerate health equity in the country.

- Although the CHEQ professional group has a very hybrid composition of advanced and developing professionals, core careers and aspirations of Health Equity the group has finally coalesced in sharing learning experiences to better understand specific processes that respond to specific populations, and an immense sharing of ideas to make every public health resource and practice more accessible to communities.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Canessa, MA, MBA, PhD, Chair

APHA Committee on Health Equity and Social Justice