



Illinois Health and Hospital Association

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## **IHA Launches the *Racial Equity in Healthcare Progress Report* During IHA's Inaugural Health Equity Action Day on June 18**

*The report is a long-term tool to document progress toward racial health equity*

Naperville, Ill.—As part of its inaugural Health Equity Action Day—a multi-dimensional approach to effect real change—the Illinois Health and Hospital Association (IHA) launched the [\*Racial Equity in Healthcare Progress Report\*](#) to give each IHA-member organization tailored feedback on opportunities for growth in the health equity space. IHA shared details about the progress report during the morning virtual education portion of Health Equity Action Day.

The progress report was conceived after Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot created the Racial Equity Rapid Response Team to address COVID-19 in Chicago and its disproportionate impact on Black and Latinx communities. In June of 2020, 36 hospitals, health systems and health centers participating in the Racial Equity Rapid Response Team published a statement declaring racism a public health crisis. Over the summer and fall of 2020, IHA worked closely with the Racial Equity Rapid Response Team leaders to curate and pilot the progress report.

“COVID-19 was a wakeup call for many Americans on the health disparities facing communities of color,” said IHA President and CEO A.J. Wilhelmi. “Illinois hospitals and health systems are committed to reducing these disparities in their communities.”

“The *Racial Equity in Healthcare Progress Report* is a critical piece of the work ahead to advance health equity,” Wilhelmi added. “IHA is committed to assisting our members by bringing them events like Health Equity Action Day and tools like the progress report.”

The progress report will highlight the important progress hospitals have already made and guide the work ahead. It will center around five guiding principles:

- **Facilitating collaboration**—sharing best practices, celebrating growth, and setting collective goals;
- **Focusing on high-impact metrics**—using impactful metrics across internal and external functions;
- **Mobilizing toward action**—starting with baseline data to spur action;
- **Centering on racial equity**—focusing on the people and communities of color most impacted by systemic racial inequities in healthcare; and

- **Promoting organizational growth**—assessing where hospitals and health systems are today in the health equity space and identifying how they can grow.

In addition, the progress report will be organized into four pillars: Our People, Our Patients, Our Organization and Our Community.

As a tool to promote collective improvement, the progress report will serve as a baseline self-assessment to measure progress, understand hospital and community assets in racial equity work, and outline areas of improvement for individual hospitals and the larger ecosystem of healthcare providers.

“Together, healthcare providers in Illinois have the opportunity to dismantle systemic racism in a way that no individual provider could,” said Adam Kohlrus, Assistant Vice President of Quality, Safety and Health Policy at IHA, who is spearheading the progress report.

See IHA’s [brochure](#) and [webpage](#) to learn more about Health Equity Action Day.

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#### **About IHA**

The Illinois Health and Hospital Association, with offices in Chicago, Naperville, Springfield and Washington, D.C., advocates for Illinois’ more than 200 hospitals and nearly 40 health systems as they serve their patients and communities. IHA members provide a broad range of services—not just within their walls, but across the continuum of healthcare and in their communities. Reflecting the diversity of the state, IHA members consist of nonprofit, investor-owned and public hospitals in the following categories: community, safety net, rural, critical access, specialty and teaching hospitals, including academic medical centers. For more information, see [www.team-iha.org](http://www.team-iha.org). Like IHA on [Facebook](#). Follow IHA on [Twitter](#).