Advancing Health Equity
PATH Addendum

Effective partnership between community-based and healthcare organizations includes actively working to eliminate obstacles to health and ensuring that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.

Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF) has developed an addendum to the Partnership Assessment Tool for Health (**PATH**) to elevate the pivotal role that partnerships between community-based organizations and healthcare play in contributing to equitable health outcomes in communities. This new section identifies benchmarks characteristic of partnerships working effectively to advance health equity, as well as guiding questions for partnerships to consider in assessing their development in this area. The statements and questions following are intended to open dialogue within and between partnering organizations around strengths and gaps of the partnership in removing obstacles to health and ensuring opportunities for all to be as healthy as possible.

"Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care."

Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2017). *What is Health Equity?*

Making an organizational commitment

Understanding barriers

Advancing Health Equity

Measuring outcomes

Engaging the community

Taking Action

Understanding barriers

Benchmark | *We have assessed the barriers to health equity in our community*

- How are we engaging the community and local organizations in understanding barriers to health equity?
- How do health outcomes in our community vary by demographic (e.g., gender, race, age, socioeconomic status, education level, citizenship, housing status)?
- What are the root causes of disparities in health outcomes in our community?
- How are social determinants of health, such as housing stability and food access, and access to care impacting health outcomes?
- How does our understanding of barriers to health equity inform our partnership's services?
- How are we incorporating data from our Community Health Needs Assessment and other local sources into our partnership?

Assessment

Rate from 1-5:	1	2	3	4	5
	Needs development		*Developing*		*Well-Developed*

Notes

Engaging the community

Benchmark | *We engage community members regularly to inform the goals, design, and decisions of our partnership*

- How are community members – including people who participate in our programs or use the services we offer – involved in informing our partnership?
- Whose voices and perspectives are missing from our partnership?
- Do we have a community advisory committee or board? What is its role?
- What steps are we taking to minimize barriers to community engagement (e.g., providing stipends and childcare, offering multiple language options)?
- What resources (i.e., money, time) have we dedicated to community engagement efforts?

Assessment

Rate from 1-5:	1	2	3	4	5
	Needs development		*Developing*		*Well-Developed*

Notes

Taking Action

Benchmark | *We are actively pursuing short- and long-term strategies to advance health equity*

- What strategies are we using to advance health equity through our partnership?
- How are we factoring in community input and evidence-based practice in setting our strategies?
- How does health equity fit into our partnership's theory of change?
- Who do our strategies benefit and who do they burden? What are the potential unintended consequences of our strategies?
- How comprehensive are our strategies in terms of time horizon, target population, scope, and scale?
- How is our partnership connected to advocacy or systems change efforts?
- To what extent do partners have an equal opportunity in making decisions about our strategies?

Assessment

Rate from 1-5: **1**   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

Needs development   *Developing*   *Well-Developed*

Notes

Measuring outcomes

Benchmark | *We safely and transparently collect demographic data and use it to assess our outcomes and inform the goals, design, and decisions of our partnership*

- Have we defined target demographics for our services across the partnership? How are these informed by an understanding of disparities in health outcomes in our communities?
- Do we look at client data by demographic (e.g., gender, race, age, socioeconomic status, education level, citizenship, housing status)?
- What tools and processes are we using to understand impact of our strategies on health equity?
- What protocols do we have in place to ensure client data is kept secure and used appropriately?
- How – and how often – are we evaluating outcomes related to health equity?
- How are we using demographic data to make changes to our partnership's services?
- What resources (i.e., money, time) have we dedicated to understanding and using our data?

Assessment

Rate from 1-5: **1**   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**

Needs development   *Developing*   *Well-Developed*

Notes

Making an organizational commitment

Benchmark | *We recognize that advancing health equity through the partnership requires an active commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion by each of our organizations*

- Do partners have established goals around diversity, equity, and inclusion in their organizations?
- How are partners held accountable to diversity, equity, and inclusion goals in their organizations?
- How is commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion demonstrated at each partner's staff leadership and board level?
- What steps are partners taking to develop and retain a diverse workforce, representative of the community it serves?
- Do partners regularly discuss with each other their priorities related to diversity, equity, and inclusion?
- What resources (i.e. money, time) have organizations dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts?

Assessment

Rate from 1-5:	1	2	3	4	5
	Needs development		*Developing*		*Well-Developed*

Notes

Looking ahead

Consider how you rated your partnership on each benchmark as you reflect on the following:

- In what areas is our partnership most developed?
- In what areas do we have the greatest need for development?
- Where are our ratings aligned across partners? Where are our ratings different?
- What are our partnership's goals and priorities for advancing health equity in the community?

Notes

Please refer to the Partner Discussion Guide in the PATH for additional questions to consider as your partnership works toward advancing health equity.