

# Addressing Health Disparities through a Nurtured Emergence

## Approach at The University of Texas Medical Branch

Kenneth D. Smith, Ph.D., Interim Director, Center to Eliminate Health Disparities, University of Texas Medical Branch

Karen Wong, MHA, Management Analyst, Waiver Operations, Office of the President, University of Texas Medical Branch

### Implement interventions

Example interventions to address disparities include using Community Health Workers and social media

### Future Vision

CEHD is committed to nurturing the emergence of systems that make addressing health disparities a sustained activity at UTMB. We use a deep listening process to set goals and establish a future vision for addressing health disparities.

### Monitor disparities dashboards

Dashboards will update leaders on “off the shelf” measures (e.g. core measures) and disparity-specific measures

### Convene a Health Equity Collaborative

This ongoing, inter-professional group will meet regularly

### Identify, plan, & develop new interventions, research proposals

Collaborative members identify funding sources, support interventions and “prototypes” for addressing disparities

### Co-host Health Disparities Leadership Forums

CEHD is disseminating findings and generating dialogue through forums with UTMB & community leaders

### Identify champions & leaders

The forums help identify champions and leaders in the hospital and community who already or wish to actively address disparities

### Identify disparities in the hospital population

UTMB Inpatient data revealed: High rates of low birth-weight newborns born to African American females, low rates of breastfeeding among African American and Hispanic females, high rates of ambulatory care sensitive conditions among African Americans

### Develop a plan to address disparities

CEHD developed an Improvement Plan with recommendations to address identified health disparities

### Engage with stakeholders & departments at UTMB to form new relationships

CEHD listens and observes to identify stakeholder needs and tell them about our goals for implementing REAL Data

### Engage in learning & support

UTMB trained registration staff on collecting accurate REAL Data fields in the EMR: Collection of valid REAL data has improved from 63% in 2013 Q4 to 82% in 2015 Q2

Our approach to addressing health disparities is rooted in UTMB’s implicit institutional-level support, which is expressed by:

Funding approval through Texas 1115 Medicaid Waiver DSRIP project option “Collect Valid and Reliable Race, Ethnicity, and Language (REAL) Data to Reduce Disparities ”

Establishing the UTMB Center to Eliminate Health Disparities (CEHD)

Convening a UTMB Diversity Council

