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## Hospital Equity Measures Advisory Committee August 4, 2020 Draft Meeting Minutes

**Members Attending:** Dr. Amy Adome, Sharp Healthcare; Dr. David Lown, California Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems; Denise Tugade, Service Employees International Union; Denny Chan, Justice in Aging; Dr. Anthony Iton, California Endowment; Dannie Ceseña, Program Manager, California LGBTQ Services Network; Kristine Toppe, National Committee for Quality Assurance; Dr. Neil Maizlish, Public Health Alliance of Southern California; Robyn Strong, California Department of Health Care Access and Information;

**State Partners Attending:** Dr. Pamela Riley, California Department of Health Care Services; Dr. Alice Huan-mei Chen, Covered California; Nathan Nau, California Department of Managed Health Care; Julie Nagasako, California Department of Public Health

**Members Not in Attendance:** Cary Sanders, California Pan-Ethnic Health Network; Silvia Yee, Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund.

**Presenters:** Elia Gallardo, Deputy Director Legislative and Government Affairs and Chief Equity Officer, HCAI; Dr. Bruce Spurlock, Hospital Quality Measures Expert, HCAI Consultant; Natalie Graves, Hospital Quality Measures Expert, HCAI Consultant; Ignatius Bau, Health Equity Expert, HCAI Consultant

**Public Attendance:** 23

### Agenda Item I. Call to Order, Welcome & Meeting Minutes

Elia Gallardo, HCAI's Deputy Director Legislative and Government Affairs and Chief Equity Officer, welcomed everyone and reviewed the remote meeting ground rules and procedures. She also facilitated the review and approval of the July 7, 2022, meeting minutes.

**Motion made by:** Anthony Iton  
**Seconded by:** Neil Maizlish

There were no comments from members of the public or the committee.

Roll call was taken, and the minutes were approved with 9 Ayes and 0 Nays.



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Questions/Comments from the Committee and Members of the Public:

There were no questions/comments from the Committee.

There were no comments from members of the public.

**Agenda Item II. Chair Election**

Committee members elected Denise Tugade to serve as Committee chair. Committee member Denise Tugade provided an overview of her work on the development of Assembly Bill 1204 and her understanding of the goals of the bill and the Committee's role. Denise also highlighted previous experience with health equity work and provided insight into her vision for the Committee as Chair. Elia Gallardo facilitated the Committee's vote to approval Denise Tugade as Chair.

**Motion made by:** Anthony Iton

**Seconded by:** Neil Maizlish

There were no comments from members of the public.

Roll call was taken, and Denise Tugade was approved as the Chair with 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, and 1 Abstention. Robyn Strong was in abstention.

Questions/Comments from the Committee and Members of the Public:

No questions/comments from the Committee.

There were no comments from members of the public.

**Agenda Item III. Continued Context Setting – Hospital-level Equity Measures in Development**

Ignatius Bau, Health Equity Expert and HCAI Consultant, presented on a crosswalk of federal government and national hospital equity measures and standards including highlighting the release of the final Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) rule on health equity measures that hospitals will need to implement.

Dr. Bruce Spurlock, Hospital Quality Measures Expert and HCAI Consultant, also provided an analysis of the association between measures and disparities.



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### Questions/Comments from the Committee and Members of the Public:

Committee members discussed the content and implementation approach for the final CMS rule that was just released as well as the social needs and intervention measures released by the National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA). The Committee noted that throughout the crosswalk there is a use of various terms such as social drivers of health, social needs, social determinants of health, and they seem to be treated synonymously. There was a suggestion for the Committee to further discuss the terminology to be used moving forward.

The Committee noted that when looking across the various efforts at the federal level, it is important to identify which ones are most relevant to hospitals.

The Committee discussed the correlation between the Health Places Index (HPI) and existing measures hospitals are using. Committee members discussed the granularity of data and the potential improvements to hospitalization data resulting from the recently finalized HCAI regulations to collect patient address, which will allow the analysis to be done at a more granular level, such as the census tract.

The presentation went over a few different indices, including HPI and Social Vulnerability Index. The Committee discussed any divergence across correlation of disparities identified by the index with hospital measures and recognized that the choice of framework should inform the choice of index. Each index is different, so that will create different results that have different practical implications. It was noted that the HPI is particularly helpful to policy makers as it has more actionable domains upon which policies can be based.

The Committee members also discussed that some disparities that may show up at an individual hospital level are masked when rolled up to a statewide level.

There were no comments from members of the public.

### **Agenda Item IV. Principles and Criteria for Measure Selection**

Dr. Bruce Spurlock, Hospital Quality Measures Expert and HCAI Consultant, discussed the proposed set of principles and criteria that the Committee could use in selecting measures. Dr. Spurlock asked for Committee member discussion and feedback on the following items:



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- Does starting with a limited measure set make sense?
  - Can we expand in the future with existing bill language?
- Should we use existing measures rather than act as a measure developer?
  - Can we leverage federal requirements for hospitals as appropriate?
- Should the report and data submission be simple initially, adding sophistication as experience and utility become clear?

*Questions/Comments from the Committee and Members of the Public:*

The Committee asked HCAI staff to clarify which hospitals would be required to submit reports, and it was confirmed that general acute, acute psychiatric, and special hospitals are all required to report. The Committee also asked HCAI staff to clarify that the references to AHRQ and NCQA HEDIS measures that are referenced in the statute are to be taken into account when developing recommendations for measures, but the department is not limited to only adopting measures that fit into those frameworks.

Committee members acknowledged that beginning with a limited measure set of existing measures would make sense as a starting point. There was also discussion about the importance of alignment with existing efforts at the state and federal levels to the extent feasible to reduce administrative burden, the importance of standardized data collection, and the importance of de-identification when reporting. Committee members noted the importance of focusing on measures that are less procedural and specific to granular conditions and more amenable to population health improvement, because this is a statewide effort, as well as ensuring measures can capture the intersectional nature of people and the impacts of multiple types of stratifications (e.g., age and gender or gender and race).

Committee members noted the importance of measures and health equity plans being actionable and focused on improving overall health of Californians. They recognized that even actively working on a few areas for disparity reduction can be a big lift for some organizations. There was also discussion on the role of a hospital as an anchor institution in the community, and how the measures selection should be cognizant of future results and connecting them to potentially bigger efforts. The measures should, to the extent possible, anticipate the need for hospitals to start leaning more heavily into the community, partnering with social service providers and with local health departments to create more comprehensive approaches to tackling the leading drivers of disparities. The Committee concluded the discussion by recognizing the importance of both the quality of care received inside the hospital as well as the role of the hospitals



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in supporting healthier communities.

There were no comments from members of the public.

### **Agenda Item V. Case Study: Beginning with the End in Mind – What Might a Hospital Equity Report Look Like?**

Natalie Graves, Hospital Quality Measures Expert and HCAI Consultant, presented on existing quality measures that hospitals could stratify; she provided an example of looking at readmissions, stratified by race and ethnicity.

#### *Questions/Comments from the Committee and Members of the Public:*

The Committee discussed the importance of time series data to identify areas in which progress is or is not being made, and that a point in time count is limited when it comes to moving the needle in health equity. The Committee also discussed the importance of statistical parameters to demonstrate that there are differences between these populations and particularly with measures where the denominators are small.

Committee members also commented on the importance of looking at interactions between variables that can have important policy implications. For example, the intersectionality between gender and sexual orientation may tease out nuances just as gender identification or even birth sex combined with race may uncover inequities not otherwise seen.

The Committee did note that it is important to start simpler in the analysis and stratification of data, but it would be important to think about how to sequence and tier the reports over time. Growing in complexity over time fosters improved capabilities at the hospital level to both to collect the data and generate the reports as well as consume and understand the data.

There were no comments from members of the public.

### **Agenda Item VI. Committee Wrap Up**

Elia Gallardo, HCAI's Deputy Director of Legislative and Government Affairs and Chief Equity Officer, led a brief closing discussion which included a high-level recap of items covered during the meeting and identified the action items for next meeting.

### **Agenda Item VII. Public Comment**



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There were no comments from members of the public.

### **Agenda Item VIII. Future Meeting Dates**

Elia Gallardo announced that the next meeting will be hosted on September 4, 2022, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.