

# Health Inequalities

## Future Leaders Programme

### What are they?

Health inequalities are avoidable, unfair and systematic differences in health between groups of people.

Some people have poorer access to the building blocks of health including income, housing, education and access to and experience of healthcare.

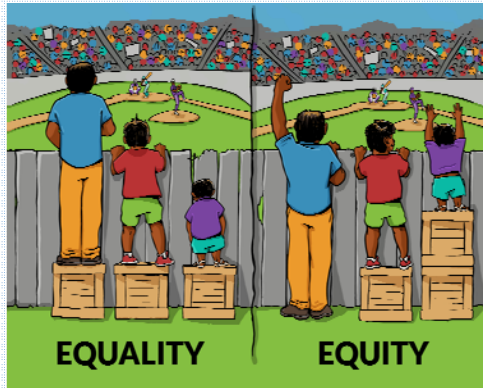
Inequalities between groups of people are often analysed across four types of intersecting factors:

- Socio-economic factors: income, deprivation and employment
- Geography: living in urban or rural areas
- Protected characteristics: ethnicity, sex, sexuality, disability etc.
- Social exclusion: vulnerable migrants, sex workers, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people etc.

Learn more:

- [What are health inequalities – Kings Fund](#)
- [Building blocks of health](#)
- [Inclusion health](#)
- [Inequalities and child health](#)

Data helps us understand the impact of inequalities. See how deprivation is measured in England [HERE](#) Understand your local population better [HERE](#)



Interaction Institute for Social Change | Artist: Angus Maguire

### Equity vs Equality: What's the difference?

Equality means treating everyone the same.  
*Each person above is given one box.*

Equity means making things fair. This could involve treating people differently, according to their need.

*Redistribution of boxes so that everyone can see over the fence.*

### How can things change?

No one organisation can fix health inequalities - it will take committed partnerships that address the underlying causes and work with communities.

Addressing health inequalities needs a long-term programme and requires a balancing of short-, medium- and long-term actions.

Numerous frameworks for action have been developed, and the majority have these underlying principles:

- Action on the underlying determinants of health
- Whole-systems working
- Evidence-based action at scale
- Strong leadership
- Community involvement and asset-based approaches

Here are some frameworks to explore:

- [Marmot principles](#)
- [The population intervention triangle](#)
- [Tackling inequalities in healthcare access, experience, and outcomes - Actionable insights](#)
- Lots more frameworks [HERE](#)

**“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in healthcare is the most shocking and inhumane.”**

*Dr Martin Luther King*



### Why do they happen?

The fundamental causes of health inequalities are an unequal distribution of income, power and wealth in our society which is rooted in political and social decisions and priorities. More [HERE](#)

### Why do they matter?

#### Morally

Equity is about fairness and is a fundamental ethical principle; it is enshrined in human rights principles.

#### Financially

Narrowing health inequalities leads to reduction in the economic cost of loss of healthy life years and years of life lost and boosts productivity. More [HERE](#)

#### Current Policy and Legislation

- [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) – duty to consider needs of people who suffer inequality.
- [NHS Long Term Plan](#) – sets out the NHS role in addressing inequalities.
- [“Core20PLUS”](#) - the NHSE approach to addressing healthcare inequalities experienced by people living in the 20% most deprived areas and other locally defined PLUS groups.

### What can I do?

#### Increase my knowledge and awareness

Increasing our knowledge and awareness of health inequalities and their causes is a helpful first step. You could explore the links in this resource further.

#### Develop health equity leadership skills

[Leading for health equity \(fairhealth.org.uk\)](#)

#### Talk about health inequalities

Explore the best way to [communicate](#) about the building blocks of health and health inequalities.

#### Adopt a health equity lens

When designing projects, incorporate a health equity lens. [Health equity QI toolkits](#) can help.

#### Take action for equity

Think and reflect on these questions:

- How can I identify inequity in the health services I commission or provide?
- Who has an advantage and who is disadvantaged?
- What can I do to make meaningful changes to make things fairer?

#### More helpful links:

1. **Defining equity in health:** [Click here](#)
  2. **Reducing health inequalities. Public Health Scotland:** [Click here](#)
- A deeper review at what we personally and collectively can do to address health inequality

**If you wish to learn more, the links provided throughout are a great starting point we highly recommend**