

Our Partners and Process

Supported by the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**, *Raising the Bar* provides an actionable framework for the entire healthcare sector to embed equity and excellence throughout its work. In this first part of the project the **National Alliance to impact the Social Determinants of Health** (NASDOH) convened extensive discussions with providers, hospitals, payers, and community leaders to develop foundational principles, essential roles, and concrete actions for the sector to help achieve optimal health for all. A second part, led by the National Partnership for Women & Families, is exploring more detailed guidance for maternal health.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Partners and Process

Principles

Provider Role

Employer Role

Partner Role

Advocate Role

Bright Spots

Glossary

Resources

Our Partners and Process

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation launched the development of *Raising the Bar's* Principles in 2020 through a coalition of partners led by the National Alliance to Impact the Social Determinants of Health (NASDOH). This coalition drove the ideations, evidence generation, stakeholder input, integration, and translation processes which unfolded over three phases.

Project Partners

The Principles, Roles, and Actions in this framework result from a co-creative process grounded in the perspectives of people with lived experience of inequities, as well as the realities and opportunities identified by healthcare leaders.



Advisory Councils

Two advisory councils oversaw the development of *Raising the Bar's* Principles, Roles, and Actions. The Council to Improve Healthcare for Individuals, Families, and Communities (IFC) was comprised of community advocacy organizations, patient and family representatives, and people with lived experience of inequities. In parallel, a Stewardship Council was composed of senior leaders and stakeholders in healthcare, behavioral health, public health, and social services, along with advocates and people with lived experience of inequities. The commitment and guidance of these members kept the project moving forward, provided a broad balance of creative input and review, and helped the project team connect with key stakeholders. Members who served during all or part of the project, and their organizational affiliation during their involvement, are listed below.



This network of organizations exemplified what it means to hold tension in life giving ways. When engaging consumers and/or community members there will always be a difference in view and perspective. The braided excellence in the *Raising the Bar* initiative communicated how collectively, we as a people can raise the bar in healthcare while being inclusive with aspiration and accountability."

Yolanda Roary, *Raising the Bar* IFC and Stewardship Council Member, President/CEO, Total Grace Consulting, LLC & Grace Coaching Academy, Co-Director/Founding Faculty, People with Lived Experience Institute

Raising the Bar Council to Improve Healthcare for Individuals, Families, and Communities

The IFC was engaged at critical decision points to develop and pressure-test principles that support a whole person, equitable approach to care delivery, and meaningful cross-sector engagement. It provided strategic direction to communications-related activities of the project as well as recommendations for products and approaches to describe the work.

- **Azza Altiraifi**, Research and Advocacy Manager, Disability Justice Initiative, Center for American Progress and Senior Policy Manager, Liberation in a Generation
- **Gildas Cheung**, President of the Board of Directors, International Community Health Services
- **Prem Durairaj**, Co-Founder, Data Elevates
- **Sarita Gupta**, Vice President of U.S. Programs; Director of Future of Work(ers), Ford Foundation
- **Arianna Inurritegui-Lint**, Founder, Arianna's Center
- **Luz (Lucy) Moreno**, Community Engagement Program Manager, Innercare
- **Yolanda Roary**, Founder, Total Grace Consulting
- **Kiran Savage-Sangwan**, Executive Director, California Pan-Ethnic Health Network
- **Denise Octavia Smith**, Executive Director, National Association of Community Health Workers

***Raising the Bar* Stewardship Council**

The Stewardship Council provided strategic input on the evolving principles. It was essential in assessing how the principles resonated with key stakeholders in healthcare and adjacent sectors and in achieving commitments to take action in support of *Raising the Bar's* goals.

- **Azza Altiraifi**, Research and Advocacy Manager, Disability Justice Initiative, Center for American Progress and Senior Policy Manager, Liberation in a Generation
- **Cathy Baase**, Board Chairperson, Michigan Health Improvement Alliance
- **Bruce Broussard**, President & Chief Executive Officer, Humana Inc.
- **Stephen Cha**, Chief Medical Officer, UnitedHealthcare Community & State
- **Marshall Chin**, Richard Parrillo Family Professor of Healthcare Ethics, University of Chicago
- **Sarah De Guia**, Chief Executive Officer, ChangeLab Solutions
- **Shemekka Ebony**, Founder of BlackGirlMagic Market, Co-Founder of I Am Brilliant, PLE Leaders, and the CROWN Campaign, Raleigh, NC
- **Tené Hamilton Franklin**, Vice President of Health Equity & Stakeholder Engagement, Health Leads
- **Dennis S. Freeman**, Chief Executive Officer, Cherokee Health Systems
- **Rick Gilfillan**, Independent Consultant
- **Daniel H. Gillison, Jr.**, Chief Executive Officer, National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
- **Marc Harrison**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Intermountain Healthcare
- **Dennis Heaphy**, Health Justice Advocate, Massachusetts Disability Policy Consortium
- **Sherry Hirota**, Chief Executive Officer, Asian Health Services, Co-Chair, One Nation Commission
- **Rishi Manchanda**, Founder and President, Health Begins
- **Benjamin F. Miller**, President, Well Being Trust
- **Carol Moehrle**, District Director, Public Health Department – Idaho North Central District
- **Alan Morgan**, Chief Executive Officer, National Rural Health Association
- **Meg Murray**, Chief Executive Officer, Association for Community Affiliated Plans
- **Nancy Myers**, Vice President, Leadership and System Innovation, AHA Center for Health Innovation, American Hospital Association
- **Aza Nedhari**, Chief Executive Officer/ Co-Founder, Mamatoto Village
- **Bob L. Phillips**, Executive Director, Center for Professionalism and Value in Health Care, American Board of Family Medicine
- **Yolanda Roary**, Founder, Total Grace Consulting, LLC
- **Karen Smith**, Consultant
- **Doug Thompson**, Chief Executive Officer, Perfect Health

- **Josie Williams**, Executive Director, Greensboro Housing Coalition; Affiliated with North Carolina Institute of Medicine and Care Share Health Alliance
- **Winston Wong**, National Academy of Medicine, National Council of Asian Pacific Islander Physicians, California Endowment
- **Judy Zerzan**, Chief Medical Officer, Washington State Health Care Authority

***Raising the Bar's* Development and Refinement Process**

Phase One: Generation

Project participants worked in concert for over a year to conceptualize and articulate the *Raising the Bar* project, and to develop the set of foundational principles, and transformational roles and actions for the healthcare sector. This work was informed by a broad literature review, an assessment of the experience of organizations leading transformation, focus groups and key informant interviews (including with healthcare, social services, and public health organizations, people with lived experience of inequities, and consumer and community advocates), and joint ideation and workshopping between the *Raising the Bar* council members and project partners. The generation process was grounded in co-creation, recognition of preceding pioneers, and seeking actionability while aspiring for transformational change.

Literature Review

The environmental scan involved reviewing principles, values, care models, and care delivery approaches that define healthcare's role in addressing patients' social, emotional, and physical health and health equity. The purpose of the environmental scan was to identify existing models which could be adopted or built on and to identify gaps in defining roles and responsibilities of the healthcare sector (including how healthcare works with other sectors). Sixty-seven documents were identified and evaluated to support our work.

This framework results from a co-creative process.

- Informed by previous work and pioneering thought leaders and organizations
- Driven by diverse, multidisciplinary teams and advisory bodies
- Grounded in listening, learning, and deference for expertise both professional and lived experience

Phase Two: Refinement

Our draft Principles, Roles, and Actions benefited from an expansive content testing and stakeholder feedback process to evaluate resonance and adoptability. Through dozens of roundtables, focus groups, and semi-structured outreach interviews, this process engaged over 100 healthcare leaders, practitioners, health equity experts, individuals, and families.

Stakeholders helped bring the *Raising the Bar* framework to life, pointing to dozens of places where the Principles are already in practice, many of which are embedded as examples in this report. They also provided important and constructive feedback on how the Principles, Roles, and Actions could be strengthened. Overwhelmingly, stakeholders reinforced *Raising the Bar's* early direction and provided additional insights. They emphasized the pathway from affirming dignity and respect to building trust, and from maintaining trust to forming meaningful partnerships with individuals and communities. They emphasized issues of cost and access and that healthcare entities must wield their own economic power on behalf of those they need to serve.

Together, the grant partners and advisory council members evaluated this input and finalized a set of *Raising the Bar* Principles, Roles, and Actions.

Phase Three: Carrying the Work Forward

As the Principles, Roles, and Actions were finalized, the project team again engaged key stakeholders to gain early commitments from champions and adopters, rally allies and form linkages with relevant initiatives, and prime decision-makers for uptake. The *Raising the Bar* website makes note of organizations that are helping to carry the work forward, adapt it for their own unique context, or demonstrate the consonance of *Raising the Bar* with their own initiatives.

Adapting to Context

The *Raising the Bar* project was launched in 2020, just weeks before onset of COVID-19 and months before the public outcry and global protest movements in response to the murder of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and many other Black men and women. The *Raising the Bar* project leaned into its own principles of listening and learning, and our initial two-year project term and interim deadlines were extended over half a year—and even paused at points—in acknowledgement of the stress and emotional toll of working on an equity project in the midst of a national reckoning over racial justice and working on a healthcare transformation project in the midst of a public health crisis.

Acknowledgments

In addition to the contributing project partners and advisors, *Raising the Bar* has benefited from the generous engagement of the many individuals who participated in focus groups, roundtables, and conversations that helped shape and refine our work. The commitment of the organizations that shared their stories, and helped craft the Bright Spots, Vignettes, and Resources was deeply appreciated and added inspiration and depth to this work.

Support for this report was provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of the Foundation.

Citation:

National Alliance to Impact the Social Determinants of Health. 2022. “A Framework for Promoting Equity and Excellence in Healthcare.”



**Raising
the Bar**

Healthcare's Transforming Role