

MEETING THE MOMENT: NEW PRINCIPLES FOR HEALTH CARE

Raising the Bar: Health Care's Transforming Role seeks to accelerate health care's engagement in efforts to:

1. Achieve health equity,
2. Improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities, and
3. Enhance the health care experience of individuals and their families.

WHO: Making the fundamental improvements needed to the health system requires engaging individuals, families, and communities to share their perspectives, experience, and expertise. Over 12 months the project convened those who give, get, and pay for health care to develop principles that are designed to address long-standing roles for health care in meeting these goals.

WHAT: While multiple sectors must work together to address the issues that drive health, *Raising the Bar* focuses on **the unique and important roles health care has** across a spectrum ranging from direct delivery of care inside the clinic and other care settings to its powerful roles outside the clinic in promoting the health of communities.

WHY: The importance of new principles for health care focused on equity and excellence is amplified by COVID-19 and the national reckoning over equity and racial justice. There is now increased public awareness of the intersection of social determinants, structural drivers, economic status, and health. A concerted, proactive effort is needed to address inequities based on race, disability, gender, sexual identity, as well as other factors that affect health, well-being, and life experience.

YOUR ROLE

Raising the Bar seeks your input on draft principles, roles, and actions to ensure they:

1. Best reflect the needs and priorities of people who receive care
2. Resonate with health care stakeholders who are critical to implementing the principles
3. Articulate how and when health care should work with adjacent sectors, including public health and social care, to improve equity and health



Background

Raising the Bar: Health Care's Transforming Role seeks to accelerate health care's engagement in efforts to:

1. Achieve health equity,
2. Improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities, and
3. Enhance the health care experience of individuals and their families.

The Project

Raising the Bar: Health Care's Transforming Role was launched by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to help clarify and transform health care's role in achieving optimal well-being for all the people and communities it serves. The project is led by experts from the [National Alliance to impact the Social Determinants of Health \(NASDOH\)](#) and the [National Partnership for Women & Families](#):

- NASDOH and [its partners](#) are developing **principles** for raising the bar, as well as transformational **roles** and transformational **actions** that describe how the health care sector can assist in achieving this mission.
- The National Partnership and its partners are developing practical guidance that applies the principles for use in maternal and newborn health.

Process and Progress to Date¹

NASDOH leads the process to foster discussion among those who give, get, and pay for care, and experts in public health and social services. Along with convening experts, NASDOH and its partners identified and reviewed existing frameworks, principles, and consumer research; and analyzed high-performing health care organizations. The process was designed to solicit the voices of a diverse set of individuals, consumer advocates, and representatives from community-based organizations, public health agencies, and health care organizations.

Informed by these efforts, Raising the Bar generated **cross-cutting principles** that are the core, underlying drivers woven throughout the transformational roles and actions. They form a call to action about *what it means for health care to raise the bar* and ensure individuals, families, communities, and their priorities are at the center of health care.

Health care institutions and organizations can raise the bar by taking actions that fulfill **four transformational roles**. Within each role, several specific actions that health care can take will help advance equity and promote the well-being of individuals, families, and communities.

The transformational actions provide a tactical framework for how health care can raise the bar for equity and excellence by describing what health care's role is in achieving optimal well-being, with an emphasis on those who face the greatest barriers to health.

Objective

Raising the Bar's objective is to accelerate health care's transformation across a spectrum of roles: providing care in an equitable way and honoring goals of individuals receiving care; meeting individuals where they work and live; being active community members; and fostering sustainable change to improve health and equity through investment and advocacy. Most importantly the principles, transformational roles, and actions must reflect the perspectives, priorities, and expert input of the individuals, families, and communities who are served by health care.

Raising the Bar strives to develop principles, roles, and actions that are:

- **Aspirational:** a bold vision for excellence and equity in health care, and not just reinforce positive elements of the status quo
- **Actionable:** accompanied by relevant examples in practice and include steps to operationalize the principles
- **Adoptable:** compelling, tested with stakeholders who will lead uptake and reference factors and incentives that facilitate their implementation

¹ For more information, visit RTBHealthcare.org.

The project's goal is for key players in health care to embrace the finalized principles, roles, and actions and take the journey toward a health system fully focused on excellence and health equity. Raising the Bar requires both incremental steps that can be taken within current constraints and more fundamental, sustainable change that comes from broader systems restructuring.

Who Raises the Bar

Many players have a role in assuring health and well-being, including those who provide and pay for physical and mental health services; perform public health functions; and deliver social services. But the Raising the Bar project focuses on health care actors because of their unique positions. Health care has direct relationships with those burdened by the health consequences of social and economic determinants, has a history of contributing to these burdens, and is well positioned to change course in a way that benefits individuals and communities.

Because health care is the primary audience, Raising the Bar focuses on the health care sector as the actor, while widening its scope of action.

Next Steps

Your participation is part of a broader process to refine the principles with a wide-ranging set of stakeholders from health care, social services, and public health, as well as people who have experienced barriers and inequities and their advocates. Input will be used to revise and improve the principles, roles, and actions.

We are also developing accompanying materials that highlight evidence that demonstrates the actions are implementable and effective, in addition to addressing accountability and measurement. This includes case studies and vignettes of the “bright spots,” or organizations that are putting the actions in practice.

The National Partnership is simultaneously leading the effort to develop guidance applying the Raising the Bar framework for use in maternal and newborn health.

Sign up to receive project updates at RTBhealthcare.org/stay-informed.

Principles, Roles and Actions

Introduction

Health is more than health care—it is the product of the structural and social conditions in the places we live, our experiences and personal behaviors, and the health care we have access to and receive. Myriad social factors and systemic inequities inside and outside of care settings affect each of these factors. As a result, many sectors must work together to improve the health of the individuals and communities they serve.

While health care actors are neither solely responsible for improving health nor changing broader determinants of health, they are uniquely positioned to help improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities.

Raising the Bar makes an urgent call to health care to embrace and accelerate transformation needed to achieve equity and excellence. Raising the Bar offers:

- **Five cross-cutting principles** that articulate *what it means for health care to raise the bar* to ensure individuals, families, communities, and their priorities are at the center of health care
- **Four transformational roles** that characterize *the broad action areas that are central to achieving* this mission
- **15 actions** for *health care to take to advance health equity and achieve optimal well-being*

The term “health care organizations and institutions” is used broadly to include a range of actors such as payers, health plans, small and large hospitals, urban and rural clinics, clinicians, and community health workers.

The project intends for the principles and actions to resonate with and be adopted by each of these actors and recognizes the implementation strategies may vary depending on the actor. Nonetheless each of these actors can raise the bar to address the whole range of needs of individuals, families, and the places they serve—as well as making strides toward health equity.

Finally, the project recognizes that in some cases payment and incentive changes will facilitate adoption and ease implementation of these principles, and that broader systems change is needed. COVID-19 highlighted that there must be transformation and demonstrated how racism, economic status, and social factors intersect with health. Health care can lead and be a force for change—and is already leading in many cases—while making necessary and possible improvements from within the system.

Five Over-Arching Principles for Equity and Excellence in Health Care

Focus on Health Care's Primary Mission.

The bar is raised when health care organizations and institutions fully embrace the mission of improving the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities.

Improving the health and well-being of individuals and communities is at the heart of the health care system. This extends beyond the “doing no harm” ethos to provide effective, integrated care across a broad spectrum of physical, behavioral, and social care in parallel with tackling underlying inequities and health risks that pose harm to individuals and communities. This underlying mission is what drives many individual practitioners to pursue careers in health care and motivates the formation of many health care organizations and institutions. Nevertheless, this mission is often obscured by the complexity of those organizations and institutions, and by payment systems and business models that are not aligned with this central mission. The bar is raised when health care puts improving health and well-being at the center of everything they do—and implements operational and business models that achieve this.

Embrace Health Equity, Racial Justice, and Ending Discrimination.

The bar is raised when health care organizations and institutions acknowledge the lack of equity in the current system and take active steps to promote solutions. This includes actively confronting racism, taking steps to meet the unique health needs of persons with disabilities, and challenging other forms of discrimination. It means promoting health equity in their practices and seeking equity in the health outcomes of those they serve.

All elements of health care organizations and institutions should embrace health equity and racial justice as fundamental, overarching goals. This begins with acknowledging historic and current systemic racism and other forms of discrimination and inequity not only in society broadly, but in health care itself. This includes understanding how different forms of discrimination intersect and combine to prevent health care from achieving equity and implementing new systems and strategies to promote justice and antiracism. Raising the bar means focusing on equity in all of health care's roles, ranging from patient experience to the governance and management of organizations and institutions, as well as the influence of health care in their communities and in society at large.

Be an Active Community Partner.

The bar is raised when health care organizations and institutions recognize and reach their potential as engaged members of their communities.

Health care organizations and institutions play critical roles beyond delivery of services to individuals. They are often the largest economic force or employer in communities (often referred to as “anchor institutions”) and are on the front lines of treating the health consequences of social and economic conditions and inequities in communities. This makes health care uniquely positioned to build on the strengths and resources of communities, working together with community partners to tackle the fundamental drivers of health both inside and outside the clinic. At the same time organizations and institutions are stronger and more effective when they embrace authentic partnerships with the broader, interconnected ecosystem that contributes to the health and well-being of communities, including public health, social services, and other agencies and organizations.

Share and Effectively Use Power.

The bar is raised when power is shared among health care organizations and institutions, individuals, and the community to the benefit of those served by health care.

Achieving equity and improving the health and well-being of communities relies on health care’s ability to respect, celebrate, and engage the expertise, life experience, and talent of local individuals, community organizations and advocates. Power imbalances are evident when the needs of individuals are not heard in their encounters with clinicians and when needs of communities are not understood or acted upon by health care organizations and institutions, undermining health care’s central mission of improving health and well-being. Similarly, power imbalances within the health care workforce can inhibit effective care. Health care organizations and institutions and practitioners must see themselves as co-creating health in equal partnership with the individuals and communities they serve.

Cultivate Trusted Relationships.

The bar is raised when the health care organizations and institutions meaningfully cultivate relationships in which they earn the trust of individuals, families, and communities; and that they trust in the ability and expertise of individuals, families, and communities.

Health care intuitions and providers need to earn and sustain trust of individuals receiving care and their partners, and need to trust in the capabilities, talents, and expertise of those with whom it seeks to work. Earning trust requires treating people with dignity and delivering on their expectations related to accessible and patient-centered care. It also requires engaging the community as a partner in achieving health care’s mission of improved health and well-being. Health care can return that trust by respecting the capabilities, talents, and expertise of community members and their advocates.

Transformational Roles and Actions

The Raising the Bar project aspires to be a call to action by a broad range of health care organizations and institutions. These transformational actions cross four roles health care can play and were developed through a collaborative process involving health care stakeholders and consumers working together.

Because the goal is for the actions to be put into practice by health care stakeholders, they are written in the first-person “voice” of those who we hope will ultimately adopt them.

We commit to “raise the bar” across all of health care’s roles in the following ways:

Role: Provide Whole-Person Care to Achieve Health Equity

Action 1

Welcome and Respect All

We will treat all persons with dignity and actively work to make all feel welcomed, respected, and listened to. We commit to strive for equity in the delivery and outcome of care, to be anti-racist and take active steps to remove other systemic obstacles to optimal health and health care.

What this action addresses:

- Feeling welcomed and respected is the baseline care experience an individual and their support network should have.
- Health care achieves equity and delivers effective care when it provides for respectful engagement with individuals receiving care and members of the community regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, employment, income, preferred language, health literacy, insurance status, and other factors.
- Health care will work to eliminate disparities in health outcomes based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability status, employment and income, and other factors and address the underlying barriers to health and well-being such as racism.
- There are many proven and practical steps health care can take to make individuals feel comfortable seeking care across the various interactions they have with the health system.

Action 2

Promote and Facilitate Access to Care

We will actively work to ensure whole-person care is available, affordable, accommodating, and equitable. We will implement training and protocols that ensure care is available in ways that are culturally and linguistically congruent for the multiple communities they serve.

What this action addresses:

- To deliver effective care, health care promotes access to multi-specialty care teams and a comprehensive range of clinical, mental, behavioral, dental, social, and care enabling services.
- Health care facilitates access to care through a variety of means, including:
 - i. Eliminating or mitigating financial constraints and providing affordable care regardless of insurance status or ability to pay. This includes accepting Medicaid and other forms of publicly-funded payment.
 - ii. Accommodating patient or member preferences and constraints, including hours of operation, ease of appointments, providing and covering telehealth options, and other factors which facilitate access.
 - iii. Ensuring physical access accommodations for individuals with disabilities.
 - iv. Providing coverage for health needs and services of individuals with disabilities or sexual and gender minority status and ensuring that provider networks have resources and are supported to provide training and respectful care.
 - v. Providing culturally congruent care, care management, and other services that respects the patient or member and their support networks and ensuring that providers in a network have resources and are trained to provide appropriate and respectful care.
 - vi. Striving to create relationships that facilitate sharing of relevant information and making information and services available in preferred language that are accessible to all regardless of health literacy.

Action 3

Partner with Patients to Co-Create a Holistic Care Plan

We commit to developing an understanding of the values and perspectives of our patients and members. We will co-create care plans that encompasses their overall care needs and reflect their physical, social, emotional, mental health, behavioral health, oral health, and spiritual needs across the trajectory of their life. These care plans will be portable and connect clinic-, home- and community-based care partners.

What this action addresses:

- Effective care recognizes, understands, and acts on behalf of a person's full range of complex health and health-related needs and priorities. This includes comprehensive preventive and care management services, and a greater emphasis on promoting wellness rather than the absence of disease and addressing social needs, social risk factors, and social determinants of health.
- Holistic care is important for all, but critical for individuals and communities more likely to experience social and structural factors, including systemic racism, that result in inadequate access to care, poorer quality and fragmented care, worse outcomes, and lower rates of satisfaction with their care.

Action 4

Deliver Effective and Responsive Care

We will deliver or promote access to care that meets the needs of the individual and their family and caregivers, and engage in effective, multidirectional communication. We commit to integrating the full range of individuals—home- and community-based health workers, social workers, licensed behavioral health professionals, and other non-traditional health care personnel—and organizations, including social services and public health agencies, that are important to delivering effective and comprehensive care.

What this action addresses:

- To effectively implement a holistic care plan, health care relies on strong partnerships across an individual's care delivery network and social support system. This often requires investment in the development of those networks.
- Effective care requires coordination and communication between the wide range of providers an individual may interact with, which should be diverse and work as a team. This raises the bar by ensuring that care teams are inclusive of diverse professional types and care providers, and from communities in which individuals receiving care live (e.g., community health workers), and that those workers can provide culturally competent care and build trusting relationships.

- Responsive care provides individuals receiving services and their caregivers with meaningful choices and shared decision-making about the effective care they receive, including the kind of care, the setting, and who provides it.
- Health care providers and payers ground care delivery on robust evidence of what works, and how equity can be achieved. Equally importantly, they invest in sharing their own experience to expand the evidence base on effectiveness and equity.

Role: Employ and Support a Diverse Health Workforce

Action 5 Employ and Cultivate a Representative Workforce

We will employ care teams and workforce—across leadership, health professionals and personnel, and institutional support staff—that reflect the diversity of the community. We commit to fostering opportunities for workforce diversity training and developing diverse workforce pipelines in the community.

What this action addresses:

- A fully diverse workforce is better able to meet the needs of those who health care organizations and institutions serve and is more likely to lead to more equitable outcomes. Multidisciplinary teams and greater diversity in the health care workforce (including race and ethnicity) have been shown to result in better health outcomes for the communities served.
- Employing a diverse workforce and care teams requires a suite of strategic efforts, like investing in education, mentoring and other systems that develop a talent pool for health care; training employees to ensure they can provide culturally and linguistically-appropriate, respectful, and equitable care (including but not limited to anti-racist and implicit bias training); transforming medical and health professional education; improving hiring practices; and, partnering with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities (HACU), Asian Pacific Islander American Association of Colleges and Universities (APIACU), American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), and community-based organizations.

Action 6

Enable Employees to be Healthy, Thrive, and Guide Effective Care

We commit to fair pay, a living wage, and a supportive and comprehensive benefits package. We will provide for career development and pathways to ensure diversity at all levels. We will ensure the voices of employees are respected and integral to the management of the institution.

What this action addresses:

- To demonstrate a commitment to achieving health equity, health care payers and providers look internally and address equity within the workplace. This is especially true when considering health systems are often the largest private employers in the community.
- Health care commits to practices that support the workforce. All who work in health care should be secure economically to best contribute to the health and well-being of those they serve. Practices that support the health care workforce include fair pay; offering career advancement opportunities; and providing a living wage with a comprehensive benefits package, such as paid sick and family leave, support for childcare and elder care, accommodation for pregnancy, and mental health/wellness services. These practices also benefit health care organizations and institution by enabling them to retain talent and promote continuity of operations.
- The health care workforce is at the front lines of delivering care and has valuable perspectives on the policies and practices that affect individuals, families, and communities. Health care must actively engage their workforce in the management of their organizations and institutions to ensure that these insights are central to decision-making.

Action 7

Ensure Diversity through Procurement

We will use contracting and purchasing power to ensure those working directly or indirectly for health care organization and institutions also have diverse and appropriately compensated workforces.

What this action addresses:

- Many health care organizations and institutions work with directly employed individuals and contracted individuals. Their resources are critical to supporting the diversity of their overall workforce and economic security of all individuals who work in and for their organizations.
- Health care organizations and institutions support the economic security of contracted individuals by encouraging transparency in the bidding process, requiring contractors and vendors to disclose compensation and demographic data of their workforce in proposals, and include provisions requiring nondiscrimination and fair treatment of employees.

- This raises the bar by using health care organizations' and institutions' economic power in the community to advance the health and well-being of all workers who support their work.

Role: Engage with Organizations and Community Residents

Action 8

Meaningfully Involve Residents from the Communities with the Greatest Challenges to Health and Well-being

We will provide for robust representation and continued involvement of community members in meaningful decision-making roles to set the strategy for and priorities of the health care organization or institution.

What this action addresses:

- Diverse voices in governance and management makes health care more likely to reflect the needs of the diverse communities they serve.
- To effectively raise the bar decisions regarding strategies, policies, and practices need the meaningful involvement of community members.
- Meaningful involvement goes beyond providing advice, or participation on advisory bodies. Community members offer value to health care, and their time and expertise should be compensated accordingly. Health care organizations should provide support for their effective engagement, including removing language and other barriers to their full participation.
- Governance opportunities for community members can be reflected through a variety of means, ranging from engagement in committees and leadership of specific initiatives to membership in board of directors or other governing bodies.

Action 9

Respect the Expertise of Community Residents

We will work together with community representatives and residents to identify opportunities and support activities in the community that reflect their priorities, strengths and assets, and health and well-being needs.

What this action addresses:

- Communities, including the people who have experienced the greatest barriers and inequities, along with leaders and organizations which provide services, are experts in their own needs and priorities. It is essential that health care meaningfully include the community, including its representatives and residents, to identify health needs and prioritize interventions and investments in the community.

- Community engagement in institutional governance and strategy (Action 8) is important, but health care needs to be proactive in engaging with the community through a wide range of modes and mechanisms.
- To meaningfully improve health and well-being the health system needs to understand the context in which they work and recognize and respond to conditions affecting all members of the community, not just individuals being directly served.
- Health care needs to prioritize relationships with and investment in members of communities experiencing the greatest barriers to optimal health such as racism and other forms of discrimination or disadvantage based on gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, employment, and income.
- Community residents, advocates, and organizations, similarly, need to be open to meaningful engagement to help shape an effective set of partnerships and initiatives in the community.

Action 10

Build Trusted Relationships with Community Organizations

We will build trust with community-based organizations, agencies, and individuals by actively fostering long-term, collaborative partnerships that benefit the community.

What this action addresses:

- Health care is one sector within the broader, interconnected ecosystem that impacts health. Raising the bar for equity and excellence means building authentic and enduring partnerships with community organizations and residents to improve health.
- Partnerships are rooted in trust and based on dignity and respect for each other's perspective and expertise. This takes investment of time, attention, and resources into the community for the benefit of the community and the health system's mission of improving health.
- The development and maintenance of trusted relationships, which only happen over time, is necessary to facilitate productive, effective partnerships.
- Effective community engagement means elevating the role of individuals and advocates, moving from low engagement or consultation to partnership and community leadership.
- Health care organizations and public health agencies have unique opportunities for collaborative partnerships, starting with community health needs assessments and participation in cross-sector initiatives to address needs that are identified.

Action 11

Build The Power of Community Residents and Organizations

We will contribute resources to and share leadership with community partners so they can effectively advocate for their needs.

What this action addresses:

- Health care organizations and institutions have significant power through their stature and funding. Raising the bar means that health care acknowledges and shares power, influence, and resources with the community to advance equity and health.
- The community is rich in experience skills and history. Sharing leadership and decision-making responsibilities demonstrates that health care acknowledges, celebrates, and supports these skills and capacities and it commits to partnership with the community.
- Health care needs to use its power to invest in further development of community organizations or provide resources to build them where they do not exist. Health care should work in solidarity with community needs and interests, opening doors and providing opportunities for visibility and access to community organizations and residents.

Role: Advocate for and Invest in Health Equity

Action 12

Use Our Advocacy Power to Shape Public Policy

We will promote health equity by advocating for public policies that build equity, dismantle structural racism, and address social determinants of health. We commit to standing with community leaders to support and advocate for a robust public health infrastructure, affordable housing, equitable economic development, educational equity, and other priority needs of the community.

What this action addresses:

- Health care can establish mechanisms for engaging the community in defining the advocacy and public policy priorities of health care organizations. Health care can raise the bar by advancing policy agendas based on what the community needs to improve health and well-being for everyone, with particular attention on the priorities of communities that have been historically most disadvantaged.
- A “healthy equity in all policies” approach is a cornerstone. This is informed by the community and advocates for policies that address equity, racism, social determinants of health, climate change and environmental justice and other high-priority issues, along with investments in research to inform action.

- Health care needs public health as an effective partner and advocates for sustainable funding for a public infrastructure that protects communities against threats and improves community health and resilience.
- Standing with community leaders and leaders of other sectors to build, support, and participate in coalitions that advocate for affordable housing, equitable economic development, broadband access, educational equity, and other priority needs for the community is a powerful way to use health care's influence.

Action 13

Use Our Economic Power

We will promote health equity through our procurement and by investing in the economic development of the community and creating wealth in communities that experience the effects of historic and/or ongoing marginalization.

What this action addresses:

- Endowment investments and community-benefit spending are important factors in a “health equity in all investments” strategy, ensuring that priority is placed on meeting the fundamental needs identified by the community, rather than the needs of the institution.
- Health care's investment in the economic development of the community is evidenced by prioritizing local procurement and hiring in operational spending, and by creating wealth in communities that have experienced the effects of historic or ongoing marginalization and disinvestment.
- Health care can demonstrate commitment to equity by disinvestment from financial ties that perpetuate discrimination.
- Direct funding from health care is an important element in initiatives and partnerships addressing social needs and social determinants (e.g., housing, nutrition).

Action 14

Use Our Voice

We will use our status and credibility to uplift public understanding about the root causes of health inequity. We commit to taking positive action to influence the narrative and culture to promote efforts to address those root causes.

What this action addresses:

- Health care has a critical role to play in identifying and educating policy makers about the root causes and impacts of health inequities and actions that local, state, and federal actors can take to improve them.
- Acknowledging historic and current patterns of racism in health care and society, and their impact, is essential to achieving equity.

- Health care can demonstrate real change is possible by uplifting examples of successful work to address inequities and their root causes.
- Community organizations and public health play vital roles in improving community health and health equity; health care can support these sectors by highlighting their importance and building their visibility.
- Health care organizations and institutions and their representatives can use their institutional and personal credibility to help shape public opinion, to “change hearts” and advance health equity.
- Health care has an obligation to promote values of equity, inclusion, and anti-racism through both internal and external communications.

Action 15

Advocate for Payment Systems Change

We are committed to promoting new health care payment and accountability systems that align with and support adoption of the Raising the Bar principles and actions.

What this action addresses:

- Health care’s advocacy for health care financing policies is critical to support progress in achieving widespread adoption of Raising the Bar actions.
- Many existing payment systems do not provide sufficient resources to support effective, equity-focused, integrated care for individuals or for health care’s engagement at the community level.
- Health care brings important voices to policy advocacy in this area including the voices of payers, purchasers, and providers.
- Payment systems should allocate health care resources according to greatest need, highest value, and the achievement of health equity.
- Health care’s advocacy role promotes and supports this change by:
 - i. Working to align incentives, investments, and regulatory processes to advance health, well-being, equity, and service to the community.
 - ii. Developing and supporting sustainable funding models that integrate health care delivery and other sectors critical to improving health and well-being.
 - iii. Shifting data and measurement to incorporate measures of health care’s effectiveness in addressing health equity in the care they provide and at the community level.
 - iv. Engaging the community in developing metrics and accountability mechanisms for health care organizations and institutions that serve them.

Measurement and Accountability

Measurement and accountability are critical to all aspects of Raising the Bar—starting with understanding the needs of patients and communities, and extending through measuring the impact of health care on community outcomes. Effective measurement provides for accountability, as well as for adaptation and innovation.

As key stakeholders review the content of the Raising the Bar principles during the project's refinement phase, the project team will begin to address measurement and accountability more directly. These will provide a broad measurement framework to accompany the principles, and be based on these previously articulated assumptions:

- Measures need to support the imperative to achieve equity and address racism. As such, data systems need to collect and make disaggregated race and ethnicity data available.
- Culturally appropriate measures should be adopted or developed to drive desired outcomes and be integrated to the extent possible with measures and systems in routine use. These measures should be incorporated into payment and accountability strategies.
- Accountability systems should be designed by and responsive to the community. Who identifies and prioritizes problems, sets the agenda, makes decisions, and decides metrics and accountability measures is a central element in addressing who holds power in communities.
- Measures are key to holding health care accountable, but also to generating evidence needed to improve effectiveness and equity. Health care systems are key consumers of evidence for care improvement, and also need to be active participants in sharing experience, data, and successes to help build the evidence base for future interventions.