

Oregon Health Authority | Office of Equity and Inclusion

2011–2012 Annual Report



Office of
Equity & Inclusion

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Administrator's Message

*“I wonder how many miles I’ve fallen by this time?”
she said aloud. ‘I must be getting somewhere near the
center of the earth. Let me see: that would be four
thousand miles down, I think ...’”*

—Alice in Wonderland

Much like Alice as she enters her adventure in Wonderland, it was with a sense of curiosity and discovery that the staff at OEI and our community partners engaged in the various unfolding stages of the past year’s public policy process. We moved from introducing and explaining terms and values such as health equity and cultural competence to getting very specific and detailed about how these now come to life in the every day work of health, behavioral health, and public health professionals, organizations, and systems across the state.

Almost immediately after our annual meeting in 2011, the Office of Multicultural Health and Services changed its identity. We became the Office of Equity and Inclusion — and focused on achieving the strategic imperatives of the strategic plan we developed with you.

Early in 2012, Oregon’s Legislature and Governor approved Health Systems Transformation. Our staff and several community partners participated in the subsequent administrative rule-making process. The next step in the very fast-paced journey was developing the request for proposals for Coordinated Care Organizations — followed almost immediately by the review process for those same proposals. Today, the new CCOs are providing care to many of Oregon’s most vulnerable.

At every step of the way, OEI staff focused on health equity, cultural competence, and diversity and inclusion and made sure that the body of time-tested, research-based, community wisdom was embedded in health systems transformation. For example, we focused on expanding opportunities for Community Health Workers, Peer Wellness Specialists, Doulas, Patient Navigators, and Health Care Interpreters to become a more integral part of the workforce that will help assure better health and health equity.

On a parallel path, Oregon’s state and local public health departments began gearing up for accreditation. OEI staff provided specific guidance to our public health systems about how to explicitly consider equity and cultural competence as part of the process.

The meanings and importance of cultural competence, health equity, and diversity and inclusion haven’t changed. Now that Coordinated Care Organizations have come to life, and as public health departments pursue accreditation, the role of the Office of Equity and Inclusion will be shifting.

Drawing on the wisdom and partnership of our stakeholders, we will focus much more on providing training. In many cases, we will be sharing the lessons we have learned as we apply the same basic principles of health equity, diversity, inclusion and cultural competence within the Oregon Health Authority’s fundamental values, goals, programs and processes:

- Establishing standards for how the Oregon Health Authority collects more granular race, ethnicity, and language data;
- Assessing and assuring language access services, including certifying and qualifying health care interpreters;
- Maintaining and continuously improving a fair process for resolving discrimination and harassment complaints;
- Improving health care workforce diversity recruitment and retention strategies;
- Developing and delivering tailored professional development opportunities focused on cultural competence, health equity, diversity and inclusion, and the legal foundations of our work; and
- Expanding and deepening health equity leadership throughout the agency by creating transformational learning opportunities with cohorts of leaders.

“I almost wish I hadn’t gone down that rabbit-hole — and yet — and yet — it’s rather curious, you know, this sort of life! ... When I used to read fairy-tales, I fancied that kind of thing never happened, and now here I am in the middle of one!”

— Alice in Wonderland

Unlike Alice, OEI is on the path we chose and are passionate about. But like her, because of the diversity and professional excellence of our team and in concert with many others, I can honestly say, we are in the midst of a fantastic professional adventure that is helping to move Oregon towards becoming a more just, equitable, and healthy society.

Along the way, we have enjoyed the partnerships we have created and continue to build with an array of amazing stakeholders. We thank you for joining us on this journey — for co-creating a healthy, vibrant Oregon that we can all enjoy.

Latricia Allman



About the Office of Equity and Inclusion

The vision of OEI is:

All people, communities and cultures co-creating and enjoying a healthy Oregon.

Our mission is:

To engage and align diverse community voices and the Oregon Health Authority to assure the elimination of avoidable health gaps and promote optimal health in Oregon.

Our strategic focus is:

By 2016, the Office of Equity and Inclusion will connect people, policy and programs to make substantial and measurable progress toward the achievement of our vision and mission. We will prioritize the following strategic imperatives:

- Assure and sustain an organizational structure that relentlessly pursues health equity and organizational diversity in OHA and in Oregon's health promoting systems.
- Foster dynamic, strength-based, and authentic relationships among Oregon's diverse communities, OHA, and Oregon's health promoting systems.
- Integrate and use diversity development best practices in recruitment, hiring, retention, performance management, contracting and procurement, and leadership and employee development in OHA and in Oregon's health promoting systems.
- Leverage community wisdom, timely data, and research to develop and effectively communicate the rationale for investing in health equity and eliminating avoidable gaps in health outcomes.



We organize our work in three units:

- **Administrative** — focusing on long-term vision, strategic communications, quality improvement, and efficient office operations;
- **Equity** — focusing on engaging community and agency partners in developing and implementing long-term solutions to avoidable health inequities;
- **Diversity** — focusing on creating work environments that support and leverage the strengths of a highly qualified, diverse workforce.

Our history:

Formerly known as the Office of Multicultural Health and Services (OMHS), the Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) has conducted a variety of activities focused on addressing health disparities in Oregon since 1993. Initially, it was located in the Oregon Public Health Division. In 2009 OMHS moved to the Director's Office of the Department of Human Services. At that time, OMHS expanded its mission to encompass an agency-wide scope of health and human services.

In 2011, with the creation of the Oregon Health Authority, the Office of Equity and Inclusion transitioned to the new agency, and a "sister office" was created in the Department of Human Services. The scope of the office shifted to encompass equity in all aspects of the Oregon Health Authority and Oregon's focus on Health Systems Transformation to achieve the triple aim (improved health outcomes, increased access to health care, and decreased or controlled health care costs). That same year, the Office of Equity and Inclusion developed its strategic plan. This plan was informed by hundreds of Oregonians through individual interviews, focus groups, and surveys and continues to guide the work, partnership focus, and priorities of the office.

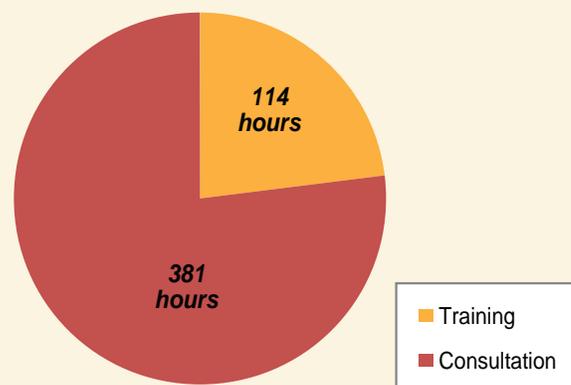
OEI Accomplishments in 2012

With the passage of Health System Transformation legislation in 2011 and 2012, OEI has worked closely with health policy leaders, health care administrators and community organizations to ensure that health equity and diversity and inclusion concepts and strategies are integrated into Oregon's new health care delivery model. As a result, key culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies have been incorporated into Oregon's health care delivery model.

OEI staff provided technical assistance and training to numerous community groups and within OHA and other state agencies. In the last year, OEI provided 114 hours of training to 74 groups and provided 381 hours of consultation and technical assistance to our stakeholders.

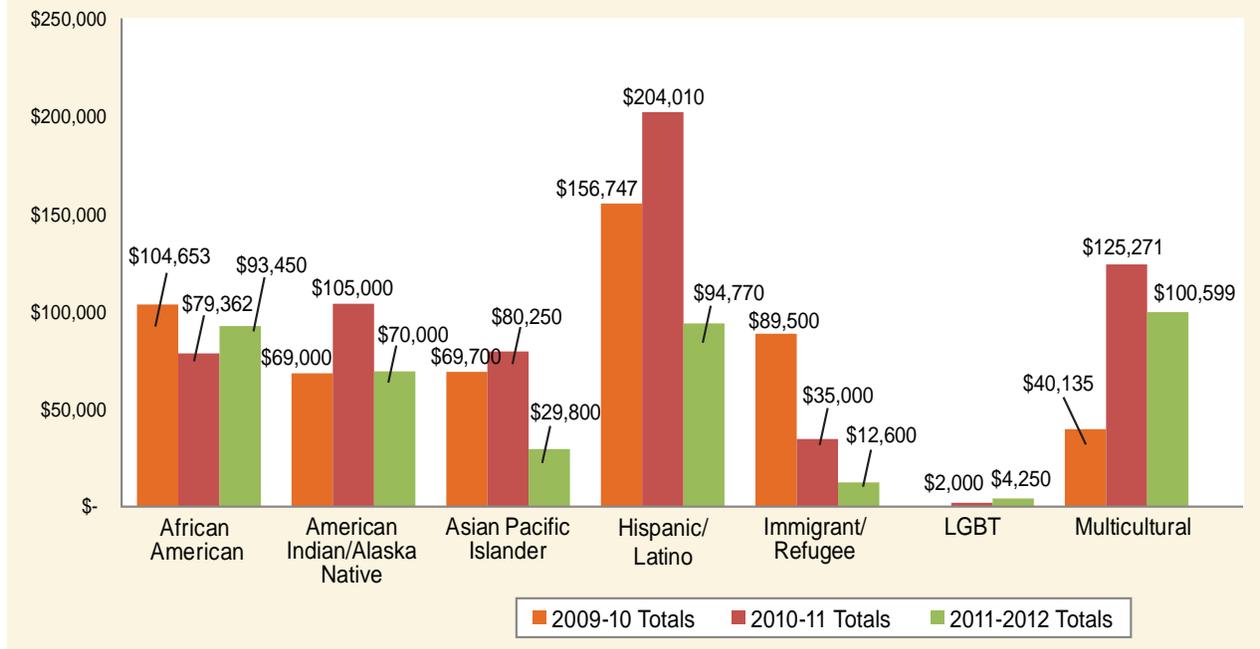
- OEI leveraged Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health State Partnership Grant funds with the Office of Prevention and Epidemiology, Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention Section and the Northwest Health Foundation to fund three Regional Equity Coalitions (REC). These coalitions successfully engaged diverse community

OEI Consultation and Training Hours 2011–2012



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OEI-Funded Communities 2009–2012



partners to develop five-year strategic equity plans for the communities they serve. These plans will inform other statewide efforts to promote health equity, including community health assessments and the work of the Coordinated Care Organizations. This year, RECs received \$450,000 to implement their plans.

- OEI's sponsorship program distributed nearly \$20,000 to 27 community-based organizations that used the funds to provide training, connect community members with OHA leadership and advance efforts to promote health equity.
- We worked with the National Board for the Certification of Medical Interpreters and the Certification Commission for Healthcare Interpreters to develop health care interpreter certification testing. Tests are now available at the national level in Spanish, Mandarin, Russian, and Arabic and will be available in Cantonese, Vietnamese and Korean by January 2013.
- OEI engaged in several efforts to create a culturally competent and representative health care workforce, including the development of competency and training standards for Community Health Workers, Peer Wellness Specialists, Personal Health Navigators and Doulas and convening a group of stakeholders to establish cultural competency training standards for health care providers. Through a partnership with the Oregon Public Health Division Americorps*VISTA Medical Reserve Corps we acquired an Americorps*VISTA member to support this important work.
- We partnered with our Regional Equity Coalitions and other community partners to host 12 community forums. The input from these forums will help OEI create our long-term policy platform to promote health equity and inclusion.

- OEI established an Equity Researchers group to consider opportunities to conduct equity-based research and increase health equity research dollars to Oregon.
- OEI brought 127 health care professionals of color and community partners together to network and identify strategies to support and retain diverse health care providers in Oregon.
- Through a partnership with Kaiser Permanente and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we are launching the “Developing Equity Leadership Training Academy” (DELTA) learning collaborative to provide community organizations, health policymakers and health care administrators with education, resources and relationships that promote health equity and diversity in our health providing systems.
- OEI convened the Diversity and Inclusion (D & I) Professionals, an ongoing forum for the purpose of professional development and peer support of diversity and inclusion professionals in the region. OEI and D & I partner organizations hosted “A Day with Dr. Edward Hubbard,” where representatives from 13 organizations and agencies in the region learned the theory and application of Diversity Return on Investment (DROI).



- We provided ongoing consultation to the OHA strategic planning process, health systems transformation and change management initiatives.
- OEI has identified and is implementing improvements in a number of agency-wide systems relating to diversity and inclusion, civil rights and affirmative action. These improvements include the development of a tool to better track employee parity in all job categories for women, people of color and people with disabilities, co-leadership of the OHA/DHS ADA Steering Committee and conducting and tracking discrimination and harassment investigations.
- OEI developed the Equity and Inclusion Learning Series, a 16-month collaborative learning process involving OEI staff and OHA Executive Cabinet covering topics relating to health equity, civil rights, inclusion and cultural competence.
- We collaborated with the Office of Contracts and Procurement and DHS, developing a charter and agency initiatives to increase business opportunity for Minority, Women and Emerging Small Business.
- OEI developed and submitted to the Governor’s Office the OHA 2013–2015 Affirmative Action Plan on behalf of the agency.

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Community Advisors — Key to OEI's Success

In alignment with our mission and strategic imperatives, OEI committees engage a broad range of stakeholders, paying special attention to actively involving diverse communities who have historically experienced health disparities but have been underutilized to address complex barriers to health equity.

Assuring Language Access Services: Oregon Council on Health Care Interpreters

Oregon Revised Statutes 409.615-625 created a 25-member council on health care interpreters advising the state on administrative rules and policy standards. By law, the council is to be representative of the racial, ethnic, cultural, social and economic diversity of the people of the state. Within OHA, OEI worked with our DHS partners to develop proficiency standards for bilingual staff.



Developing a Diverse, Culturally Competent Health Care Workforce

ORS 414.665 mandated OHA to establish a plan for integrating community health workers, personal health navigators and peer wellness specialists (collectively referred to as Non-Traditional Health Workers) into Oregon's Health System Transformation process. The Office of Equity and Inclusion provided leadership and staff support for this subcommittee of the Oregon Health Policy Board.

Health Equity in All Policies

The Office of Equity and Inclusion convened the Health Equity Policy Review Committee to evaluate all recommended policy improvements throughout the Oregon Health Policy Board's policymaking process to ensure they promote the elimination of inequalities and promote health equity. The committee's role has evolved in its purpose to track, engage, and inform the full implementation of several health equity policy priorities it recommended as well as other policy concepts that will continue to emerge from the agency and from community-informed processes.

Addressing Poor Birth Outcomes with Doula Care

House Bill 3311, which passed in the 2011 legislative session, required the Oregon Health Authority to explore options for providing or utilizing doulas in the state medical assistance program to improve birth outcomes for women who face a disproportionately greater risk of poor birth outcomes.

The Office of Equity and Inclusion convened the House Bill 3311 Implementation Committee, which delivered a report to the 2012 Legislature describing:

- 1) Women who face a disproportionately greater risk of poor birth outcomes,
- 2) Promising models for providing or utilizing doulas, and
- 3) Approaches to integrate doula models into state medical assistance program.

The committee's report is available on OEI's website.

Gaining More Knowledge About Health Equity

Health Equity Researchers of Oregon is a statewide network convened to strengthen the mechanisms by which local research informs policy and community-based efforts to improve health in Oregon for culturally diverse communities, while ensuring that policy agendas and community members inform Oregon's research agenda.

Cultural Competency Continuing Education Committee

The committee convened in April 2011 to explore opportunities to promote cultural competence continuing education for health care professionals. During and since the 2011 legislative session, discussions with stakeholders have emphasized the importance of cultural competence in health care. The committee is addressing four major considerations:

- 1) Definitions of cultural and linguistic competence,
- 2) Standards for cultural competence continuing education for health care professionals,
- 3) Logistics for implementation of cultural competence continuing education for Oregon's health professional licensing boards, and
- 4) Funding mechanisms.

The committee is currently slated to finish its work in December 2012.



OEI Advisory Council, Committee Members and Partner Organizations

Thank you!

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Kris Anderson, Oregon Family Support Network
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Jamie Bash, Oregon Center for Christian Values
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Ron Williams, Oregon Action
Mitch Wilson, Independent Interpreter
Judith Woodruff, Northwest Health Foundation
Jean Yamamoto, SEIU

**Thank you to our organizational
Diversity and Inclusion partners!**

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Clark County
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LifeWorks NW
Multnomah County
OHSU
Red Cross Oregon Trail Chapter
Reed College

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Stay connected!

There are many ways to stay in touch with the Office of Equity and Inclusion. Register for updates via the weekly newsletter by visiting www.oregon.gov/OHA/oei/newsletter; or see our events on the diversity calendar at www.oregon.gov/OHA/oei/calendar; or visit us on Facebook.



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