

W O R K I N G T O A C H I E V E H E A L T H E Q U I T Y



Working to Achieve Health Equity

CMS OMH Overview | April 27, 2021

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Today's Topics

- CMS Office of Minority Health Overview
- About Equity
- CMS Programs and Resources
- Q&A

HHS Offices of Minority Health

When the Affordable Care Act was introduced, it called for the establishment of six offices of minority health within HHS agencies, including the CMS Office of Minority Health.

These offices joined forces with the HHS Office of Minority Health and the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities to lead and coordinate activities that improve the health of minority populations.



More information on the [HHS Office of Minority Health website](#)

CMS Office of Minority Health

Mission

To ensure that the voices and the needs of the populations we represent are present as the agency is developing, implementing, and evaluating its programs and policies.

Vision

All CMS beneficiaries have achieved their highest level of health, and disparities in health care quality and access have been eliminated.

Learn more at the [CMS Office of Minority Health website](#)

About CMS OMH

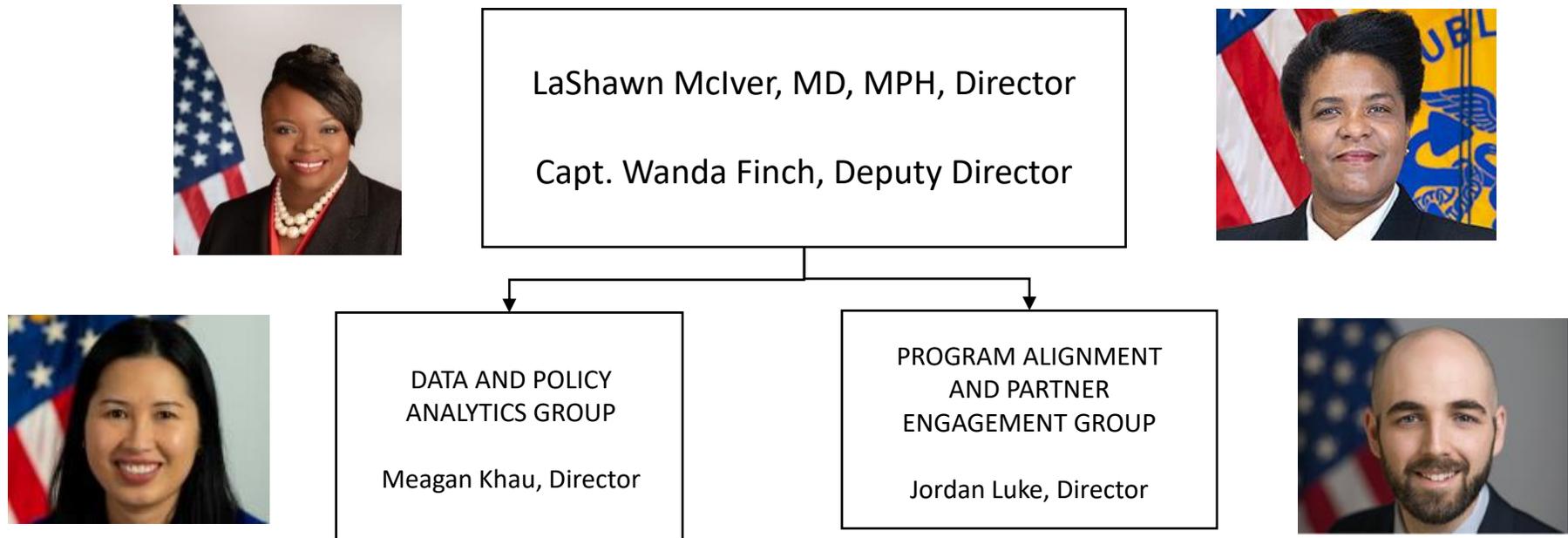
CMS OMH serves as the principal advisor and coordinator to the Agency for the special needs of minority and disadvantaged populations.

Responsibilities include:

- Providing leadership, vision, and direction to address CMS minority health and health disparities goals;
- Participating in the formulation of CMS goals, policies, and strategies;
- Implementing activities to monitor CMS health equity programs and share resources
- Consult with federal agencies and external organizations to address health equity

CMS Office of Minority Health Organizational Chart

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Preferred Terms

For the purposes of today's presentation:

- **Agency** refers to wider CMS, while Office denotes a specific component within the agency (such as CMS OMH)
- **Health equity** is the attainment of the highest level of health for all people (HHS definition)
- **Health disparities** are differences in health outcomes closely linked with social, economic, and environmental disadvantage
- **Minority groups** include non-dominant groups within a society with certain racial, ethnic, religious, or linguistic characteristics differing from the rest of the population¹

¹[United National Human Rights: Office of the High Commissioner. 2010. Minority Rights: International Standards and Guidance for Implementation](#)

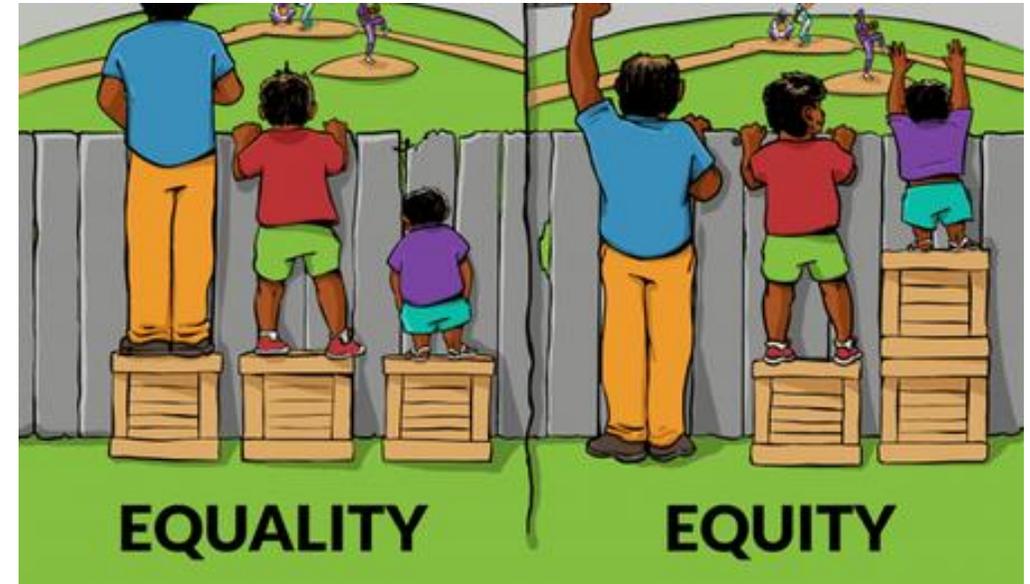
Priority Populations

CMS OMH serves as the principal advisor to the agency on the needs of all minority populations, including:

- Racial and ethnic minorities
- People with disabilities
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons
- Individuals with limited English proficiency
- Rural populations
- Individuals adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality

Equity Versus Equality

- **Health equity:** the attainment of the highest level of health for all people
- Certain population-level factors called **social determinants of health (SDOH)** underlie health disparities in certain populations
- While equality offers the same opportunities, equity ensures fairness



Source: [Peacecorps.gov](https://www.peacecorps.gov)

Source: [CDC Paving the Road to Health Equity](https://www.cdc.gov/health-equity)

Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)



What are social determinants of health?

The social determinants of health (SDOH) are the conditions in the environments where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.¹

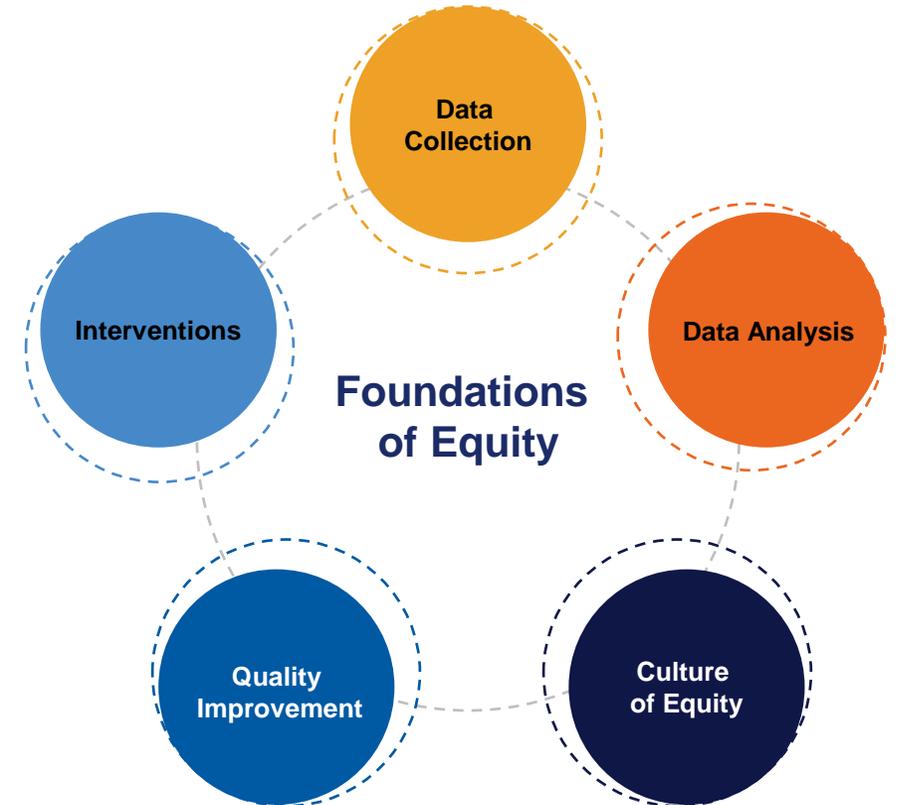
Why are SDOH important?

It's estimated that between 70-90% of health is determined by SDOH. This doesn't mean that the clinical encounter doesn't matter – but instead, that health and health outcomes are influenced by the context of a person's place and space in society.

¹Source: [Healthy People 2030 website](#)

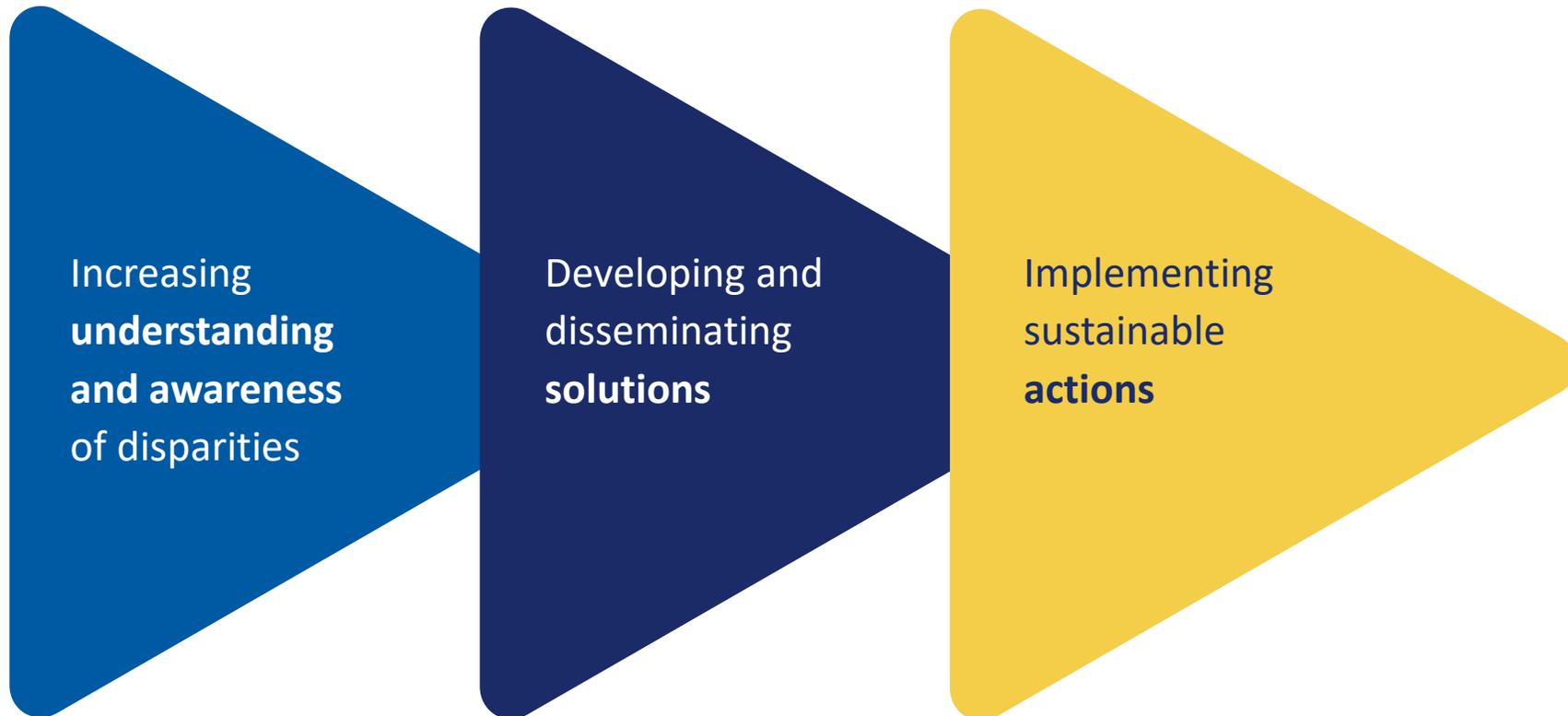
Foundations of Equity

- **Data Collection:** commit to collection of race, ethnicity, and language (REAL) data
- **Data Analysis:** stratify available data by REAL data; collaborate with providers to analyze and address health disparities; enhance dashboards with REAL data; share data
- **Culture of Equity:** embed equity in programs and activities; measure cost of health disparities; empower staff with resources and training in cultural competence
- **Quality Improvement:** define measurable goals and evaluate success of QI programs in reducing health disparities; use stratified data to align QI programs; diagnose root cause of disparities; establish a value proposition for QI initiatives by looking at cost savings
- **Interventions:** identify evidence-based interventions; partner with health plans to learn from their experiences; invite members of underserved target populations to provide feedback; invest in real-time stratified dashboards



Source: [CMS OMH – Building an Organizational Response to Health Disparities](#)

CMS Health Equity Framework



CMS Programs and Resources

CMS Disparities Impact Statement

The [Disparities Impact Statement](#) is a tool that can be used by CMS components as well as health care stakeholders to promote equity.

The tool is used to:

- Identify health disparities and priority populations;
- Evaluate impacts of a policy or program on disparities and integrate equity solutions across programs;
- Create an action plan on how to implement sustainable actions and evaluate progress to achieve health equity.

Steps in the Disparities Impact Statement

1 Identify health disparities and priority populations

2 Define your goals

3 Establish your organization's health equity strategy

4 Determine what your organization needs to implement its strategy

5 Monitor and evaluate your progress

Data Analysis: Mapping Medicare Disparities (MMD) Tool



- Interactive map that allows users to identify areas of disparities between different groups of Medicare beneficiaries (e.g., racial and ethnic groups) in chronic disease prevalence, health outcomes, spending, and utilization.
- County, state, territory, and national data are mapped out on the MMD tool
- User friendly and visually appealing
- Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) data, recently updated with 2019 data
- Downloadable data and maps
- Available in Spanish

Available on the [CMS OMH website](#)

Preventing & Managing Diabetes and Chronic Kidney Disease

Suppliers of Diabetes and Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) Services

- [A Culturally & Linguistically Tailored Type 2 Diabetes Prevention Resources Inventory](#)
- [Diabetes Management: Directory of Provider Resources](#)
- [CKD Disparities: Educational Guide for Primary Care](#)

Beneficiaries

- [Managing Diabetes: Medicare Coverage & Resources](#)
 - Available in Spanish

From Coverage to Care (C2C)

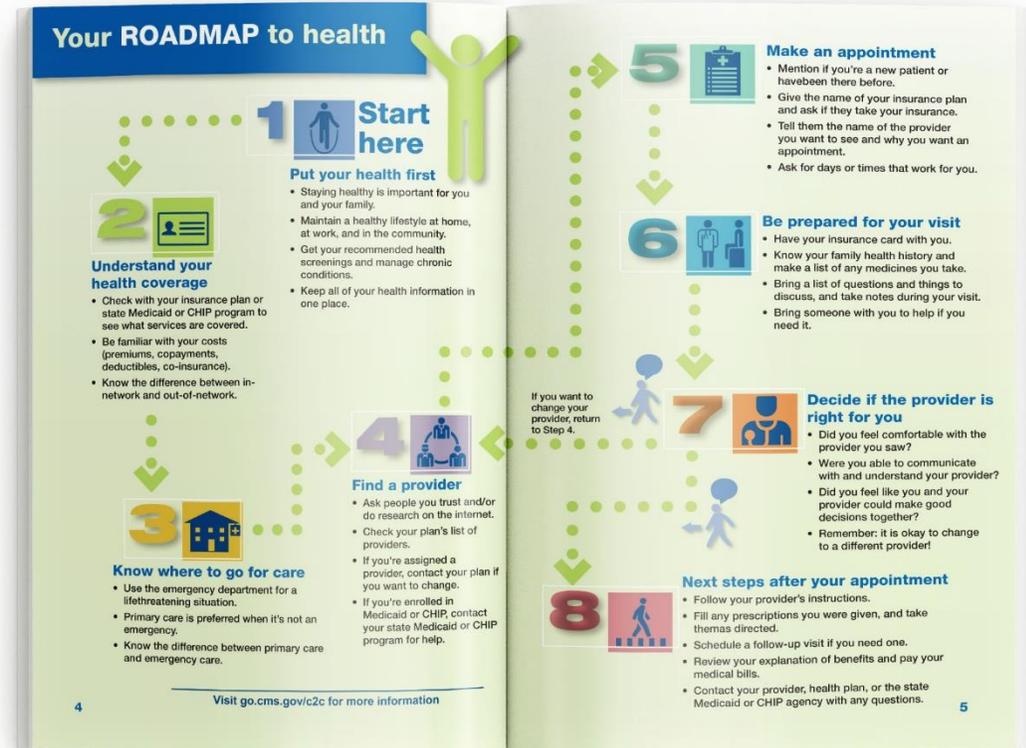
C2C aims to help individuals understand their health coverage and connect to primary care and the preventive services that are right for them, so they can live a long and healthy life.

If you work with patients, navigators, or other beneficiary intermediary groups, C2C has many resources available for download to help share pertinent information.

A Roadmap to Better Care and a Healthier You

- Explains health coverage and how to use it for primary care and preventive services
- Available in 8 languages, Tribal version, Customizable version
- Currently being updated; check the C2C website for the latest version

More information available on the [CMS OMH website](#)



Additional C2C Resources

- **NEW** COVID-19 Resources
- Roadmap to Behavioral Health
- Prevention Resources
- 5 Ways to Make the Most of Your Health Coverage
- Manage Your Health Care Costs
- Enrollment Toolkit
- Partner Toolkit and Community Presentation



More information available on the [CMS OMH website](https://www.cms.gov/omh)

COVID-19 Resources

As part of an agency-wide response to the COVID-19 pandemic, CMS OMH has increased activity around the public health emergency to provide assistance and assess needs among our focus populations.

Activities to date have included:

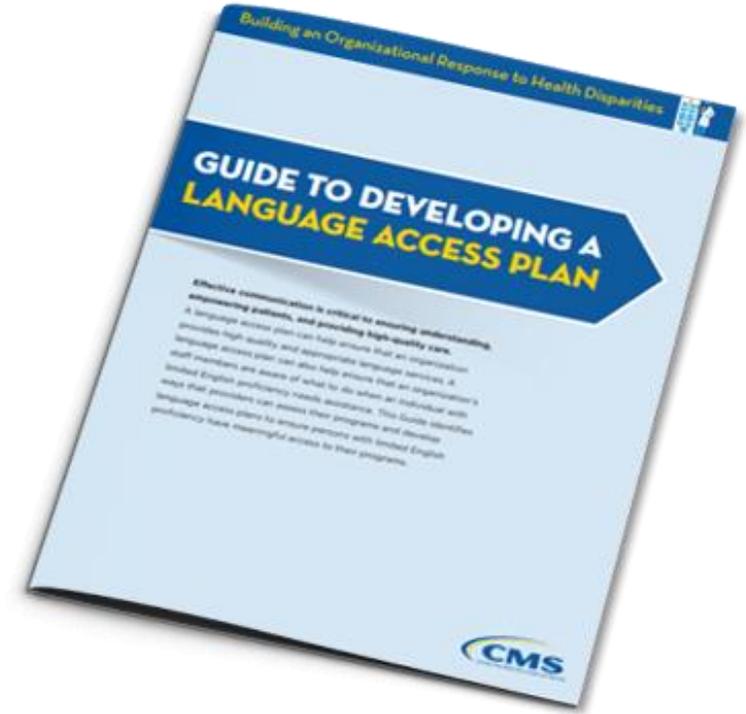
- **Two rounds of listening sessions** to understand partner needs and update our recommendations and next steps to address the coronavirus pandemic
- **The COVID-19 Resources on Vulnerable Populations webpage**, which includes an array of federal resources to assist partners who work with those most vulnerable to the disease.
- **New *From Coverage to Care (C2C)* resources** that offer tips on staying healthy and using Medicare and Marketplace health plans for COVID-19-related coverage.
 - These resources are available in a variety of languages.

Support for data collection, outreach, and potential other areas is another key area that CMS OMH is involved in and should be applied to this effort.

Language Access Planning

Language Access

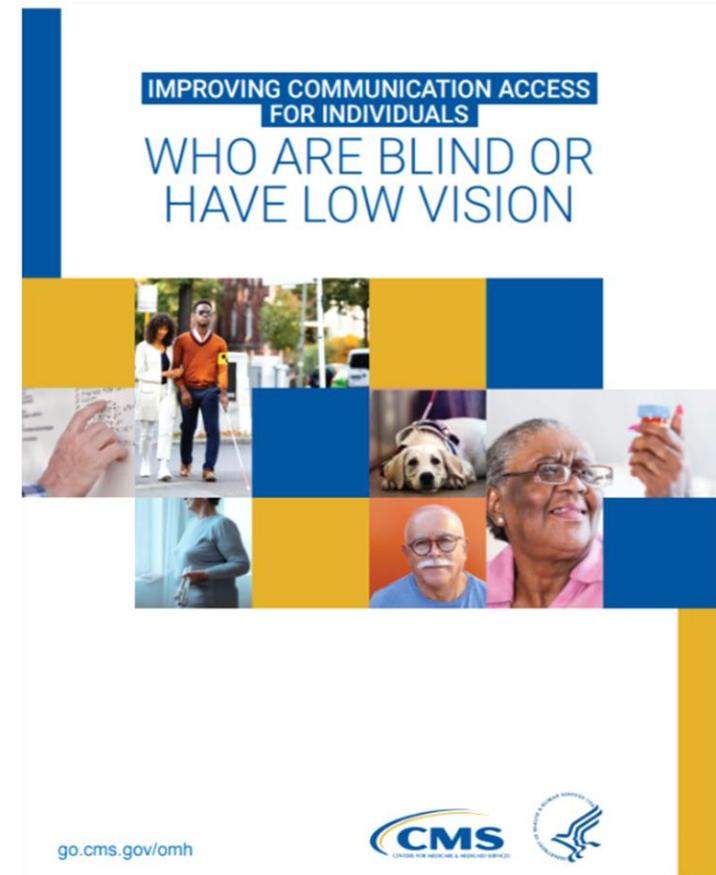
- [Guide to Developing a Language Access Plan](#)
- A language access plan spells out how to provide services to individuals who are non-English speaking or have limited English proficiency. They should be tailored to individual organizations but may include sections such as needs assessment, services offered, training for staff, etc.



Communication Access Planning

Communication Access

- [Improving Communication Access for Individuals who are Blind or have Low Vision](#)
- [Improving Communication Access for Individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing](#)
- These resources spell out how organizations can plan to provide services to individuals who are blind or have low vision or who are deaf or hard of hearing, including how organizations can develop communication access plans to support their efforts. Plans should be tailored to individual organizations but may include sections such as needs assessment, services offered, training for staff, etc.



Understanding Individuals' Experiences

Video Vignettes

- [Navigating Health Care with A Disability: Our Stories](#)
- Hear testimonials from people with physical disabilities where they describe their experience accessing health care.



Access to Care & Filing a Complaint

Guide

- [Getting the Care You Need: A Guide for People with Disabilities](#)
- This guide describes the rights of people with disabilities, the process for filing a complaint, and best practices to consider when accessing health care.
- Available in Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, and Vietnamese



CMS Accessible Communications

- CMS provides free auxiliary aids and services including information in accessible formats like Braille, large print, data/audio files, relay services and TTY communications.
- If you request information in an accessible format from CMS, you won't be disadvantaged by any additional time necessary to provide it. This means you will get extra time to take any action if there's a delay in fulfilling your request.

Providing Materials in Accessible Formats

- CMS provides materials in accessible formats free of costs.
- Standard accessible formats for written materials includes:
 - Large print
 - Braille
 - Audio or data files
- Custom Formats, other types of accessible formats, are offered by CMS on a case by case.

How to contact CMS

Use one of these ways to request Medicare, Medicaid, or Marketplace information in an accessible format:

Call:

- For Medicare: 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) (TTY: 1-877-486-2048)
- For Medicaid: 1-877-267-2323 (TTY 1-866-226-1819)
- For the Health Insurance Marketplace: 1-800-318-2596. (TTY: 1-855-889-4325)

Fax: 1-844-530-3676

Email: Altformatrequest@cms.hhs.gov

Mail: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
Offices of Hearings and Inquiries (OHI)
7500 Security Boulevard, Mail Stop S1-13-25
Baltimore, MD 21244-1850
Attn: Customer Accessibility Resource Staff (CARS)

*NOTE: Do not put sensitive information such as address, medical information, or Medicare Beneficiary Identifier (MBI) in email or mailing requests.

Accessible Publications

- The following publications are available in accessible formats **Online:**
 - For the Medicare & You Handbook: [View PDF](#) - [Listen to recording](#) - [Order print copy](#) - [Order braille copy](#) - [Order audio CD](#) - [Order large print](#)
 - Find [other Medicare publications here](#)

Customer Accessibility Resource Staff (CARS)

- Customer Accessibility Resource Staff (CARS) within the Offices of Hearings and Inquiries (OHI) helps ensure that CMS program materials are available in accessible formats.
- Anyone enrolled in one of CMS' programs, or an individual supporting an enrollee, can also contact CARS directly for assistance, by calling, faxing, emailing, or writing.
- Complete contact information for CARS is found on [CMS.gov](https://www.cms.gov) under "[Nondiscrimination/Accessibility](https://www.cms.gov/nondiscrimination/accessibility)."

CMS Health Equity Technical Assistance (TA) Program



HealthEquityTA@cms.hhs.gov

Available to all CMS components:

- CMS Health Equity TA program supports quality improvement partners, providers, and other CMS stakeholders by offering:
 - Personalized coaching and resources
 - Guidance on data collection and analysis
 - Assistance to develop a Disparities Impact Statement
 - Resources on culturally and linguistically tailored care and communication
 - Training and resources to help embed health equity in stakeholder's strategic planning

Connect with CMS OMH

Contact Us:

OMH@cms.hhs.gov

Visit Our Website:

go.cms.gov/omh

Sign up for our CMS listserv:

bit.ly/CMSOMH

Coverage to Care:

CoverageToCare@cms.hhs.gov

Rural Health:

RuralHealth@cms.hhs.gov

Health Equity Technical Assistance:

HealthEquityTA@cms.hhs.gov