

Achieving Equitable Health Outcomes in Nebraska, Session 5: Conducting an Equity-focused Needs Assessment

Key Takeaways:

- A needs assessment aims to 1) identify potential causes of failure where a process is not reliable, and 2) facilitate the prioritization of potential solutions to test based on their benefits and requirements.
- A reliable process requires a common understanding of the problem it aims to solve, the steps that need to happen, and the places where errors are most likely to arise.
- Prerequisites for conducting an equity-focused needs assessment include a focused problem statement, knowledge of existing data sources and/or data needs, a population of focus, and a timeframe for when you need to see results.
- Three tools that can be used to learn more about the sources of error in a process quickly are 1) direct observation of the process, 2) review of an existing process map, and 3) a fishbone diagram.
- When evaluating potential solutions to a problem impacting health equity, always consider the impact/benefit, the level of effort, and the disparity that these solutions should address. You may also consider the probability of achieving impact/benefit within your time frame, the political implications of choosing this solution, and how this solution would position you for future tests of change.

Further Reading:

Conducting an Equity-focused Needs Assessment	Needs Assessment Overview. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality Website .
	Writing a Problem Statement. Health Quality Ontario Website .
	Reliable Systems and Processes, Institute for Healthcare Improvement Website
	Patient Care Experience Observation Exercise, Institute for Healthcare Improvement Website
	Cause-and-Effect (Fishbone) Diagram Resources. Institute for Healthcare Improvement Website
	Impact/Effort Matrix. American Society for Quality Website .
	How to Use the Impact Effort Matrix to Prioritize Projects. Six Sigma Daily Website .

Further Reading:	
Joint Commission National Patient Safety Goal	<i>R3 Report Issue 38: National Patient Safety Goal to Improve Health Care Equity.</i> The Joint Commission Website.
	<i>National Patient Safety Goal to Improve Health Care Equity.</i> R3 Report: Requirement, Rationale, Reference. A complimentary publication of The Joint Commission. Issue 38, December 20, 2022. The Joint Commission Website.
Achieving Equitable Health Outcomes in Nebraska Program	<i>Achieving Equitable Health Outcomes in Nebraska Program Homepage.</i> University of Nebraska Medical Center Website.
	<i>Achieving Equitable Health Outcomes in Nebraska Program Online Registration Form.</i> University of Nebraska Medical Center Website.

