



*Sedgwick County...
working for you*

Center for Health Equity

What is Health Equity?

Health Equity is a discipline that addresses the root causes of differences in population health that can be traced to unequal economic and social conditions. Specifically, the focus is on conditions that are systemic, avoidable, unjust and unfair. For example, improving access to medical care for vulnerable residents, especially for preventive services, may play a role in reducing disparities in health outcomes.

What is the Center for Health Equity?

The Center for Health Equity was created in the summer of 2007 as part of the Sedgwick County Health Department. The mission of the Center is to examine and advance the understanding of disparities in health risks, health status, treatments, and survival among the diverse groups of Sedgwick County residents.

Where did this come from?

Traditionally, health departments have been direct service providers for residents who can not afford healthcare. Over time, the role of health departments has changed. With the advent of non-profit and faith-based agencies and clinics, health departments have increasingly stepped out of this service area.

As a result, health departments are moving in a new direction. The Sedgwick County Health Department's mission reflects this change: To promote and protect the health of Sedgwick County residents through education, prevention, surveillance and treatment, using public health functions of assessment, assurance and policy development.

In line with this mission, the Center for Health Equity will offer assistance to the system of healthcare providers, in an effort to minimize duplication and maximize resources to help citizens access appropriate health care. The Center will also work to identify and reduce barriers to access.

How can I get more information?

For more information on the Center for Health Equity, call Roderick Harris, Director at 316-660-7312 or email rlharris@sedgwick.gov.

What is the vision for the Center for Health Equity?

The Center's vision is to achieve fairness in **health status, healthcare access, and social well-being** for all residents of Sedgwick County.

What are the goals of the Center for Health Equity?

The goals for the Center include:

- Increase public awareness of health disparities and the social determinants of health (e.g., poverty, housing, and social isolation).
- Increase impact of health equity research through effective partnerships, shared resources, and wide dissemination of research results, ultimately to enhance local services and inform public policy.
- Collaborate with county residents, public and private agencies, and academic institutions to improve health status, healthcare access and reduce health disparities.
- Promote, develop, and enhance the communities' capacity to actively participate in health promotion and healthcare advocacy.