

A Week-Long Immersion into Equity, Social Determinants, and Population Health for Health Professionals

Maureen R. Benjamins, PhD, Senior Research Fellow, Sinai Urban Health Institute (SUHI)

BACKGROUND

Who?

- Students pursuing a degree in a health profession field
- Public health professionals, health care practitioners, or administrators

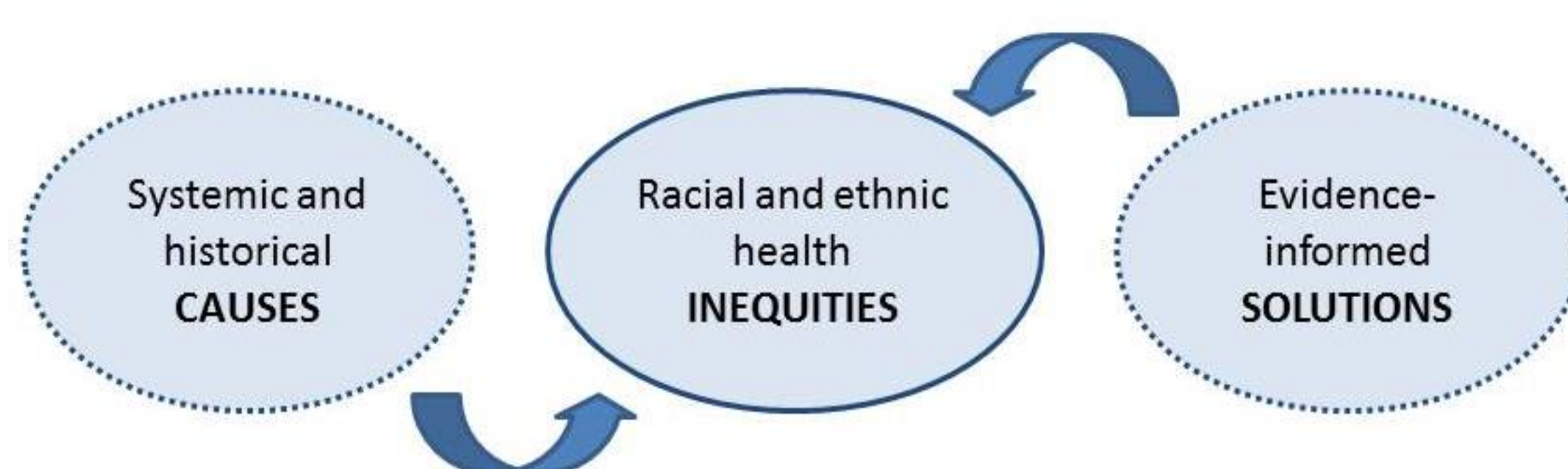
What?

- One-week intensive institute (*virtual in 2020-2021*)
- Explores population health topics, with a special focus on health equity and social determinants of health
- Inter-professional speakers include researchers, public health and healthcare practitioners, and representatives of vulnerable patient populations

Why?

- Insufficient training on how to understand and serve diverse patients
- Need for increased skills related to evidence-based best practices and research in public health
- Need to better appreciate the importance of culture and community engagement within health care

Focus of the Institute: Moving beyond awareness of inequities



STRUCTURE

1. Seminars and Skill-Building Workshops

SUHI researchers and partners share their expertise on a range of topics.

2. Community Tours

SUHI staff from local neighborhoods lead participants on tours that focus on the history and assets of the diverse communities.



Sample Seminar and Workshop Topics

- Health inequities
- Social determinants of health
- Conducting health assessments
- Caring for vulnerable populations
- Community engagement
- Evidence-based public health
- Health care policy
- Population health management
- Structural racism and discrimination
- Research methods and statistics



Sharing Our Expertise

- Screening for social risk factors in the emergency department
- Community health workers as population health solutions: the case for asthma
- Addressing infectious diseases in an urban population

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

- “I cannot tell you how impactful that experience was to me.”
- The institute “changed my life and opened my eyes on how to be a change leader in medicine and community health...”
- “You all are on the academic front of social justice and medicine.”
- “I realized how important it is to be an advocate that can enact change, and how this in the long run is just as if not more important than being a good clinician.”
- “I have also developed skills in more effective communication with patients, especially those who have lower literacy levels.”
- “What I saw and experienced on our neighborhood tours has changed my perception of poor neighborhoods and the people that live there.”
- “I feel much more prepared to work with a patient population and take into account their cultures, communities, and experiences.”
- “There is no other experience like this one.”

Sinai Urban Health Institute (SUHI)

SUHI is a research center located within Sinai Chicago, the largest private safety-net health care system in Illinois.

SUHI's mission: Identifying health inequities, addressing these inequities with innovative solutions, and rigorously evaluating our work to ensure effectiveness.

Team: Diverse staff of 40+ epidemiologists, project managers, research specialists, and community health workers.

Educational and Training Opportunities: SUHI staff regularly share their expertise through teaching, mentoring, internships, and a health equity faculty fellowship program. In addition, through [CROWD](#), we provide training and consultation related to hiring, training, and evaluating community health workers.

