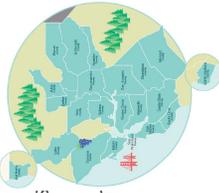


Background

An integrated, not-for-profit healthcare organization in Northern California cares for a remarkably diverse patient population of more than 3 million patient across 22 counties, one of the most geographically and demographically diverse regions in the country.



After more than a decade of work to advance health equity, this organization created an Institute for Advancing Health Equity (IAHE) with a dedicated team of physicians, nurse scientists and researchers focused on advancing health equity.



Purpose

With a long history of academic partnership for student clinical experiences, the healthcare organization and local healthcare sciences university came together to create the nation's first Health Equity Nursing Fellowship. Lifting the next generation of nurse leaders with a health equity focus was the goal of this first-in-nation fellowship for Doctor of Nurse Practice candidates. In February 2021, the planning team was convened to develop a business case for a post-graduate nursing fellowship focused on health equity and diversity.

Considering existing resources, contributions were divided:

- | Healthcare Organization | University |
|---|--|
| • Fellowship governance | • Monetary stipend to fellow |
| • Executive support (CNO) | • Partial tuition stipend |
| • Marketing of fellowship | • Wraparound academic support from an assigned faculty |
| • Clinical mentorship | • Statistical analysis of fellow's work |
| • National voice to elevate fellow's work | • Leadership and professional development education and training |

Launching the Nation's First Health Equity Nursing Fellowship for DNP's

This fellowship supports a DNP student capstone project by providing an opportunity to learn analytic and leadership skills to conduct impactful, focused health equity research to address disparities while participating in groundbreaking research that can be directly applied in clinical settings



"I like the challenge and the platform to make a difference."

Irene Arroyo-Romero, MSN-FNP
 Health Equity Nursing Fellow, 2024

Methods

Eligibility: Requirements included an active Registered Nurse license, California residency, an MSN or master's degree in a related field and a BSN, and current enrollment in the university's DNP program.

Applications: Requirements included eligibility, academic qualifications, membership of historically marginalized background, ranked level of interest in existing organizational health equity projects already underway, and to likelihood to remain in state for at least five years of practice post-graduation), previous experience conducting research, and a 500-word personal statement on why the applicant is passionate about health equity.

Selection: The fellowship committee advanced candidates to in-person interviews with a selection committee comprised of senior nurse leadership, health equity leadership, and academic leadership.

Results

In May 2023, the final candidate was notified and readily accepted the inaugural one-year position of Fellow, beginning in January 2024. Public announcement was made in June 2023 and the fellowship garnered national attention. The fellowship is currently offered annually, with the goal of soon offering bi-annually.



VIDEO: Meet Sutter Health's First Doctor of Nursing Practice Fellow

Recommendation

Beyond foundational training on diversity, equity and inclusion, graduate nursing programs must design opportunities for research and solutioning on pervasive inequities in healthcare. A doctoral fellowship program brings together research mentors, trainees, and clinical and community members with a shared commitment to student nurse development, health equity, innovation and implementation, and dissemination of research.