



Finding the Evidence:

Health inequalities, equality and diversity

Health inequalities are systematic and avoidable differences in health and wellbeing between groups of people or communities.

This resource has been prepared by the Public Health England Knowledge and Library Services Team to help people working in public health, identify the best evidence for making decisions around health inequalities.

The conceptual and legal frameworks for considering health inequalities and equality are related but slightly different. Health inequalities are avoidable and unfair differences in health status between groups of people or communities. Equality and diversity in the UK reflects concern with promoting good relations, ensuring equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination.

Background information

- **Fair society, healthy lives: Strategic review of health inequalities in England post-2010**
This review was carried out by the Marmot Review Team, in 2010, and is the key report about health inequalities in England.
<http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/projects/fair-society-healthy-lives-the-marmot-review>
- **WHO Social determinants of health**
This is a brief introduction to health inequities or inequalities, produced by the World Health Organization.
http://www.who.int/social_determinants/final_report/key_concepts_en.pdf
- **Health inequalities - what are they and how do we reduce them?**
NHS Health Scotland has produced this briefing on health inequalities.
<http://www.healthscotland.com/uploads/documents/25780-Health%20Inequalities%20-%20what%20are%20they%20and%20how%20do%20we%20reduce%20them%20-%20Mar16.pdf>



Evidence

- **NICE advice [LGB4] Health inequalities and population health**
This briefing summarises NICE's recommendations for local authorities and partner organisations on population health and health inequalities.
<https://www.nice.org.uk/advice/lgb4/chapter/introduction>
- **Equality and Human Rights Commission. Health inequalities reading list**
This is a comprehensive bibliography of texts about health inequality in England.
<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-research/reading-lists/health-inequalities-reading-list>
- **House of Commons Health Committee debate: Health inequalities**
This is the third report from the House of Commons Health Committee, and it is about health inequalities.
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmselect/cmhealth/286/286.pdf>
- **Examining the complexities between health disparities and poverty: Bibliography**
The American Psychological Association Office on Socioeconomic Status has compiled a bibliography about health inequalities in different settings.
<https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/poverty-complexities-bibliography.pdf>
- **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development: Health inequalities**
The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has collated these resources on health inequalities.
<http://www.oecd.org/health/inequalities-in-health.htm>
- **Migrant Health Subgroup of the Campbell and Cochrane Equity Methods Group**
Migrant Health focuses on evidence based migrant health, guidelines, and migrant-equity, which is collated here.
<http://methods.cochrane.org/equity/migrant-health>
- **Canadian Collaboration for Immigrant and Refugee Health**
This collaboration, shines an evidence-based lens on the discipline of migrant health, and contains guidance, e-learning, and evidence-informed policy.
<http://www.ccirhken.ca>

Information sources: UK

- **Data resources on health inequalities**
Public Health England has created this list of data resources on health inequalities
<http://www.hiat.org.uk/resources/data-sources.pdf>
- **UCL Institute of Health Equity**



This is a compilation of work to take action on the social determinants of health covers many thematic areas. Here you can see work done by both the Institute and external bodies, grouped by theme.

<http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/>

- **Evidence for Policy and Practice Information Centre (EPPI-Centre)**
EPPI-Centre carries out research synthesis and research use across many areas of social policy including education, health, social care, developing economies, sport, environment, and crime.
<http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/>
- **Database of promoting health effectiveness reviews (DoPHER)**
DoPHER is unique in its focussed coverage of systematic and non-systematic reviews of effectiveness in health promotion and public health worldwide. This register currently contains details of over 3,700 reviews of health promotion and public health effectiveness.
<http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk/webdatabases/Intro.aspx?ID=2>

Information sources: Europe

- **European Portal for Action on Health Inequalities**
This portal includes information about key initiatives, policies and resources on health inequalities across Europe.
<http://www.health-inequalities.eu/>
- **Equality evidence finder**
The Scottish Government has developed an Evidence Finder to help collect, analyse, and publish equality evidence across a wide range of policy areas.
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Equality/Equalities/DataGrid>
- **Good Practice Database**
This good practice database, produced by EuroHealthNet, includes examples of projects and other initiatives - implemented at EU, national, regional or local level - addressing health inequalities.
http://www.health-inequalities.eu/HEALTHY/EN/good_practice_database/
- **WHO Health determinants**
The European Health Information Gateway, developed by the World Health Organization, includes a range of information resources, organised by different themes, including health determinants.
<http://portal.euro.who.int/en/themes/#byCategory>

Information sources: International

- **PROGRESS Framework: Applying an equity lens to interventions**
This summary, from the National Collaborating Centre for Methods and Tools, brings together resources to ensure that there is explicit consideration for health



equity, the unfair difference in disease burden, when conducting research and adapting research evidence to inform the design of new interventions.

<http://www.nccmt.ca/resources/search/234>

- **National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health**
This library contains resources that are relevant, geared to practice, and either recently published or foundational to current health equity thinking in public health.
<http://nccdh.ca/resources/library/>
- **Health disparities & minority health information resources**
This resource, developed by the National Library for Medicine, is a collection of information about health disparities and minority health.
https://www.nlm.nih.gov/services/queries/health_disparities.html
- **Health Evidence Network (HEN): Sources of evidence**
The World Health Organization has created the Health Evidence Network (HEN) sources of evidence database, which filters searches organisations, or themes, including health inequalities.
<http://data.euro.who.int/HEN/Search/HenSearch.aspx>

Journals

- **Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health**
This journal looks at the epidemiology of both communicable and non-communicable disease, and is relevant to people who practise social and preventive medicine.
<http://jech.bmj.com/>
- **BMJ Open**
This open-access journal presents evidence related to clinical medicine, public health, and epidemiology.
<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/>
- **Social Science & Medicine**
The purpose of this journal is to disseminate social science research on health.
<http://www.journals.elsevier.com/social-science-and-medicine>
- **International Journal for Equity in Health**
This open-access journal presents evidence relevant to the search for, and attainment of, equity in health across and within countries.
<http://equityhealthj.biomedcentral.com/>
- **Journal of Public Health Management & Practice**
This open-access journal focuses on evidence based public health practice and research on a wide range of population health topics including research to practice; emergency preparedness; bioterrorism; infectious disease surveillance; environmental health; community health assessment, chronic disease prevention and health promotion.



<http://journals.lww.com/jphmp/pages/default.aspx>

- **Public Health**
This open-access journal publishes articles on public health practice and impact, applied epidemiology, need or impact assessments, health service effectiveness, management, and re-design, health protection, health promotion, disease prevention, evaluation of public health programmes, governance, audit, and quality, law, ethics, and policy, and the workforce in public health systems.
<http://www.publichealthjrn.com/>
- **Journal of Public Health**
This open-access journal includes papers on the theory and practice of the whole spectrum of public health across the domains of health improvement, health protection and service improvement, with a particular focus on the translation of science into action.
<http://jpubhealth.oxfordjournals.org/>
- **The European Journal of Public Health**
This open-access public health journal includes contributions from social medicine, epidemiology, health services research, management, ethics and law, health economics, social sciences, and environmental health.
<http://eurpub.oxfordjournals.org/>

Research support

- **PRISMA Statement for equity-focused systematic reviews**
PRISMA stands for Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses, and this is an extension which focuses on health equity.
<http://methods.cochrane.org/equity/equity-extension-prisma>
- **Equity checklist for systematic review authors**
This checklist, published by the Cochrane Collaboration, is for systematic review authors planning and conducting reviews with a focus on health equity.
<http://methods.cochrane.org/equity/sites/methods.cochrane.org/equity/files/uploads/EquityChecklist2012.pdf>
- **Health disparities search tips**
Kent State University Libraries have prepared a list of tips for searching for health disparities research.
<http://libguides.library.kent.edu/c.php?g=278274&p=1854371>
- **Health equity: evidence synthesis and knowledge translation methods**
This research paper makes recommendations for assessing health equity, and lists the ten steps in the systematic review process, where health equity should be considered.
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3702469/pdf/2046-4053-2-43.pdf>



Search strategies

- **PROGRESS Framework: Page 2 - list of health inequality subject headings**
The PROGRESS framework was used as an initial framework to ensure the main determinants of socioeconomic health inequalities were covered in the search strategy. It presents a comprehensive list of terms related to health inequalities.
https://static-content.springer.com/esm/art%3A10.1186%2Fs12939-016-0314-z/MediaObjects/12939_2016_314_MOESM1_ESM.pdf
- **Protected characteristics**
These pages, developed by the NHS Health Scotland, provide an overview of key policy, legislation, statistics, and highlights from qualitative research for each of the nine protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010
<http://www.healthscotland.com/Equalities/characteristics/index.aspx>
- **A glossary for health inequalities**
In this glossary, published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, the authors address eight key questions pertinent to health inequalities.
<http://jech.bmj.com/content/56/9/647.full>
- **Community engagement to reduce inequalities in health: a systematic review, meta-analysis and economic analysis: Appendix 1: Search strategies**
This systematic review, produced by the National Institute for Health Research, provides the complete search strategy they used to search for evidence on inequalities.
<http://www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/phr/volume-1/issue-4#appendices>
- **Community coalition-driven interventions to reduce health disparities among racial and ethnic minority populations: Appendix 1**
This Cochrane systematic review provides the complete search strategy they used to search for evidence on inequalities.
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/14651858.CD009905.pub2/full>
- **Indicators of socioeconomic position (part 1)**
This glossary, published in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, presents a comprehensive list of indicators of socioeconomic position used in health research.
<http://jech.bmj.com/content/60/1/7.abstract>
- **MEDLINE®/PubMed® health disparities and minority health search strategy**
The search retrieves citations to journal literature, combining subject terms and title & abstract words.
https://www.nlm.nih.gov/services/queries/health_disparities_details.html



Current awareness

- **UKHF Health Inequalities Update Service**
This resource is produced by the UK Health Forum, and has a category for health inequalities, linking to relevant resources and evidence.
<http://www.ukhealthforum.org.uk/prevention/pie/>
- **CHAIN Equality & Diversity sub-group**
CHAIN (Contact, Help, Advice and Information Network) facilitates the exchange of knowledge between like-minded health and social care practitioners, educators, researchers and managers. There are a number of sub-groups, including one for health inequalities.
http://www.chain-network.org.uk/subgroup_resources.html#ED

Learning resources

- **Bridging the gap: A health inequalities learning resource**
Bridging the Gap, drawing on current evidence, outlines some of the key features of health and social inequalities in Scotland, exploring a range of associated topics and themes.
<http://www.bridgingthegap.scot.nhs.uk/>
- **The economics of social determinants of health and health inequalities: A resource book**
The purpose of this resource book, is to provide economic arguments to guide policymakers on how to present the case for action on health inequalities.
http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/84213/1/9789241548625_eng.pdf
- **Cochrane Equity Methods Group: Training and webinars**
The Cochrane Equity Methods Group has developed a set of training and webinars about equity in health care.
<http://methods.cochrane.org/equity/training-and-webinars>
- **European Portal for Action on Health Inequalities: Learning module**
This learning module aims to provide guidance and support to public health and health promotion professionals that are addressing the social determinants of health and health inequalities and working with other sectors both at national and local level.
http://www.health-inequalities.eu/HEALTHYQUITY/EN/projects/crossing_bridges/resources_cap_b_module/

Tools to support local practice

- **Inequalities Calculation Tool**
This spreadsheet, from Public Health England, provides Excel formulae for



calculating a number of measures of inequality commonly used within public health intelligence, for example the Slope Index of Inequality and Concentration Index.

<http://www.apho.org.uk/resource/view.aspx?RID=132634>

- **Marmot Indicators 2014 - Local Authority Profiles**
The UCL Institute of Health Equity has developed the Marmot Indicators 2014, which are the individual indicator profiles for each Upper Tier Local Authority in England.
<https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/uk/marmot-indicators-2014-supporting-documents>
- **Atlas of Variation**
In many localities across England, the NHS Atlas of Variation in Healthcare has been used as a stimulus to start a search for unwarranted variation, and as a springboard to releasing resources for re-investment in higher-value healthcare for local patients and populations.
<http://www.rightcare.nhs.uk/index.php/nhs-atlas/>
- **Resource for Community Health Partnerships to address health inequalities**
This resource, from NHS Health Scotland, has primarily been developed to support Community Health Partnerships (CHPs), although it will have value for other partnership organisations engaged in planning and delivering services for improving health and reducing health inequalities.
<http://www.healthscotland.com/topics/resourcechp.aspx>
- **Health Inequalities Assessment Toolkit (HIAT)**
The NIHR CLAHRC North West Coast has produced this toolkit to help people dealing with inequalities in public health to assess the impact of their activities.
<http://www.hiat.org.uk/introduction.html>



Health inequalities a measurement search terms

These two tables present a list of Thesaurus terms (bibliographic database index terms) and free-text terms, which can be used to construct a health inequalities search strategy. More terms may be identified as relevant records are retrieved.

Thesaurus terms, also known as Medical Subject Headings (MeSH), index terms, controlled language, and descriptors, are assigned to each article added to bibliographic databases, such as PubMed. Thesaurus terms will also search for similar terms, plurals, and language variations. It makes it easier to retrieve articles specifically on that particular topic. However, it takes time for index terms to be assigned, so it is important to combine the thesaurus search with a free-text search, which searches for the term, as it is, but throughout the text.

Topic	Thesaurus terms	Title/abstract free text terms
<i>Health inequality</i>	Healthcare Disparities Health Status Disparities Small-Area Analysis Physician's Practice Patterns Resource Allocation	Disparity/Disparities Equality/Equalities Inequality/Inequalities Equity/Equities Inequity/Inequities Equitable access Inequitable access Variation Disadvantaged Underserved Deprivation Deprived Health gap Health gradient Unequal life chances Unequal distribution Postcode lottery Geographical exclusion Discrimination Social exclusion Social gradient



Measurement	Indicators Health indicators Health service indicators Health Needs Assessment Health Services Needs and Demand Health Services Accessibility Gatekeeping Catchment Area (Health)	Gini co-efficient index Slope index of inequality Health inequality indicators Social gradient in health Slope index score Equity proofing Equity filter Equity lens Equity audit Equity-effectiveness loop Equity gauge Equity-focused health impact assessment Equity audits Health equity profiles
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Protected characteristics search terms

Topic	Thesaurus terms	Title/abstract free text terms
Social status	Socioeconomic Factors Social Determinants of Health Income Poverty Social Conditions Social Class Educational Status Health literacy Employment Homeless Persons Demography Crime Human Rights Poverty Areas Social Environment Geography Housing	Social Socioeconomic Standard of living Living standards/Conditions Income Education Literacy Employment/ Unemployment Working conditions Occupation Demographic Determinant Social stratification Homelessness Accommodation Location
Age	Age factors Ageism	Age discrimination Ageist
Disability	Disabled Persons Vulnerable Populations Intellectual Disability	Disability/Disabled Handicapped Impairment
Gender	Sexism Sex Factors Gender Identity	Sexist Sex discrimination Gender



Marriage	Marital Status	Married Civil partnership/union
Pregnancy and maternity	Pregnancy	Maternity Pregnant woman/women
Race and ethnicity	Minority Groups Minority Health Cultural Diversity Ethnic Groups Transients and Migrants Emigrants and Immigrants Refugees Racism	Ethnicity/Ethnic Culture/Cultural Minority Transient Migrant Race/Racial/Racism/Racist Tribe Refugee camp Asylum seeker Migrant health
Religion and belief	Religion	Religion/Religious Belief Faith Spirituality [Name of specific religions]
Sexual orientation	Transgender Persons Homosexuality, Female Homosexuality, Male Homosexuality Heterosexual Bisexuality Gender Identity Sexual Behaviour Sexuality	Sexual orientation Transgender Transsexual Homosexual Heterosexual Bisexual Pansexual Same sex Gender