

Flipping the Discussion about Trust: A perspective from the AAMC Center for Health Justice

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BIO Diversity Roundtable

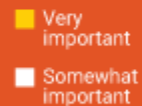
The AAMC Center for Health Justice

Established in 2021 as part of the AAMC's Strategic Plan, the AAMC Center for Health Justice seeks to look beyond medical care to the other factors that create opportunities for communities to thrive.

aamchealthjustice.org

Health requires a multi-sector approach:

The majority of adults agree that each of the 15 sectors surveyed are important to them to improve the quality of health in their community. In fact, we see a diversity of sectors even among the top five options in total importance.



Health justice goes beyond medical care alone:



of adults agree that to be healthy requires **more than medical care**.



of adults agree that certain groups of people in the U.S. are **less healthy** because of their **social circumstances** or economic situation.



of adults agree that no one's health should be disadvantaged because of their **social circumstance** or economic situation.



A wooden boardwalk made of light-colored planks winds through a lush, green dune landscape. The path curves from the foreground towards the background, leading the eye into the distance. The dunes are covered in tall grasses and some purple flowers. In the far background, sand dunes are visible under a clear sky.

Health equity is the goal.
Health justice is the path.

HEALTH JUSTICE

Anti-Racist, Anti-Discriminatory

Community
Wisdom
& Multisector
Partnerships

Research → Policy Action



AAMC Center for Health Justice Focus Areas



Trustworthiness

Guiding health care and other organizations as they work to demonstrate they are worthy of their communities' trust



Data for Health Equity

Developing tools and advocating for the information we need to ensure communities thrive



Maternal Health Equity

Understanding health inequities for birthing people and advocating for evidence-based policy solutions



Environmental Justice

Amplifying community voices and building a multisector, research to policy agenda

1

**The community is already educated;
that's why it doesn't trust you.**

aamc.org/trustworthiness



1

The community is already educated; that's why it doesn't trust you.

2

You are not the only experts.

3

Without action, your organizational pledge is only performance.

4

An office of community engagement is insufficient.

5

It doesn't start or end with a community advisory board.

6

Diversity is more than skin deep.



7

There's more than one gay bar, one "Black church," and one bodega in your community.

8

Show your work.

9

If you're gonna do it, take your time, do it right.

10

The project may be over, but the work is not.


The Principles of Trustworthiness


AAMC Principles of Trustworthiness





Deserving trust is crucial to equitably partner with the communities you engage and to achieve health justice.


Remember, though, **the process of engagement is as important as the product.** Here are 10 principles that community stakeholders endorse as the guiding compass on your journey to establishing trustworthiness.

- **1 The community is already educated; that's why it doesn't trust you.**

Words matter. Be mindful of how you frame your relationship. It is not your job to teach to the gaps you assume the community has. Mistrust is a rational response to actual injustice. The community knows what it doesn't know and will ask when it thinks you have answers it can trust. (This goes for "empowering" the community, too.)
- **2 You are not the only experts.**

People closest to injustice are also those closest to the solutions to that injustice. (That is probably not you or your organization and, even if it is, there's a power imbalance.) Listen to people in your community. They have deployed survival tactics and strategies for decades — centuries, even. Take notes. Co-develop. Co-lead. Share power.
- **3 Without action, your organizational pledge is only performance.**

Walk the walk, please. Deploy resources. Coordinate across your organization. Hire someone to the C-suite and a network or coalition of experts to be responsible for transformation because transformation is not a one-person job. Be authentic. Don't just say you're committed to the goal of health equity; do the work to achieve it.
- **4 An office of community engagement is insufficient.**

One full-time employee doesn't cut it. Don't jam this work into your existing diversity and inclusion office, either. Trustworthiness is not a "minority tax"; we are all responsible. This is systemwide, all-hands-on-deck work and, as such, should be acknowledged, incentivized, and promoted in material ways.
- **5 It doesn't start or end with a community advisory board.**

Running your thoughts by a group of self-appointed community leaders for a thumbs-up does not suffice. Take to the streets to get some unfiltered opinions. And then work together with the community to put that wisdom into the work. Make it clear to all you've done so, and explain the benefits accrued.

aamchealthjustice.org/trustworthiness

Community Engagement Reflection Guide



Community engagement is an iterative, on-going, long-term investment that is foundational to the work of demonstrating trustworthiness. It's more than building trust in one project or community interaction, but rather building trust in the organization and in the system.

Use this guide for personal self-reflection or as a tool to help your organization reflect upon all 10 *Principles of Trustworthiness* as you engage with your community.

10 Principles of Trustworthiness

Principle 1 – The community is already educated, that's why it doesn't trust you.

Key Behavior: Respect and Responsibility

- How are we communicating with the community as a dialogue between equals, instead of a one-way lesson?
- How do we take the time to understand local knowledge, history and its ramifications?
- How do we ask the community what is needed rather than assume?

Principle 2 – You are not the only expert.

Key Behavior: Humility

- How are you using language that conveys superiority or an "us versus them" mentality?
- In what ways are you partnering or trying to "lead" the coalition?
- Can you point to concrete ways you're incorporating community expertise into your work?

Principle 3 – Without action, your organizational pledge is only performance.

Key Behavior: Authenticity

- How are we following up our words with meaningful action?
- How does our plan for action hold organizational leadership accountable?
- How is our plan for action and related evaluation co-developed with the community?

The principles, videos, discussion and reflection guides help institutions of all kinds demonstrate trustworthiness to their communities.





A more just society creates healthier communities.

Working together, we are a movement to improve the health of communities.

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