

Alabama A+ Conference 2023

Session Description

Keynote Session – Health Disparity in Primary Care

André A. Lessears, MBA

The ability to navigate differences effectively is not an inherent trait. It is a skill developed over time, through intentional effort and leveraging your lived experience. The goal, which is often stated, is to develop a level of cultural competency. However, cultural competency should not be the end goal. To effectively address health disparities, we need caregivers who are able to leverage their cultural competency through cultural humility. This discussion will walk through the critical steps we can take to go beyond cultural competency.

Keynote Session – Disabusing Disability: Demonstrating That Disability Doesn't Mean Inability

Oluwaferanmi Okanlami, MD

Disability is regularly neglected in conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion, yet it is the one demographic that we may all identify with one day. Therefore, disability should serve as a means of demonstrating that we are all much more similar than we are different. As a disabled, black, Nigerian, immigrant, cis-gender heterosexual, male, physician, athlete this presentation will talk about the intersectionality between all of those identities, striving to demonstrate that disability is not inability, and encouraging us to allow people to demonstrate what they can do, rather than attempting to limit them based on what they can't. It will also hope to engage you all in conversation about what each of us can do, within our own spheres of influence to make sure we are not perpetuating ableism in our personal, academic, and professional lives.

Mixing it up: How Combining Ingredients Can Help Bridge Health Disparities*

Rashad Hayes, LMSW

The audience will undergo an experience that will stress the importance of recognizing and addressing the unequal distribution of health outcomes and access to healthcare among different populations. By acknowledging these disparities, we can work towards creating a more equitable and just healthcare system that promotes health for all individuals.

Promoting Health Equity within Communities or Promoting Health Equity in Communities: Addressing the Social Determinants of Health*

Larrell Wilkinson, PhD, MSPH, CHES©

The session is for health professional and community partners interested in promoting healthy and improving health equity towards a vision of "healthy people living in healthy communities." Efforts in working towards this vision includes approaches that foster positive community-, policy-, and system-level changes that combine social, organizational, environmental, economic, and policy strategies along with individual behavioral change and clinical services. This presentation provides methods, examples, and practical exercise in developing a framework to improve health equity in communities.

Let it flow: Period poverty as a social determinant of women's health

Sarah Toth, PhD, MEd, MCHES©

As a social determinant of health, poverty plays a significant role in physical and mental health and vulnerabilities in adolescent girls and women in Alabama. Explore how basic menstrual needs often go unmet in our most financially insecure Alabamians. This session will investigate the relationship between menstrual health, hygiene, and the challenges of period poverty. Learn how to advocate and take action for interventions to prevent period poverty and support menstrual health.

* Approved for ethics requirement for social workers

Ethical Issues in Health Disparities and treatment equities in LGBTQIA+ Communities*

Aubin Cawthon, CRSS and Lakyn Newcomb, LMSW

Alabamians who identify as LGBTQIA+ face many barriers and struggles in accessing appropriate healthcare. We will hear personal experience in the struggle to access gender-affirming care, appropriate care for general health and wellness, and the fears that come along with it. We will also hear the clinical best practices in providing accessible care for the LGBTQIA+ community and the importance of affirming care.

Ethics and Health Disparity Q&A Panel*

Sarah Toth, Larrell Wilkinson, Aubin Cawthon, Laykn Newcomb, and Dr. Lee Sharma (Huntsville only)

This structured conversation will bring together multiple experts to further explore ethics, health disparity, and health equity in Alabama. They will also share their perspectives and thought-provoking ideas on how to improve the health of all Alabamians. This is also the opportunity for attendees to ask questions and receive insights from those with varying professional degrees and personal experience.

* Approved for ethics requirement for social workers