Children's Hospital of Philadelphia PolicyLab

Using Rising Tides to Lift All Boats: Equity-focused Quality Improvement as a Tool to Reduce Neonatal Health Disparities

Visit Article

Evidence of health disparities affecting newborns abounds. Although quality improvement (QI) methodology is often suggested as a tool to advance health equity, the impact of QI initiatives on disparities is variable. QI work may mitigate, worsen, or perpetuate existing disparities. QI projects designed without an intentional focus on equity promotion may foster intervention-generated inequalities that further disadvantage vulnerable groups. This article reviews disparities in perinatal and neonatal care, the impact of QI on health disparities, and the concept of "Equity-Focused Quality Improvement" (EF-QI). EF-QI differs from QI with an equity lens in that it is action-oriented and centered around equity. EF-QI initiatives purposely integrate equity throughout the fabric of the project and are inclusive, collaborative efforts that foreground and address the needs of disadvantaged populations. EF-QI principles are applicable at every stage of project conception, execution, analysis, and dissemination, and may provide opportunities for reducing disparities in neonatal care.

Journal:

Seminars in Fetal and Neonatal Medicine
Authors: Diana Montoya-Williams, Michelle-Marie Peña

Related Content

- Associations Between a Healthy Start Program Prenatal Risk Screening Tool and Adverse Birth Outcomes: A Study Using the Mother/Infant Dyad Screening Cohort
  Article
  Jan 2020