

New Bedford  
Health

Prevent. Promote. Protect.



# Health Equity & Local Public Health

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10/26/23

# Outline

New Bedford Overview

Turning Point

Departmental Commitment

Quality Improvement

Additional Examples



# About the City of New Bedford



Historic | Fishing | Manufacturing | Cultural Diversity

Located in Southeastern MA, New Bedford is home to **~101,000** residents including **~10,000** undocumented immigrants.

Nicknamed the **“Whaling City”**, New Bedford boasts a rich history as a fishing port and later as a textile hub, both shaped this culturally diverse community for decades.

**Fishing** and **Manufacturing** continue to be the largest industries.

As a **Gateway City** full of opportunities, New Bedford is home to many immigrants predominantly from Central America, the Caribbean, Cabo Verde and Portugal

**24%**

Identify as  
Hispanic/Latino

**38%**

Speak a language  
other than English

**19%**

Live below poverty

**47%**

Are insured with  
MassHealth  
/Medicaid

**31%**

Of households  
receive food  
stamps/SNAP

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2021 and 2020 Decennial Census

# The New Bedford Health Department



## Public Health Nursing

The Public Health Nursing Division monitors and tracks infectious diseases within our community in addition to providing preventative and supportive services to our residents



## Health & Wellness Promotion

These initiatives strive to promote healthy behaviors and prevent disease through community outreach & engagement.



## Substance Use Prevention & Harm Reduction

These programs focus on prevention efforts and harm reduction activities to minimize consequences of both legal and illegal drug usage.



## Environmental Health & Food Protection

The Environmental Health and Food Protection Division focuses on protecting residents & visitors from environmental threats.

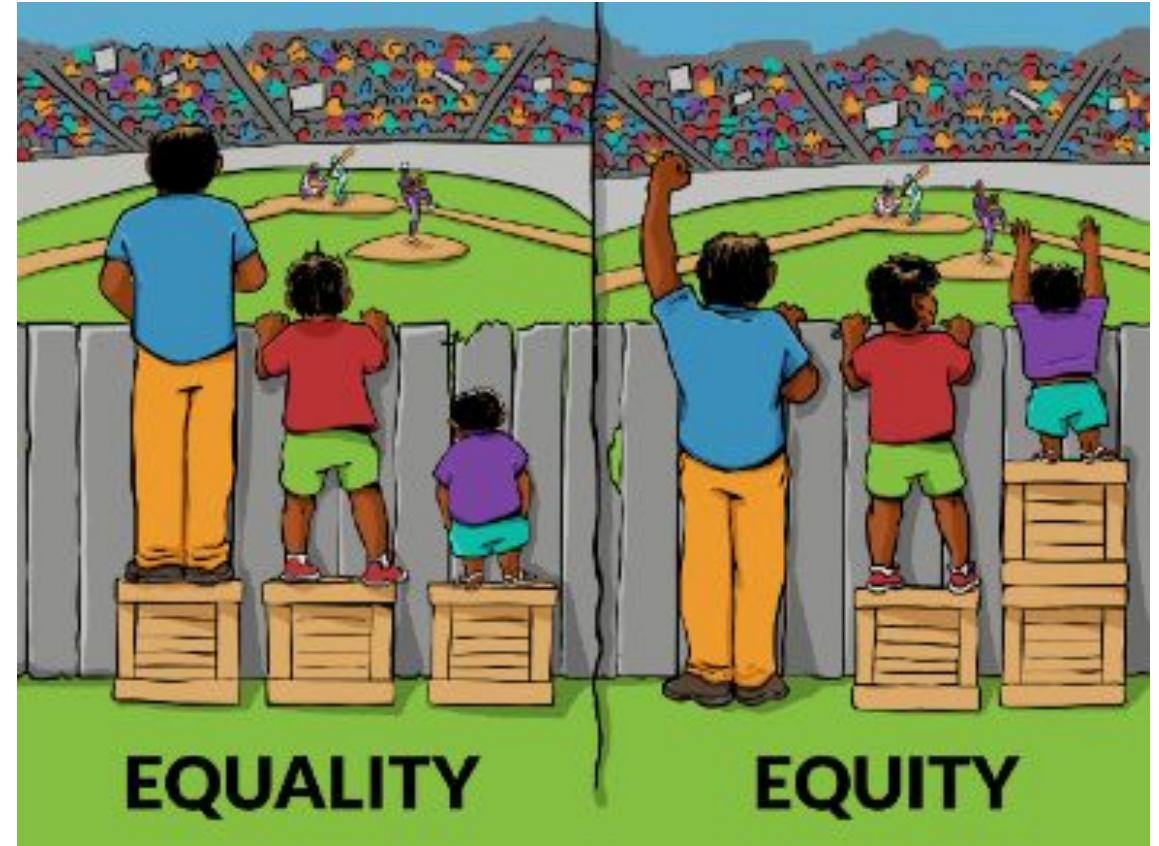


## Municipal Marine Laboratory

The New Bedford Marine Laboratory is the only municipal owned commercial lab in Massachusetts.

# Turning Point

- Health Equity/Health Disparities
- COVID-19/George Floyd
- Department and Stakeholder Development
  - Racial Equity Institute training for staff and partners
  - Dr. Camara Jones – 2 speaking sessions



# Departmental Commitment

- **Racial Equity Policy Framework**
  - Help the department be more intentional
  - Inform the development and prioritization of policy
  - Guide partnership development – longstanding and mutually beneficial
  - Host Health Equity Communities of Practice
- **Commit to Equitable Hiring Practices**
  - Hire individuals who are representative of the community (language/race/age etc)
  - Advertise using a variety of channels and methods

# Departmental Commitment

- Commit to Supporting the Community Health Worker Workforce
  - Trusted individuals in the community
  - Break down barriers and identify causes
  - Southeastern United Network for CHWs
- Create a Culture of Learning, Continuous Development and Quality Improvement
  - Workforce Development Plan
    - 10 essential services
    - Health Equity and Cultural Humility
  - Quality Improvement Plan



# Quality Improvement (QI) Plan

- Public Servants - Providing good Customer Service
- Created a link to submit QI Projects
  - Anonymous (if desired)
  - Solutions Oriented
  - Process for Accountability
  - All levels of department
- Satisfaction Surveys from the Public

Confidential

Page 1 of 1

## QI Project Idea Form

Have an idea to improve the Health Department? Completion of this form is the first step in that process, known as Quality Improvement, or QI. Exploring ideas to improve our procedures and programs will help us all provide better services to the public and create a healthier New Bedford.

Please explain your idea by providing responses on this form. After you submit your idea, the QI Coordinator - the department accreditation coordinator- will review it and get back to you.

Thank you!

1) Who is submitting this QI idea? (It is also ok to remain anonymous.) \_\_\_\_\_

2) What program or process needs to be improved? (What should be fixed?) \_\_\_\_\_

3) Which division is involved with this process or program?

- Leadership/Supervisory
- Administration/Front Office
- Environmental Health and Safety/ Inspectional Services
- Municipal Marine Laboratory
- Public Health Nursing Division
- Public Health Programming
- Substance Misuse Programing
- Public Health Accreditation

4) What is the project idea? (How do you think this problem could be fixed?) \_\_\_\_\_

5) What data/ information gave you the project idea? (What happened to make you want to fix this problem?) \_\_\_\_\_

6) How will your idea address or fix the problem?" \_\_\_\_\_



# QI- Community Engagement

Problem: Cultural Community Group held event and did not get proper permitting

## WHY?

- Did not know the city process (new to country/community visibility)
- Application is cumbersome
- Technology hurdles
- Language/Literacy barriers
- Different relationship with government

# QI- Community Engagement

## Set up Community Meetings with Leaders

- Mutual learning opportunity
  - What does the Health Department do?
  - Why does the Health Department have these requirements in place?
  - What would the group like to do that the event?
  - What needs to happen for those needs to be met?
  - What support does the community group need to be successful?
- Connections for future work
  - How do our missions align?
  - How can our work intersect?
  - What resources/support/services does the community they serve need?

# QI- Community Engagement

## Results:

- Cultural Community Group held event this year and **did** get proper permitting
- Formed trusting relationships
  - Individuals came into the department to fill out permits
  - Worked with Community Group on survey distribution
- Departmental Systems Level Change
  - Utilization of Language Line Services for all needed languages
  - Office hours to help fill out online applications
  - Presentations with community groups

# Additional Examples

- In-Home COVID Vaccination Program
- Block-by-Block Initiative
- Narcan for Fishermen
- Dental Program in Schools
- School Vaccine Program
- Car Seat Technician Check Point
- Notary Republic



# Thank You!

New Bedford  
Health

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For more information visit our website: <https://www.newbedford-ma.gov/health-department/>  
Join us on Facebook and Instagram: @NewBedfordHealthDepartment

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