

CAEP Health Equity Working Group

Report to CAEP 2022

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Background:

The CAEP Health Equity Working Group was formed at CAEP 2019. It was developed under the umbrella of the CAEP Public Affairs Committee, and it was meant as a way to advance goals of Health Equity and Social Emergency Medicine in our clinical, educational, and academic environments.

Community Building

The working group organized informal meetings every 2-3 months and which were avenues to discuss advances and issues related to health equity work in the ED. Many members were steeped in the pandemic response for people experiencing homelessness alongside their clinical duties. A lot of work was related to knowledge sharing and building collaboration between hospital groups undertaking work related to improved care and discharge for patients experiencing homelessness. The group learned about a number of initiatives occurring nationally across EDs - from offering cellphones to patients facing displacement to introduction of peer workers to provide more human care in the ED.

Featured Focus

1) Position statement for people experiencing homelessness:

Under the leadership of Dr. Edward Xie, the working group put together a position statement that looked at ED interventions to identify homelessness, strategies to improve ED care, bridging people to resources and robust discharge planning. We hope this position statement is a first step in building a more Canadian-ED specific literature base for care for patients experiencing homelessness.

Xie EC, Chan K, Khangura JK, Koh JJ, Orkin AM, Sheikh H, Hayman K, Gupta S, Kumar T, Hulme J, Mrochuk M, Dong K. CAEP position statement on improving emergency care for persons experiencing homelessness: executive summary. CJEM. 2022 Apr 7:1–7.

2) Support for decriminalizing small possession of substance use:

We were asked to provide input into ongoing calls for the federal government to decriminalize small possession of substance use, and for the CAEP board to endorse this call. We strongly support this call and provided some of the summary of evidence as it relates to EM care.

3) Collaboration on education initiatives:

Under the leadership of Drs. Vivian Tam, Jaspreet Khangura, Claire Acton, and Kate Hayman, there was a round-table discussion between a number of academic sites. They shared

educational initiatives that relate to EDI work in the ED and explored opportunities for collaboration.

4) Grand Rounds

We held grand rounds alongside the Health Equity branch of the Global Health in Emergency Medicine, with an invited community organizer, A.J. Withers, and discussed challenges in housing wait lists that people experiencing homelessness face.

Future Goals

- Develop a social media presence to promote academic work, essays, and advocacy work related to health equity in the ED.
- Develop ways to advance the work and recommendations from the CAEP 2021 Academic Symposiums related to health equity goals.
- Host a CAEP national Grand Rounds discussing health equity work in the ED.
- Develop a repository of initiatives taking place in the ED that improve care for people face inequity due to social determinants of health.