BHA-FPX4020 Assessment 1: Healthcare Problem Analysis Proposal

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Program Name or Degree Name (e.g., Bachelor of Science in Psychology), University

COURSE XXX: Title of Course

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Healthcare Problem Analysis Proposal

Healthcare systems in the US bear the obligation to achieve a triad objective of improving the patient experience of care, including quality and satisfaction, improving public health services, and reducing the cost of care. Despite these considerations, Americans do not receive quality, timely, and affordable care due to the prevailing healthcare disparities. According to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) (2021), a healthcare disparity is a "difference between population groups in the way they access, experience, and receive healthcare" (p. 193). In this sense, the synergies between ethnic, social, economic, environmental, and geographical factors contribute to inequalities regarding access to care, experiences, and quality of life. Although the country enacts policies that ensure affordability, accessibility, and equality, eliminating ethnic and socio-economic disparities poses a public health challenge. Therefore, this proposal elaborates on strategies for measuring and assessing healthcare disparities, quality benchmarks, and evidence-based strategies for addressing the problem.

Measurements and Assessment of the Problem

It is possible to measure and assess the problem of healthcare disparities by evaluating interactions between health and social determinants of health (SDOH), including age, education, neighborhood, employment, and population's income levels. Also, it is essential to incorporate ethnic aspects because they influence access to quality care, experiences, and quality of life. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) (2021) presents six profound domains for assessing disparities. These considerations are:

- Access to person-centered care
- Patient Safety

- Care coordination

- Care affordability

- Effective treatment

- Healthy living

Benchmarks for Healthcare Disparities

Often, it is possible to determine the prevailing health disparities by comparing the community's performance against top-performing communities and state or national benchmarks. As noted earlier, it is vital to assess and measure health disparities by evaluating inequalities within the six domains, including access to patient-centered care, the level of care coordination, care affordability, the availability of effective treatment, and healthy living. Gomez et al. (2021) argue that conditions in which people live, learn, work, and worship, alongside their age and growth patterns, influence well-being outcomes, quality of life, and access to timely, affordable, and quality care. Therefore, the social determinants of health (SDOH) are the causative and contributing factors for health disparities.

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) collaborates with other agencies, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), to document national and state benchmarks for the six domains. In this sense, it is possible to gauge communities' performance regarding eliminating healthcare disparities by comparing their prevalence with states' and national benchmarks. One of the most profound benchmarks for healthcare disparities is the number of uninsured people of ethnic diversities. Carratala and Maxwell (2020) argue that about 10.6% of African Americans were uninsured compared with 5.9% of non-Hispanic Whites in 2017. Such statistics indicate that ethnicity is a profound cause of disparities in care affordability and accessibility.

The standard unit for measuring health disparities entails often computing the total number of individuals with distinct characteristics against a predetermined population (1000, 100000, and so on). For example, healthcare professionals can calculate the total number of Black Americans with new cases of HIV by identifying the number of new cases per 100,000 people. Consequently, it is possible to compare the prevalence of disparities with achievable benchmarks.

Action Plan

Many scholarly and authoritative sources proposed evidence-based interventions for analyzing and addressing health disparities in patient safety, access to quality care, care affordability, quality of life, and care coordination. These interventions include:

- Identifying and addressing contextual issues contributing to healthcare disparities (Suarez-Balcazar et al., 2017). it is essential to understand the linkage between social determinants of health (SDOH) and access to care, affordability, care coordination, and quality of life.

- Initiating organizational, provider-focused, and systematic changes to reduce racial healthcare disparities (Gullost et al., 2018).

- Eliminating structural racism in healthcare organizations to promote fairness and equality at the institutional level (Lavizzo-Mourey et al., 2021)

- Ensuring equality when distributing socio-economic resources reduces disparities within the social determinants of health, such as housing, health literacy, work conditions, and employment status (Gomez et al., 2021).

- Implementing transformative care delivery and financial arrangements to transform healthcare reimbursement strategies, including national insurance models to enhance accessibility and affordability (Garzon-Orjuela et al., 2020).

American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) Leadership Competencies

ACHE Domain	ACHE Competency Selected	How This Competency Related to the Capstone Health Care Problem Analysis Proposal
Communication and Relationship Management	Communication Skills	Communication competencies are prerequisites for effectively disseminating information and evidence regarding clinical problems as a healthcare professional. According to the American College of Healthcare Executives (ACHE) (2020), communication skills enhance an individual's ability to communicate clearly and concisely with internal and external audiences, establish and maintain relationships, and facilitate constructive interactions with team members. This competency is consistent with the capstone project analysis because it entails implementing interdisciplinary teams for change.

Leadership	Managing Change	Undoubtedly, understanding the change process is essential for inspiring evidence-based interventions to address health disparities. ACHE (2020) contends that effective leadership entails inspiring individuals and organizational excellence by creating a shared vision and successfully managing change. Therefore, this competency complements the need to initiate, implement, and sustain approaches for addressing health disparities.
Professionalism	Personal and Professional Accountability	As noted earlier, it is essential to eliminate structural discrimination in healthcare organizations to address health disparities such as access to quality care for disadvantaged patient populations, care coordination issues, and patient safety concerns (Lavizzo-Mourey et al., 2021). Personal and professional accountability is a prerequisite for ensuring equality at the institutional level because it aligns with ethical and professional standards. This competency relates to the capstone healthcare

		problem because it requires healthcare professionals to uphold ethical and professional practice standards, eliminating structural disparities such as discrimination.
Knowledge of the Healthcare Environmental	Healthcare Systems and Organizations	The problem of health disparities prompts healthcare professionals and policymakers to understand the synergies between social determinants of health (SDOH) and domains of quality care, including accessible, affordable, and coordinated care. Therefore, it is essential to understand external and internal organizational environments, including healthcare delivery systems like insurance and reimbursement models. Therefore, this competency aligns with the capstone healthcare problem because it emphasizes understanding care dynamics and their contribution to health disparities.
Business Skills and Knowledge	Quality Improvement	Quality improvement is an essential concept in the current healthcare systems because it emphasizes interventions for bolstering care quality, accessibility, and affordability alongside other dimensions of quality care.

		Healthcare professionals should familiarize themselves with implementing evidence-based recommendations for clinical problems. This competency aligns with the capstone healthcare problem analysis because it entails understanding organizational capacity and aspects that improve dimensions of quality care.

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