



## Strategic Planning Frameworks



# FRAMEWORKS

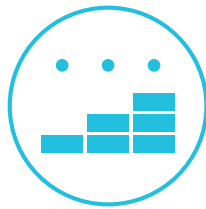
## FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT

The six frameworks were created and identified through feedback gathered from various Howard Brown Health staff members, Board of Directors members, and information collected through community feedback in advance of the strategic planning process.

The six frameworks are:



**Harm Reduction**



**Health Equity**



**LGBTQ+ Liberation**



**Operational Excellence**



**Racial Equity**



**Trauma-informed Care**

A description of each framework was completed through an in-depth literature review and benchmarking process. This was accomplished through the utilization of several professional references on relevant national health care systems including: NACHC, IPHCA, HRSA, SAMHSA, National LGBT Task Force, Institute for Healthcare Improvement, National Council of Community Behavioral Health, Healthy People 2020, and the Department of Health and Human Services.

Feedback on the first drafts of these descriptions was gathered from a large catchment of Howard Brown staff and stakeholders to ensure they were representative of the core values of Howard Brown. The frameworks were met with an overwhelming support and affirmation that these frameworks are core to the work of Howard Brown.

The final drafts presented here incorporate edits obtained from these review sessions to ensure appropriate reading level utilized, inclusion of all components of Howard Brown service offerings, and appropriate representation of staff and patients.



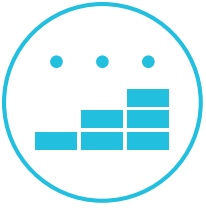
# HARM REDUCTION

## DEFINITION

A harm reduction approach reduces harm a person experiences and increases the possible benefits of all choices a person has made or will make. It does this without judgment, pressure, discrimination, punishment or requiring that a person must stop or reduce high risk behaviors before they can get care. In this way, harm reduction offers people more than one “right” way to improve their health and meets them “where they are.”

## SIGNIFICANCE

Harm reduction approaches have been used for over 50 years in HIV/AIDS prevention and care, sexual health, and substance use treatment. Research shows that harm reduction has a strong positive impact and helps people improve their health, fewer high risk behaviors and better engagement and retention in care<sup>123</sup>. While Howard Brown already uses harm reduction approaches in our HIV, substance use and sexual health care, it is creative and original for Howard Brown to use a harm reduction approach across a whole health center.



# HEALTH EQUITY

## DEFINITION

Health equity is a goal to offer the very best health and healthcare for all people, and to help all people<sup>1</sup> become the healthiest they can be by offering care that meets their specific needs, regardless of their ability to pay. Health equity ensures that people have real access to options and opportunities (in healthcare and outside of it) that help them lead full, healthy lives. Health equity focuses on meeting each person's needs, unlike "health equality" which believes that one-size-fits-all and that everyone has the same needs. Health equity requires that we notice and address the additional hardships our marginalized and disadvantaged community members face.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Health equity is strongly connected with Howard Brown's mission to reduce and eliminate "health disparities" (health differences that are very linked to poverty, discrimination or oppression) in the LGBTQ+ community and our goal to provide the highest quality care for people regardless of their ability to pay. Many of the people we serve are living at or below poverty, are uninsured, don't have stable housing, and experience discrimination and oppression. Poverty, discrimination, and oppression are linked to having worse health. Poverty, discrimination, and oppression also influence other "social determinants of health". Having poor health can lead to poverty and living in poverty can make your health worse. People can get stuck in a cycle of need and poor health.<sup>3</sup> However, people with better health can have a different cycle. People with better health are more able to work, take good care of themselves, support their family, have a better quality of life, and have fewer medical bills.



# LGBTQ LIBERATION

## DEFINITION

LGBTQ+ liberation is a movement that removes and repairs the oppression that LGBTQ+ people have faced now and in the past. It works to build healthcare systems and organizations that are LGBTQ+ affirmative and offer LGBTQ+ people care that fits their needs. LGBTQ+ liberation tries to create freedom, health, justice, and equity for LGBTQ+ people, families and communities. It creates systems and services that meet the unique needs of LGBTQ+ people, rather than requiring LGBTQ+ people to fit into services that were just built to serve straight and cisgender people.

## SIGNIFICANCE

As the largest LGBTQ+ health center in the Midwest, Howard Brown is passionate about creating healthcare that meets the unique needs of LGBTQ+ people and communities, that reduces LGBTQ “health disparities” (health differences that are very linked to poverty, discrimination or oppression), and that offers excellent LGBTQ specialized care. LGBTQ people and communities have been excluded and treated disrespectfully in traditional outreach, prevention, research, policy, and health care. Discrimination and oppression have a very strong impact on a person’s or community’s health. To improve community health, Howard Brown must use its knowledge, advocacy, and resources to help LGBTQ people live their best lives, celebrating all parts of who they are.



# OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

## DEFINITION

We achieve operational excellence when we have a culture of continuous improvement in all parts of our organization and in the care we provide. Operational excellence creates an organization that is always learning and improving to provide excellent service and to meet new patient and community needs through providing high quality, affordable care. It prepares for and supports growth, and efficiently uses resources, staff, energy, and organizational goal setting.

## SIGNIFICANCE

The communities we serve deserve excellent and affordable care. Operational excellence creates continuous improvement in our care and in the operation of our health center. It helps us earn, keep, and deserve public trust and use the resources we receive in smart and responsible ways.





# RACIAL EQUITY

## DEFINITION

Racial equity works to reduce, remedy, and ultimately eliminate, racism and racial injustice in systems and spaces. Racism, oppression, “white privilege” (benefits that white people get just from being white), “white supremacy” (believing or acting in a way that values the white race and white norms over other races or norms), and “implicit bias” (when stereotypes or assumptions influence what people do, believe and notice without them knowing it) are core parts of how our society has been built. Racism, oppression, white privilege, white supremacy, and implicit bias are built into policies, priorities, how resources are used or given, hiring/promotion, norms, and choices we make about what care we offer and how we offer it.

Racial equity focuses on meeting each person’s needs, unlike “racial equality” which believes that one-size-fits-all and that everyone has the same needs. Racial equity requires that we notice and address the additional hardships our marginalized and disadvantaged community members face. It also requires that we actively work to identify and take apart obvious and subtle racial inequities while, at the same time, building new systems and skills that support racial equity to change and improve our organization’s structure, practices and results.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Racism is a barrier to health for all people of color in our society, and is one of the main causes of poor health and “health disparities” (health differences that are very linked to poverty, discrimination or oppression). Racism has created and grown important health disparities for people of color, including shorter lifespan, increased poverty, higher levels of chronic illness, and worse access to healthcare. Without an active focus on racial equity, Howard Brown will be contributing to poor health and poor care. Without this active focus, Howard Brown will allow racism, white privilege, white superiority and implicit bias (that already exist) to continue and to increase health disparities for people of color. Racial equity is an important part of offering truly culturally competent care, and is necessary to fulfill our mission of decreasing health disparities and increasing health equity for all LGBTQ+ people. Additionally, racial equity is necessary to create a workplace that truly and actively recruits, hires, trains, supports and keeps staff members of color.



# TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

## DEFINITION

Trauma happens when a person experiences an event that feels physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening and that has continuing damaging effects on a person's mental, physical, emotional, social, and/or spiritual health. Trauma can come from one event, from something that happens as a child or as an adult, oppression and discrimination, chronic illness, loss and grief, witnessing or experiencing violence, war, deportation, separation from family and friends, and/or poverty. Trauma can be passed down in families and can affect entire communities.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Many of the patients at Howard Brown are living with serious trauma, with many of our patients and staff experiencing complex, repeated, and continuing trauma in their lives.

