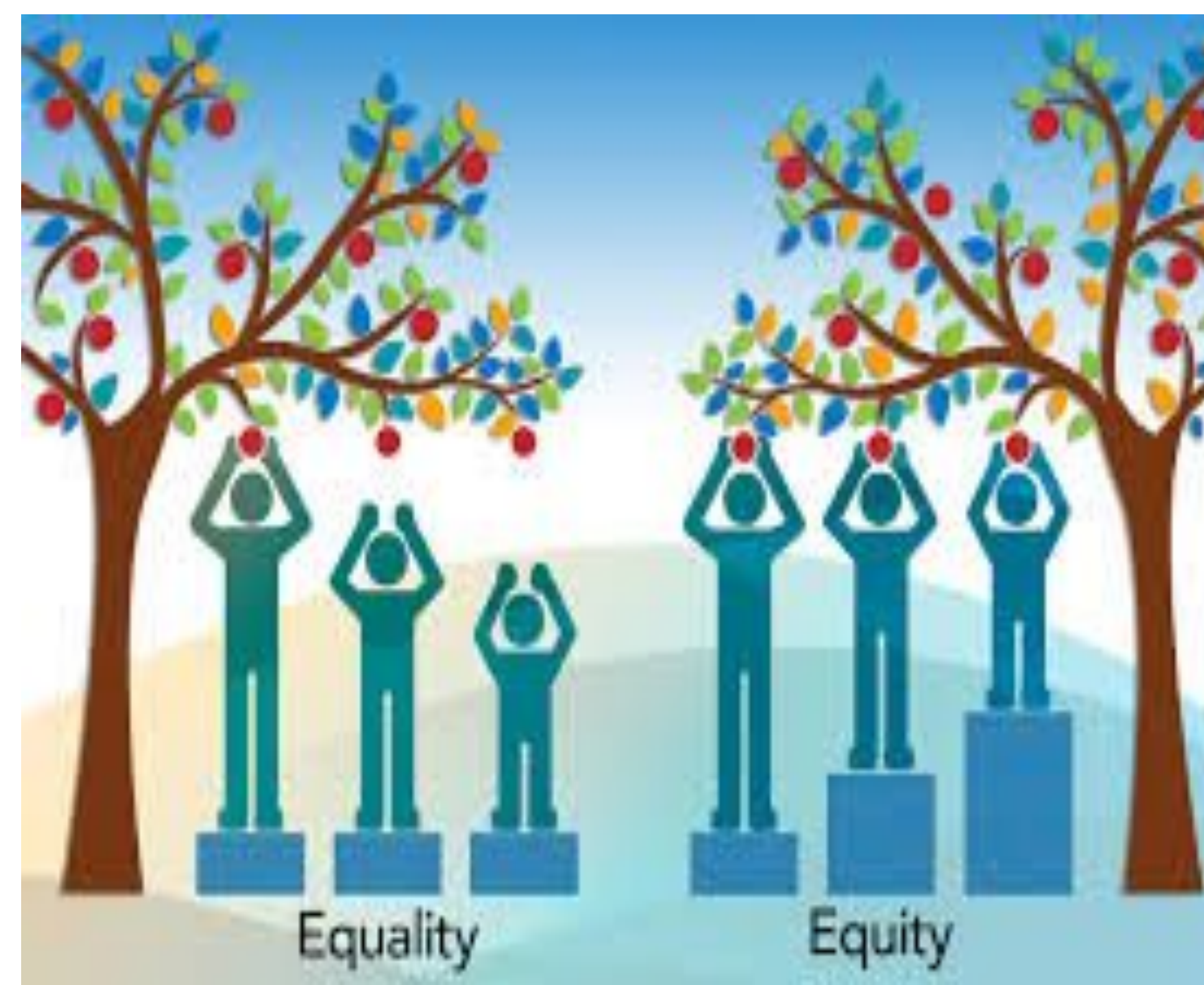


RESTRUCTURING THE SYSTEM: ESTABLISHING AN ANTI-RACISM PROGRAM FOR HEALTH EQUITY

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Purpose

An emerging model for fostering an organizational culture of equity -- the nurse-founded and nurse-led Ascension Texas Council on Racial and Health Equity (ATCORHE) -- was established in 2019 in response to the alarming rates of Severe Maternal Mortality and Morbidity (SMM) within Central Texas. As a dynamic, interdisciplinary council, our primary programmatic goal is the elimination of race-based maternal health disparities while ensuring health equity for all.



Methods

- A multi-pronged approach to anti-racism education was developed and continues to be offered in conjunction with paradigm-shifting multidisciplinary, didactic simulations and implicit bias training.
- Collaborative partnerships were formed with community organizations and area universities to share resources, initiate research, and ensure outreach to marginalized women in our service area.
- Initial data collection and analysis regarding workforce development was completed.
- Multiple initiatives are in development, including the following:
 - The establishment of a patient Food “Farmacy,” and Pop-Up Pantry;
 - An evidence-based discharge follow-up program for mothers and newborns;
 - Alternative models of prenatal care.

Findings

- ATCORHE’s outcomes are based on the successful implementation of equity-based initiatives that include the following:
- The delivery of anti-racism education to 680 associates and 43 physicians thus far;
 - The addition of social determinants of health screening questions to our EMR;
 - Redesignation of doulas as allied health professionals;
 - Substantial funding received for both the use of virtual reality with anti-racism provider education and NICU implicit bias training; and
 - Workforce development and data analysis in collaboration with executive leadership.

Conclusions

In order to create more equitable health outcomes for all women, particularly women of color, nothing less than a proactive disruption of the healthcare system will suffice. The purpose of ATCORHE is to change awareness of and responses to race-based health inequities through intensive associate/physician education efforts. Likewise, ATCORHE endeavors to incorporate a racial and health equity lens to all aspects of care, which informs actions influencing system sectors such as workforce development, patient care practice, and network policies.

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