

We Are

HEALTH EQUITY

May 2025 – Volume 4, Issue 2

The Southern Nevada Health District's Health Equity Program was established with the goal of working alongside community partners to help increase awareness of, and minimize, the health inequities that hinder marginalized communities from reaching their full health potential.

The program's mission is to work in collaboration between Health District programs and community-based organizations to reduce disparities in health care access and service delivery to underserved populations using health equity strategies, increasing access to essential services, providing education and conducting community outreach.

[Click here to view the Health Equity Webpage](#)

HAPPY SPRING!

MAY ISSUE

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Community Champions



WE ARE HEALTH EQUITY

Health Equity Program Updates

NEW EPISODE! Health Equity Chats Podcast Out Now!



In recognition of American Heart Month in February, the Health Equity Chats podcast released a special episode focused on heart health, including prevention, research, and resources. This episode features Caitlin Parker, Registered Dietician at the Southern Nevada Health District, along with Nicole Monzon and Iris Martinez with the American Heart Association. Together, they explore trends, nutrition tips, health disparities, and practical tools to support optimal heart health in our communities.

Tune in to learn about how we can work toward a heart-smart future for all!

[February 2025 Health Equity Podcast Episode](#)

National Minority Health Month



To honor National Minority Health Month in April, the Health Equity Team gathered staff from the Southern Nevada Health District to share their experiences with health disparities and the meaningful ways we work to support minority communities.

Our compilation video, **"Bridging the Gap: SNHD's Commitment to Health Equity"** is a powerful testament to how our dedicated staff work to promote health equity every day.



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A heartfelt thank you to all the staff who contributed to this project, and to everyone who continues to serve and uplift our communities every day!

Click the link below to watch the video and join us in celebrating our shared commitment to health equity.

[April is Health Equity Month](#)

HEALTH EQUITY HIGHLIGHT

Our Community

Health District After Dark: Brain Health is Public Health



In March, the Southern Nevada Health District hosted an engaging Health District After Dark event, bringing together staff and community partners to discuss a critical public health issue: Brain Health. The event featured impactful panel discussions with experts from the Alzheimer's Association, Department of Brain Health, and UNLV School of Public Health. Attendees gained valuable knowledge on brain health, trends, risk factors, and strategies to reduce risks. They also received information on essential resources available to support individuals affected by Alzheimer's and dementia.

Community Action for Brain Health

To further promote brain health awareness, the Health District is collaborating with the Alzheimer's Association Southern Nevada Region to implement a community action planning strategy. Together we will follow the Health Brain Initiative Road Map to engage and educate the community on

- Integrating brain health into chronic disease management programs
- Addressing the social determinants of health that impact cognitive well-being
- Promoting [Healthy Habits](#) that support long-term brain health

Get Involved

Looking to join this initiative? If you're interested in incorporating brain health into your program(s) or staying informed about upcoming activities, please complete this short interest [form](#).

Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support (DSMES) Classes



The Health Equity Team's ongoing partnership with the Office of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion allows for Diabetes Self-Management Education & Support (DSMES) classes to reach more communities in Southern Nevada. In March, the Health Equity Team facilitated DSMES classes at Bill & Lillie Heinrich YMCA, and plans to host classes at one of Nevada HAND's senior properties this May.

Using the Conversation Map format which strongly encourages engagement, participants learned crucial knowledge and skills needed to self-manage their diabetes. Topics covered in the two-day session included monitoring blood glucose, learning about healthy eating choices, the importance of physical activity, medication management, and tips for living with diabetes. Participants who attended the two-day class left with skills needed to change their lifestyle and with diabetes management resources provided by the Southern Nevada Health District. The Southern Nevada Health District's Diabetes Self-Management Education Program is recognized by the [American Diabetes Association](#) in meeting national standards for diabetes self-management education.

DSMES classes are also offered in-person at the Main Public Health Center throughout the year by the Office of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Virtual classes are also available for participants who prefer an online format.

If you or a loved one are interested in attending a two-day class session, sign up via the [Diabetes Self-Management Interest Form](#), call (702) 759-1270, or email gethealthy@snhd.org. Classes are also available in Spanish. For Spanish classes, fill out our online form at [Viva Saludable](#).

ADDRESSING HEALTH DISPARITIES AMONG SENIORS

Protecting Medicare and Expanding Local Resources



Health disparities among the elderly are a significant issue, with older adults often facing unequal access to healthcare due to factors such as race, ethnicity, income, and geographic location. Over time, these disparities lead to inequalities that negatively impact health outcomes and increase the barriers seniors face in accessing the care they need. For many older adults, these issues worsen as they age, contributing to greater disadvantage and inequality. According to the [Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#), individuals aged 65 and older in the U.S. made up 17% of the population in 2020, and this percentage is projected to rise to 22% by 2040.

Medicare plays a vital role in ensuring that 67.3 million seniors can access the healthcare services they need, but recent cuts to Medicare funding are making it harder for many older adults to receive appropriate care. These reductions result in higher out-of-pocket costs, limited access to treatments, and fewer healthcare options for vulnerable seniors.

As Medicare cuts take effect, seniors may face increased financial strain and health complications, potentially delaying or declining necessary care due to cost concerns. To address these growing challenges, it is important to protect and strengthen Medicare,

ensuring that all seniors, especially those in underserved communities, can continue to receive the healthcare they deserve.

Advocating for Medicare policies and educating the aging population about local resources that can help bridge gaps in care is crucial for reducing health disparities and improving the quality of life for seniors in Clark County. Click below to see local organizations who may be of assistance:

- [Clark County Social Service \(CCSS\) for Senior Advocate Program](#)- offers resources and support for seniors and their families, including information on aging in place and senior housing options.
- [Royal Pages](#)- a directory of programs and services geared toward the aging and disabled population.
- [Nevada Care Connection](#)-provides one-on-one assistance to older adults, people with disabilities, caregivers, and families to explore options, plan for care, and connect with services.

ALZHEIMER'S AND BRAIN AWARENESS MONTH

June

Understanding Dementia and Promoting Brain Health in Southern Nevada

Alzheimer's disease is a progressive condition marked by memory loss and cognitive decline, which usually interfere with daily activities. It is the most common cause of dementia, accounting for 60-80% of dementia cases. Dementia itself is not a single disease, but rather a group of conditions caused by abnormal brain changes. In addition to Alzheimer's, listed under the umbrella of Dementia is Vascular, Lewy and Frontotemporal Dementia. While dementia is irreversible, symptoms can be managed through medications and non-drug therapies that help slow cognitive decline.

In 2022, 4% of adults aged 65 and older were diagnosed with dementia and by 2060, it is estimated that cases will double-- disproportionately affecting women, Black individuals, and adults over the age of 75. In Nevada, 10.9% of residents over the age of 65 were diagnosed with dementia in 2020 (Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures, 2024).

Nearly 120 years ago, German physician Dr. Alois Alzheimer discovered the disease that now bears his name, sparking further brain research, and eventually the identification of beta-amyloid protein and tau proteins as major contributors to nerve cell damage. These discoveries, along with the implementation of clinical trials, FDA-approved treatments, and the implementation of many national health initiatives has led to significant progress. However, despite progress, now more than ever, we must continue to work towards reducing the rates of Dementia. Ninety-five percent of individuals living with dementia have at least one other chronic disease, often mismanaged, resulting in worse health outcomes and higher medical cost. Due to the prevalence of comorbidities, negative

impact on health outcomes, and an increased financial burden on health care cost, dementia remains as a pressing public health issue.

Caregiving and Its Impact

Caregivers can be defined as those that assist with one or more daily activities such as bathing and dressing or instrumental activities such as paying bills or transportation. About 83% of care for older adults in the United States is provided by family, friends and unpaid caregivers, totaling an estimated 18.4 billion hours valued at \$346.6 billion. Reasons for providing this unpaid assistance include the desire to keep a family member or friend close, proximity to the dementia patient, and caregiver's perceived obligation. Caregiving responsibilities often fall on women, leading to significant stress and mental health challenges, according to the 2018 National Health and Wellness survey. Recent studies examining racial disparities in the caring of Dementia patients reported that Black and Hispanic dementia patients are more likely to live with adult children compared to White patients.

Due to higher levels of burden and stress experienced by caregivers, it is important that they themselves practice self-care to avoid negative mental health outcomes such as stress and depression. The National Institute on Aging stresses the importance of staying physically and emotionally healthy by following tips such as asking for help, spending time with friends and/or joining a support group among many others. For a more detailed and comprehensive resource for self-care, visit the National Institute on Aging care giving [website](#).

Community Action for Brain Health

In collaboration with the Alzheimer's Association Southern Nevada Region, the Southern Nevada Health District is implementing a community action planning strategy to encourage and engage community organizations to improve the understanding of Brain Health the goal of reducing the risk of dementia in a collaborative way. Following the Health Brain Initiative Road Map, the two organizations will embark on engaging and educating the community on how they can integrate Brain Health into their current chronic disease management programs, address the social determinants of health, and promote [Healthy Habits](#) for the brain.

How to Get Involved

If you are interested in learning more about how your organization can integrate Brain Health into your program(s) and receiving information about future activities, please complete this short interest [form](#).

For additional information and resources follow the following links:

- [Alzheimer's Disease Facts and Figures](#)
- [10 Healthy Habits for Your Brain](#)
- [Alzheimers.GOV](#)
- [Tips for Caregivers: Caring for Yourself](#)



**BRAIN HEALTH =
PUBLIC HEALTH**



STROKE AWARENESS MONTH

Hypertension and Stroke Awareness Month: Know the Risks, Take Action



May marks Hypertension and Stroke Awareness Month, which aims to highlight two of the most pressing heart conditions that impact the United States. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), nearly half of adults have high blood pressure in the United States. Stroke affects a disproportionate number of racial minorities, with Black individuals being twice as likely experiencing a two-fold greater risk of first-ever stroke as compared with White patients (American Heart Association).

High blood pressure, also called hypertension, refers to the high force of blood pushing against the arteries. This force works the heart harder and thus leads to various heart conditions such as strokes. Both hypertension and stroke are among the leading causes of death in the United States, and approximately 795,000 people in the United States have a stroke yearly.

There are various risk factors for high blood pressure including physical inactivity, unbalanced diet, tobacco smoking, and drinking. Previous family history of high blood pressure may also increase the risk of hypertension. However, there are lifestyle changes that can significantly lower your risk for both hypertension and stroke:

- **Incorporate nutritious foods** and healthy drinks: Incorporate fresh fruits and vegetables into your diet. Eat foods low in salt, trans fat, and saturated fats.
- **Increase physical activity:** 150 minutes of moderate exercise is recommended for adults, and 60 minutes is recommended for children.
- **Reduce tobacco use and smoking:** Enroll in smoking cessation programs. Quitting will greatly lower your risk of stroke.
- **Get preventative care:** Check cholesterol and blood pressure levels regularly during check-ups.
- **Take medication as prescribed:** Work with your healthcare team to prevent any medical conditions that can increase the risk of stroke.

It's also important to be aware of the stroke signs. The [American Stroke Association](#) encourages using the **F.A.S.T** acronym to remember stroke warning signs.



- **Face drooping.** Ask the person to smile and look for an uneven smile.
- **Arm weakness.** Ask the person to raise both arms and observe for weakness in one.
- **Slurred speech.** Difficulty speaking and slurred speech are also something to look out for.
- **Time to call 911.** Time is of the essence and a prompt response will improve survival chances.

SELF-CARE CORNER

National Heat Safety Awareness Day - May 30th

Essential Summer Safety Tips



Summer is just around the corner and while this time of the year is great for enjoying time with family, it's important to **stay safe in the heat!** Increased sun exposure and warmer temperatures can pose a threat to you and your loved one's health if not planned correctly. Stay ahead of the game and prepare yourself for heat-related illnesses and other seasonal exposures by following the safety tips below.

- **Stay hydrated** - Sleepiness, dizziness, headaches, dry mouth, and fatigue are some signs of dehydration. Also stay vigilant for signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
 - Heat exhaustion is associated with thirst, heavy sweating, nausea, weakness, and dizziness. If you or a loved one are experiencing symptoms move to a cooler area, loosen clothing, and sip cool water. Call 911 if symptoms worsen since heat exhaustion can lead to a heat stroke if left unaddressed.
- **Always carry enough water** for yourself and your family when out engaging in outdoor physical activities. Avoid liquids that contain large amounts of sugar as sugary drinks can increase your risk of dehydration.
- **Prevent unsupervised access to pools** or bodies of water when vacationing with children and family. Drowning can occur quickly and quietly.
 - Designate a water watcher to keep diligent watch over children playing in pools and bodies of water.
 - Stay aware of your surroundings, especially when in large bodies of water like the ocean.
- **Enroll in swimming classes** offered by the [American Red Cross](#), for adults and children around the Las Vegas Valley.
 - Wear life jackets when enjoying boating or other water activities.
 - Only swim at beaches with lifeguards and within designated swimming areas.
 - Enroll in CPR classes offered by the [American Red Cross](#). CPR is an essential skill that could help save a life inside or outside of the water.
- **Wear at a minimum SPF 30 broad-spectrum sunscreen** when outdoors and reapply frequently. Sunscreen should be applied 30 minutes before any outdoor activity.
 - Apply sunscreen liberally to all exposed skin. Always check SPF expiration dates and replace the sunscreen when needed.
- **Wear loose, light-colored, breathable clothing** when working outside in the heat. Use hats, sun visors, and sunglasses to protect your eyes from sun damage.

- **Stay indoors during peak heat hours.** Check your local weather station and weather app to plan outings during low temperature hours. Limit outdoor physical activity during hours with high temperature warnings.

Always keep safety in mind when traveling for the season and have a safe summer with your loved ones! If you are interested in learning more summer safety tips visit the [American Red Cross](#).

HEALTH EQUITY RESOURCES

NEW Community Workshop Available!

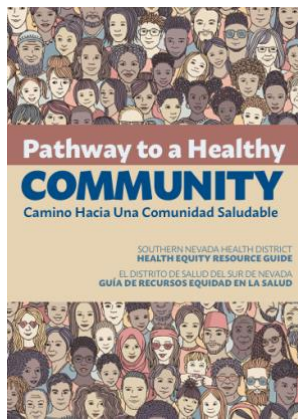


Our team is excited to introduce a new presentation for available for our partners: **Community Care in Action: Programs and Services at the Southern Nevada Health District**. This presentation is designed to educate community members about the wide range of services offered by the Southern Nevada Health District, helping to increase awareness and improve access to vital programs. Whether for a meeting or an informational session, this workshop provides valuable information about how SNHD supports public health in our community.

To request this presentation for your next team event, please contact **Grissel Oliveros** at oliverosg@snhd.org. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity and help spread the word about the services available!

Pathway to a Healthy Community: Southern Nevada Health Equity Resource Guide

Want to know more about our programs and services without requesting a presentation? We've also created a virtual resource guide that contains information about Southern Nevada Health District programs. The guide provides information in both English and Spanish. Click the link below to access the resource guide.



[Pathway to a Health Community: Health Equity Resource Guide](#)

Equitable Environment and Services Checklist

This checklist is designed to help providers identify gaps and opportunities in delivering equitable care and creating an inclusive environment. Download the fillable document and use it to assess and enhance your space and services.



Equitable Environment and Services Checklist

The purpose of this checklist is to help providers identify gaps and opportunities in delivering care and equitable services in an equitable environment.

What is an equitable environment?	What are equitable services?
An equitable environment is one where all individuals, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances, have fair access to opportunities, support and resources. In an equitable environment, systemic barriers and biases are actively identified, addressed and dismantled to ensure that everyone can thrive. Each person gains broad equality by recognizing that everyone is unique so they may need different levels of support and resources to achieve their best health. Equitable environments emphasize inclusivity, justice and fairness where diversity is valued, and everyone has the chance to succeed on their own terms.	Equitable services are designed to meet the diverse needs of individuals and communities by ensuring that everyone has fair access to the opportunities, resources and the support they need to thrive. Unlike equal services, which provide the same resources to everyone regardless of their circumstances, equitable services consider the needs, challenges and barriers different groups and individuals face. This approach often involves tailoring services to address specific disparities in hopes of creating a level playing field for all.

[Equitable Environment Services Checklist](#)

Health Equity Resource Library

Explore our growing library of health equity resources, featuring educational videos, data reports, and community tools. We update these resources regularly to keep you informed. Click the link below to access the collection.



Health Equity Resource Library

General Health Equity Resources		
Resource name	Author	Description
10 Essential Public Health Services • English • Spanish	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	The 10 Essential Public Health Services (EPHS) describe the public health activities that all communities should undertake.
Community Health Fact Sheets	Community Health Library Project	Accurate and accessible health information by topic, in over 35 different languages.
Health Literacy	CDC	Learn the definition of health literacy and how to employ best practices to build trust.
Social Determinants of Health	CDC	Learn about the factors that impact health and health disparities.
Social Determinants of Health	World Health Organization	Understand how the social determinants of health can influence health equity in positive and negative ways.
Social Determinants of Health	Healthy People 2030	Learn how Healthy People 2030 plans to address the social determinants of health.

[Health Equity Resource Library](#)