FrEEIA Readiness Assessment Tool

Why is equity readiness assessment important?

Internationally and in Aotearoa New Zealand evidence-based interventions take a long time to be implemented. Furthermore, in Aotearoa New Zealand the outcomes of interventions are not equal because the implementation of interventions is not equitable.

The Healthier Lives National Science Challenge funded the University of Otago to lead the development of a set of tools to support the implementation planning process. These tools are designed to support organisations implementing health services to maximise the likelihood they advance equity.

How was this tool developed?

This tool was developed through research with stakeholders who design and implement interventions to advance equity and ensure equal outcomes. This research highlighted critical facilitators and barriers to implementation. The research was then combined with international equity assessment and organisational readiness tools* to develop a robust and user-friendly tool for use in Aotearoa New Zealand.

*The Readiness Thinking Tool® was used as the basis of this equity readiness assessment tool. This is available under a Creative Commons License and adapted with permission from the authors. Available **here.**

Intended users

This tool is to be used by teams who are:

- Implementing interventions within health services

- Reviewing existing implementation of interventions in order to achieve equal outcomes

University of Otago ŌTĀKOU WHAKAIHU WAKA

Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora

National SCIENCE Challenges — HEALTHIER LIVES He Oranga Hauora

National Hauora Coalition

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Glossary of terms

Heath equity

The absence of unfair, avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically.[1]

Equitable implementation

Provision of interventions in a fair and just manner that accounts for social disadvantage and ensures equal outcomes for all those requiring the intervention.[2]

Equity readiness

Willingness and ability of a service/organisation to implement an intervention in an equity-enhancing way.[3]

[1] World Health Organization; [2] Brownson et al., 2021, Gustavson et al., 2022; [3] Weiner, 2009, Scaccia et al., 2015
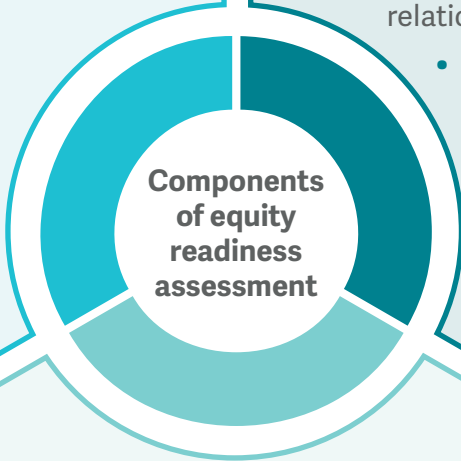
Principles of Equity Readiness

1. Equity Readiness isn't one thing; it is a combination of motivation, intervention-specific capacity, and organisational capacity

2. Equity Readiness can change over time

3. Equity Readiness is important throughout implementation

4. Equity Readiness is intervention-specific

5. Equity Readiness can vary across levels of implementation

6. Equity Readiness can be built

Individual Readiness

- Alignment
- Benefit
- Evidence
- Flexibility
- Outcomes
- Priority

Implementation Readiness

- Skills and knowledge
- Leadership champion
- Supportive work environment
- Service user/community engagement
- User-centred design
- Internal organisational relationships
- External organisational relationships
- Pathway design

Components of equity readiness assessment

Organisation Readiness

- Staff capacities
- Staff characteristics
- Knowledge
- Māori leadership
- Local leadership
- Equity leadership
- Organisational culture and values
- Innovativeness
- Communication
- Partnership
- Training
- Data
- Improvements
- Process capacities
- Resource use

How to complete this tool

As a health professional/staff member of an organisation that provides health services, you and your fellow team members are encouraged to use this tool to assess your service/organisation's readiness to implement a new health intervention or service in an equitable way.

Ideally, you will already have watched the introductory video that describes the aim of the tool and gives you further information about the tool and its development. Although not required, we strongly encourage you to view this before proceeding.

Each team member in your organisation who is involved in the new health service should complete Sections 1-3 of the tool individually first before meeting together as a team to review your responses and work through the discussion questions.

The aim of this team discussion is not just a question/answer session but to generate comprehensive and inclusive discussion between team members using their individual responses as a basis. There are two expected outcomes of the discussion, firstly, agreement about whether your organisation is ready to deliver the new health intervention or service in an equity-enhancing way, and secondly, a set of actions to further improve your organisation's readiness for improving equity.

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Section 1: Individual readiness

The following statements relate to how motivated individuals are to implement this intervention. Your responses to these statements can be used to build an understanding of the team's thinking in regard to the intervention.

Individual readiness: the extent to which I believe this is important and I want it to happen.	Disagree	Partially agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Reason for Don't know
Alignment — This intervention fits with how I usually do things around here					
Benefit — This intervention is as good as (or better) than what I am currently doing					
Evidence — The evidence for how this intervention will improve equity is clear					
Flexibility — This intervention can be adapted to my local context					
Outcomes — I can see how this intervention will lead to improved equity outcomes					
Priority — Getting this intervention working is a priority amongst other things I need to do					

Section 2: Intervention-specific readiness

The following statements relate to key equity readiness aspects that are specific to the intervention's implementation pathway. These ideally need to be in place before implementation begins.

Intervention-specific readiness: what is needed to make this particular intervention happen in an equitable way.	Disagree	Partially agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Reason for Don't know
Skills and knowledge We have sufficient skills and knowledge to implement the intervention					
Leadership champion We have someone in a leadership role, or a well-connected person, who supports and will advocate for this intervention					
Supportive work environment We have the necessary supports, processes, and resources to enable this intervention					
Service user/ community engagement There are mechanisms for service users, communities and those most impacted (people at highest risk and/or with lived experience) to be meaningfully involved in implementation					
User-centred design Services are designed to meet the needs and preferences identified by those impacted by inequities					
Internal organisational relationships The relationships within this organisation support the intervention					
External organisational relationships The external relationships necessary for this intervention to work exist and are supportive of the intervention					
Pathway design The implementation pathway: a) Considers the context where the intervention will be delivered, including any adaptations to address equity barriers (e.g.access) b) Establishes the relevant monitoring and evaluation metrics					

Section 3: Organisational readiness

The following statements focus on the extent to which your organisational context is equity ready. The statements relate to areas that research has identified as important to support equitable outcomes. These are practices that need to be developed to increase the likelihood of the intervention leading to improved equity.

Organisational readiness: our overall functioning to enable equity.		Disagree	Partially agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Reason for Don't know
Staff capacities	We have enough of the right people to get things done					
Staff characteristics	Our workforce reflects the population served, in particular the communities that experience the greatest inequities					
Knowledge	Staff are knowledgeable about inequities and their causes, and have a shared language and understanding					
Māori leadership	We have Māori in leadership roles in our organisation					
Local leadership	We have people from the population served who have leadership roles in our organisation					
Equity leadership	Leaders in our organisation actively promote equity and ensure accountability for equity action					
Culture	Equity is a part of the norms and values in how we do things here					
Innovativeness	There is an openness to do things differently to address inequities					
Communication	Language and communication needs and health literacy demands are explicitly considered in: **a)** Collateral resources (e.g. brochures, letters, videos, graphics, maps) **b)** Interactions between service users and staff (in any role)					
Partnership	There are clear and visible partnerships between the service/organisation and communities that experience inequities					
Training	There is training or specific programmes available to ensure foundational knowledge, awareness and tools to act on inequities, e.g. Te Tiriti, decolonisation, anti-racism, cultural safety					
Data	There are systems to measure and monitor data (access, quality, outcomes) by relevant equity parameters, e.g. ethnicity					

Organisational readiness: our overall functioning to enable equity.	Disagree	Partially agree	Strongly agree	Don't know	Reason for Don't know
Improvements We use local data to identify and prioritise areas of focus to address inequities					
Process capacities We have the ability to robustly plan, implement, and evaluate changes in areas that effect equity					
Resource use There is the ability to acquire and allocate resources, including time, money, effort, and technology for equity-focused work					

Develop an action plan

After completing Sections 1–3 individually, make a time to meet with the rest of your team. Allow up to one hour for this initial conversation. Use the following discussion guide to structure the conversation. The aim is to develop a concrete set of actions to further increase your organisation's ability to implement this intervention equitably.

Discussion Questions

- Discuss team members responses to Sections 1–3. Where responses differ, discuss why that might be.

- How confident are you that implementation of the intervention will achieve equal outcomes for Māori and other groups that are most impacted by inequities?

- What are the three greatest strengths of your organisation that will support equitable implementation of this intervention?

- What are the three greatest challenges for implementing the intervention equitably in your organisation?

- Out of the challenges, which one is the greatest? Which areas do you think would be most important to address early on in your project?

- Where would more information be helpful? How can you get this information?

- Where can you make a start in further building your equity readiness? Who will champion, lead and coordinate this work?

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