

# 2024 WORKFORCE SYMPOSIUM INCLUSIVE INNOVATION: PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

APRIL 29-30 | NASHVILLE, TN



# TODAY'S SCHEDULE

8:00-9:00AM - Breakfast

9:00-10:00AM - Session 5:  
Marketing & Branding

10:00-10:15AM - Break

10:15-11:45AM - Session 6: Duct  
Tape & Paper Clips - Making It  
Work with What We've Got

11:45AM-12:00PM - Break

12:00-1:00PM - Lunch

1:00-2:30PM - Session 7: Pay  
Equity: Developing a Framework for  
Health Centers

2:30-2:45PM - Break

2:45-4:15PM - Session 8: Facing  
Discrimination from Patients:  
Supporting Your Staff and Clinicians

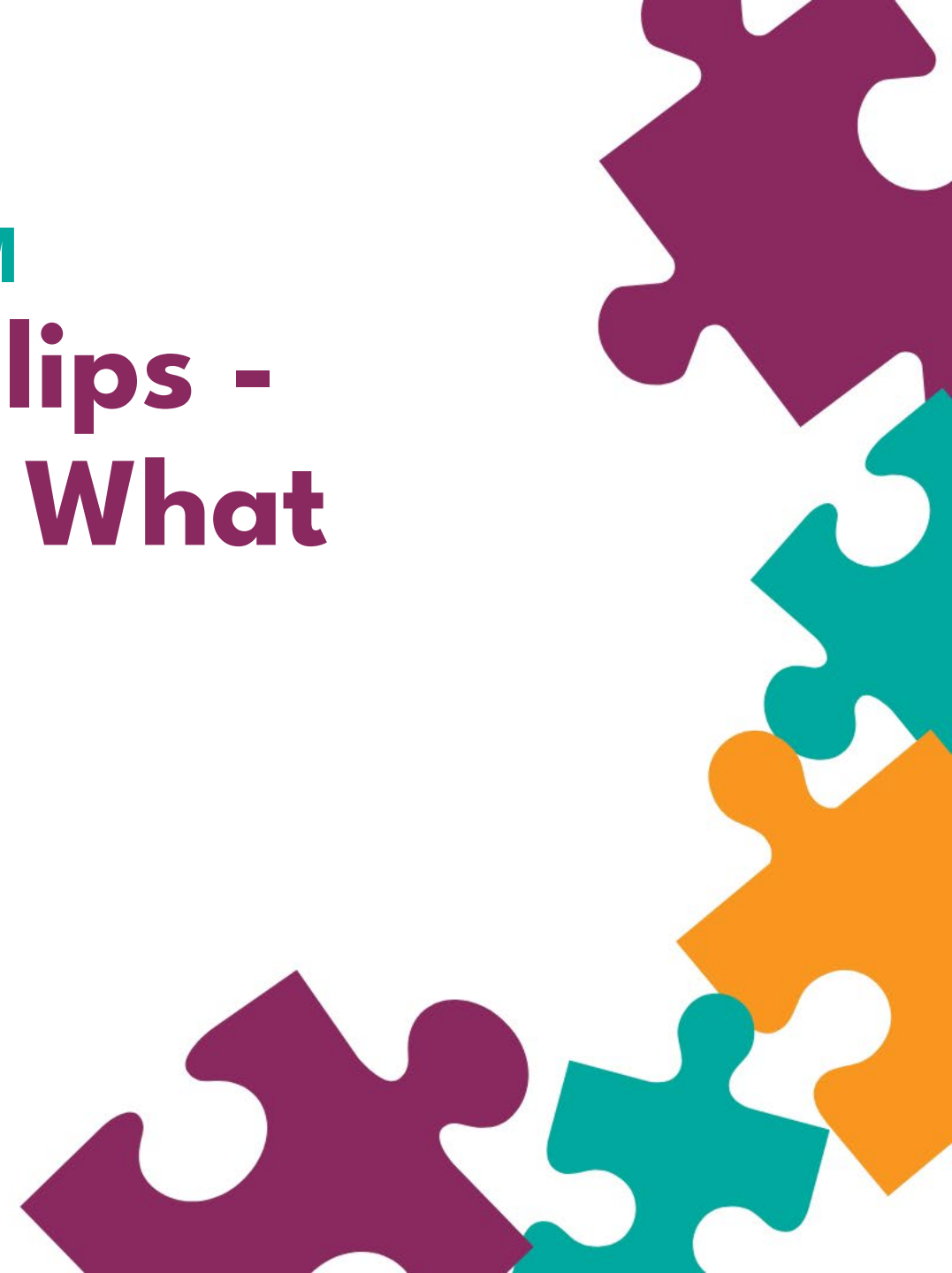
4:15-4:45PM - Session 9: Closing

## 2024 WORKFORCE SYMPOSIUM

# Duct Tape & Paper Clips - Making It Work with What We've Got

Alex Rohlwing, (ACU)

Tuesday, April 30, 2024



**Alex Rohlwing** MA, EMT-P  
he/they

*Associate Director*

ACU: BHW National Health  
Workforce Collaborative

[arohlwing@clinicians.org](mailto:arohlwing@clinicians.org)



# OBJECTIVE

*Explore how to apply best and promising practices for workforce support in a “real-world” context.*

# THE REAL WORLD FOR HEALTH CENTERS

- ❖ ~1400 centers totaling ~14,000 sites
- ❖ >30 million+ patients
- ❖ 2/3 of patients are at or below the Federal Poverty Level
- ❖ 20% have no insurance of any kind
- ❖ Patients come from across identity groups with a wide variety of health needs

# THE REAL WORLD FOR HEALTH CENTERS

- ❖ Continue increasing services & cross-discipline, inclusive care
- ❖ Outperform other providers in helping patients improve critical health indicators
- ❖ Save *thousands* of \$\$ per Medicaid patient each year compared to other care providers
- ❖ Barely collect half of total services charged from private insurance (Medicaid ~80% pmt)

# THE REAL WORLD FOR HEALTH CENTERS

- ❖ Over 88,000 medical staff
- ❖ Increasing use of advanced practice providers
- ❖ Cutting edge multi-service delivery, including:
  - Behavioral
  - Dental
  - Vision
  - SUD & Addiction Medicine
  - Enabling Services & Community Health
  - Telehealth-based services



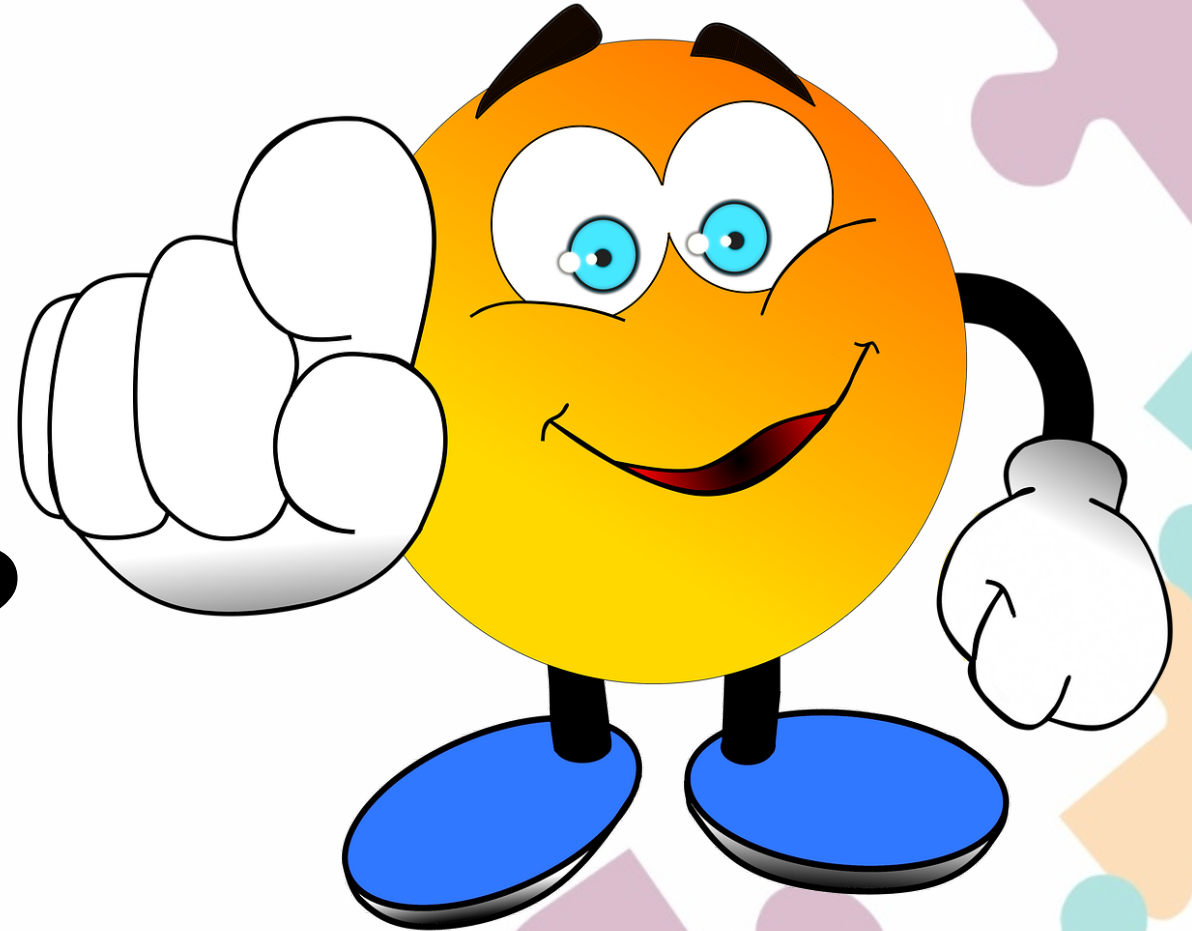
# Equity (vs "Equality")



Copyright 2022 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

JEDI

(Health)  
*Justice...?*



# WORKFORCE SUPPORT MEASURES

- Compensation equity/inclusivity (pay + benefits)
- Career paths & staff development
- Staff satisfaction surveys & stay interviews
- Recruitment equity/inclusion
- HPET and other partnerships

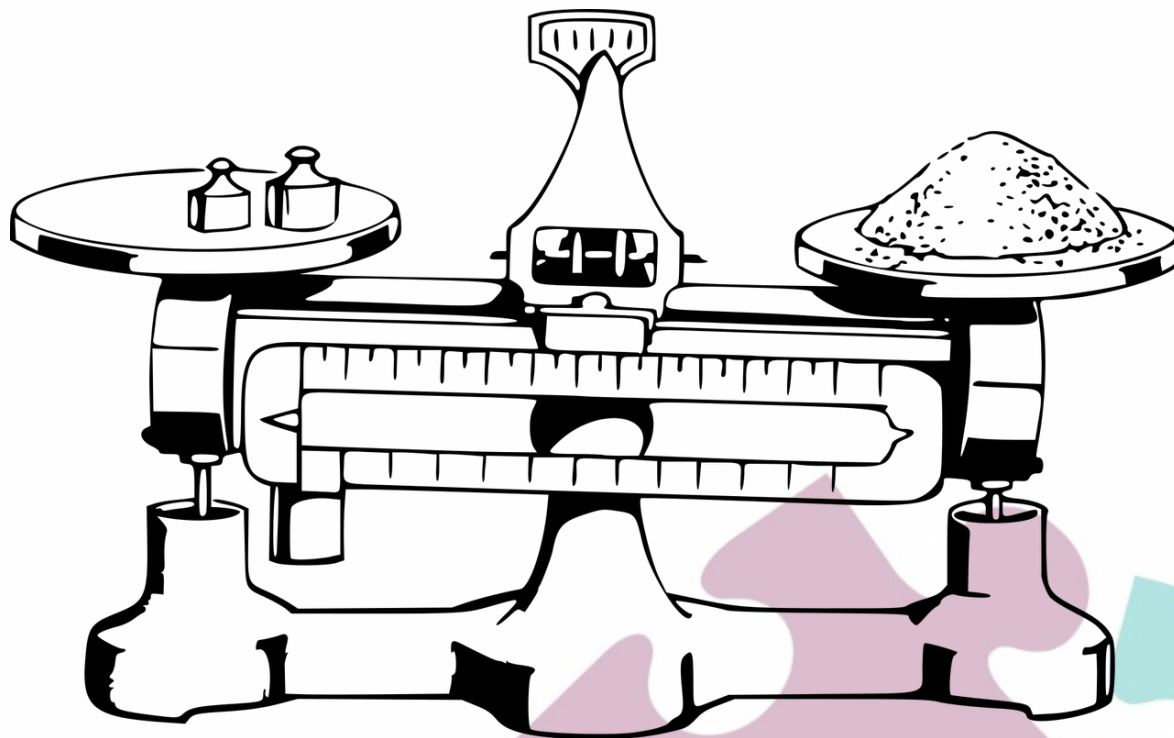


An illustration of a hospital scene. In the center, a doctor in a white lab coat and blue face mask holds up a chest X-ray. To the right, another doctor in a white lab coat and white face mask holds up a skull X-ray. On the left, a nurse in blue scrubs and a white face mask stands by a patient lying in a hospital bed. The patient is wearing a blue cap and has a stethoscope around their neck. In the background, there is a sink with a faucet and a bottle of hand sanitizer. A window is visible on the left side of the room. The overall color palette is dominated by blues and whites.

# SOME USEFUL TOOLS

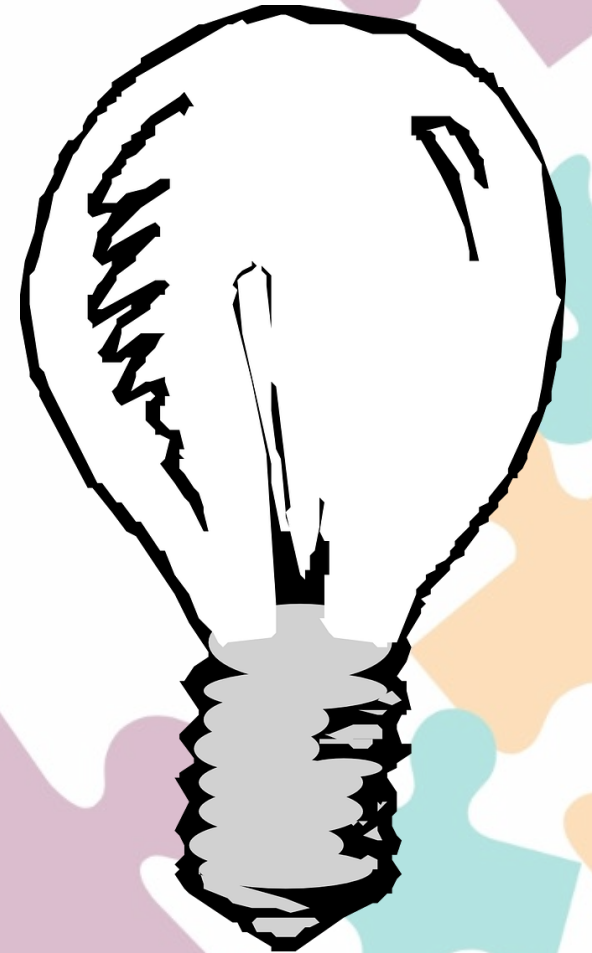
# THE RESOURCE EQUATION

**resources – requirements = shortfall/surplus**



# METHODIC RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

- Personnel (paid & volunteer)
- Expertise
- Learning/Upskilling opportunities
- Recoverable items
- Expendable items
- Finances
- Space
- Partners\* (discuss more later)
- Overlaps or areas for sharing resources



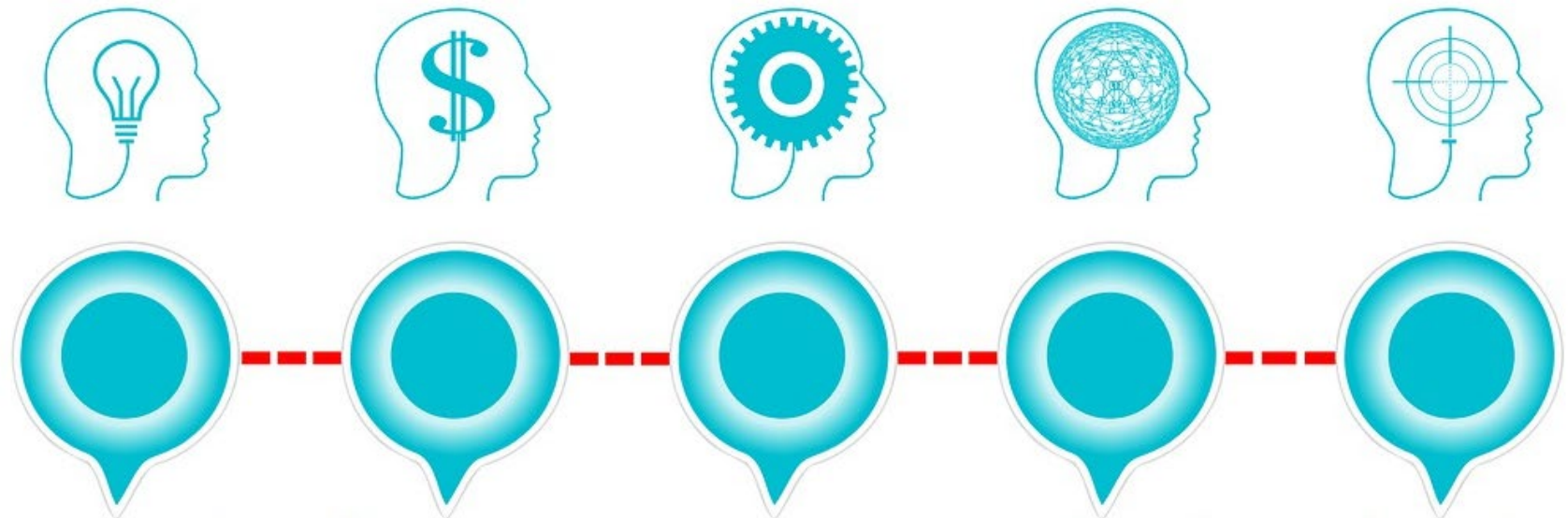
# PARTNERSHIPS & RESOURCE EXCHANGE

- Identify a potential partner organization or group
- Assess overlapping interests & potential benefits
  - What can we give them?
  - What can they give us?
- Reaching out—make your pitch!
- MoUs, contracts, and designating roles/responsibilities
- Frequent, clear communication
- MEAL (monitoring, evaluation, accountability, & learning)



# PLANNING BACKWARDS

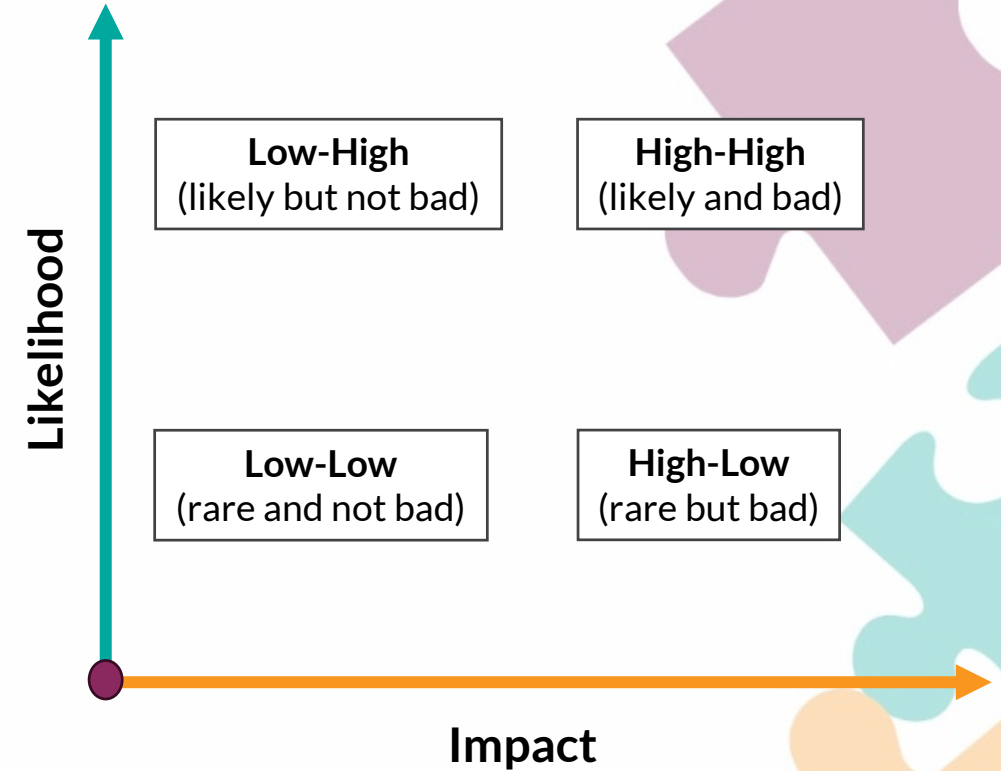
- Identify deadlines & implementation points
- Work back from those points to plan milestones and set timelines
  - Leave flex time whenever possible...
  - Don't forget lunch (ie: time for staff to take care of themselves)





# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Mission, vision, JEDI, ethics
- Long-term goals, and impact triage
  - High Likelihood + High Impact events
  - High Likelihood + Low Impact
  - Low Likelihood + High Impact
- “Activation Energy” for getting a project started vs long-term payoff



\*Note: This is laid out as a hazard matrix; events mapped in this way don't have to be bad/hazardous. This could also map out good impacts (like receiving grant funding, for example).



# SCENARIOS & APPLICATION

# RECRUITMENT



# RECRUITMENT SCENARIO

By September of this year, you need to add to your facility's staff:

2 new MAs

1 CHW

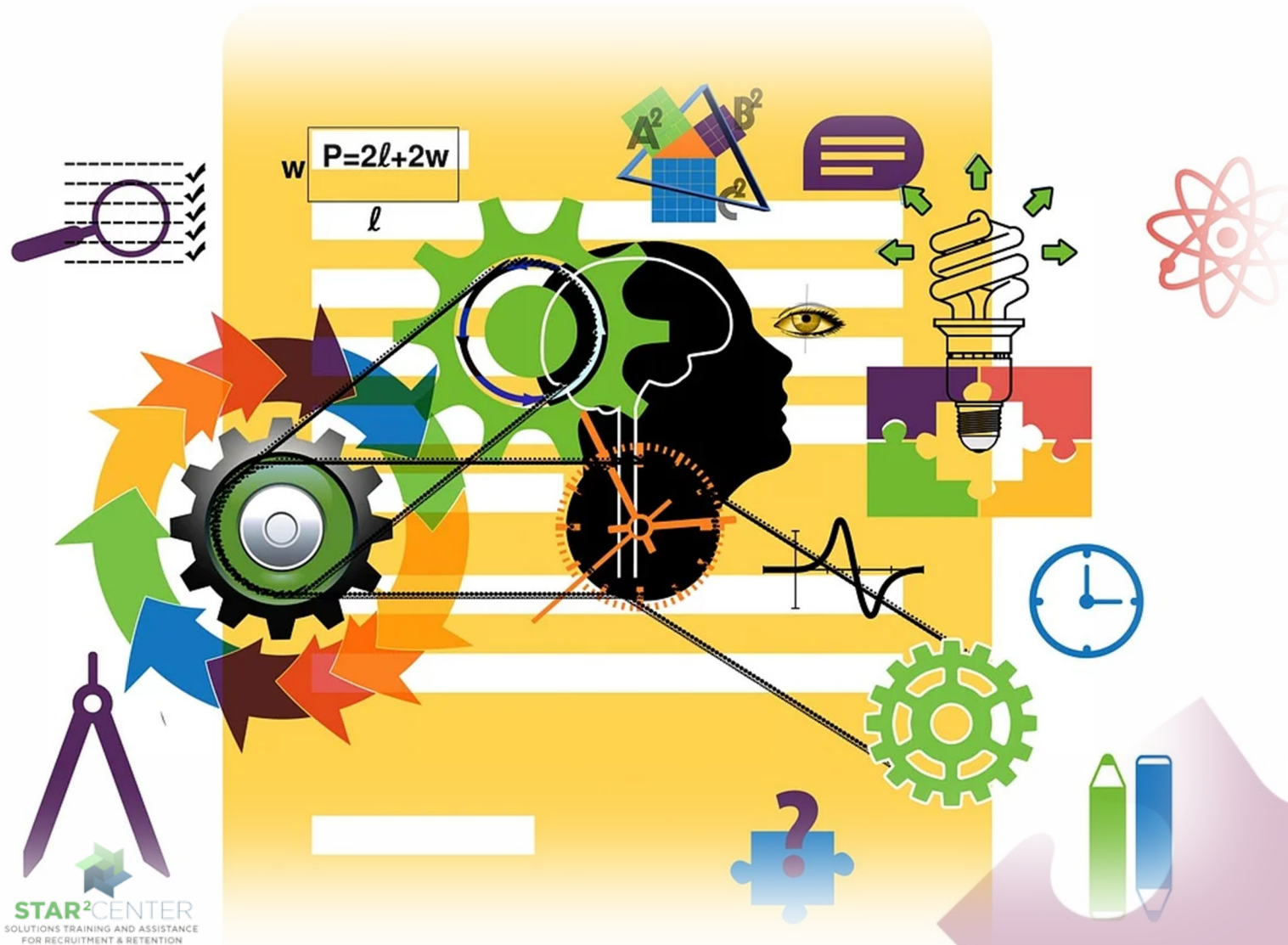
1 nurse

1 provider

You have budget to advertise in one paid outlet.

You can bring in any other staff in the CHC for a total of up to 10 staff hours to support your group's work.

# TRAINING & STAFF DEVELOPMENT



# TRAINING & STAFF DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

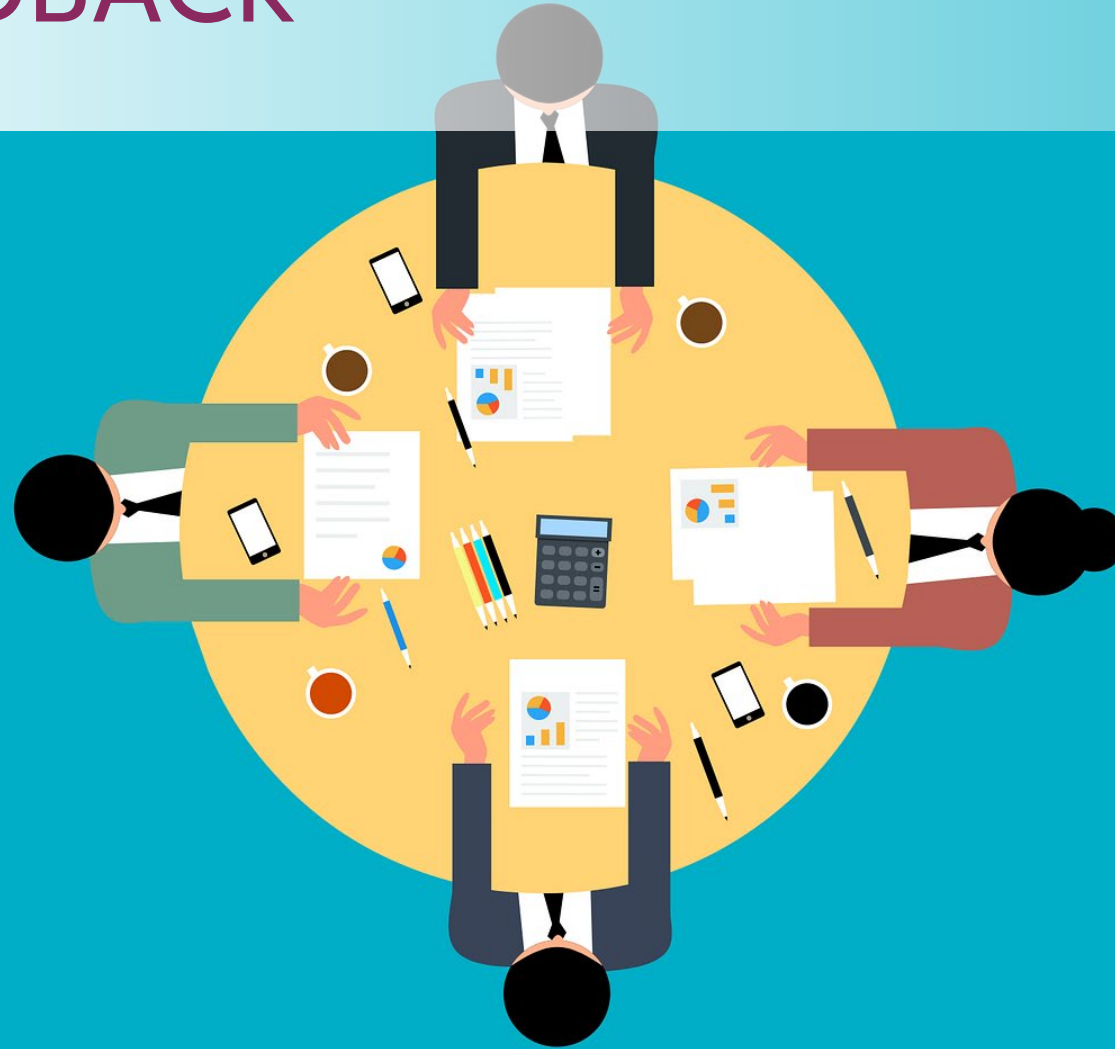
You need more MAs!

Your CHC is building an MA training program, but you only have budget to add up to 1.0 FTE to support the program.

Other things: You already work with a local state college to take LPN and RN students on clinical rotation, and the college allows your clinical staff to join their BLS/CPR recert course each year.

You also have a recently retired nurse practitioner who used to be on staff that has stated they are interested in volunteering for a couple hours each week.

# STAFF FEEDBACK



# STAFF FEEDBACK SCENARIO

Oh no! Your leadership has tasked *your* group with figuring out a plan to collect staff feedback to understand how you can better support your workforce, reduce turnover, and improve recruitment.

What will you do???



THANK YOU!



**2024 WORKFORCE SYMPOSIUM**

# **Pay Equity: Developing a Framework for Health Centers**

**Dr. Michelle Fernández Gabilondo (ACU STAR<sup>2</sup> Center)**

**Tuesday, April 30, 2024**



# YOUR SPEAKER

---



**Dr. Michelle Fernández Gabilondo, DSW, MSW**

*(she/her(s)/ella)*

**Director of Workforce Development**

[mfernandez@clinicians.org](mailto:mfernandez@clinicians.org)

# LEARNING OBJECTIVES



- Understand the essential role pay equity plays in employee well-being and retention
- Examine inequities in pay structures and strategies to mitigate these inequities
- Identify strategies to support pay equity in the workplace
- Review the process of conducting a pay equity audit

# CORE COMPONENTS

Data-Informed  
Workforce Plan

Equitable &  
Effective  
Compensation  
Structure

Positive Culture  
Focused on  
Engagement

Tested  
Recruitment &  
Retention  
Strategies

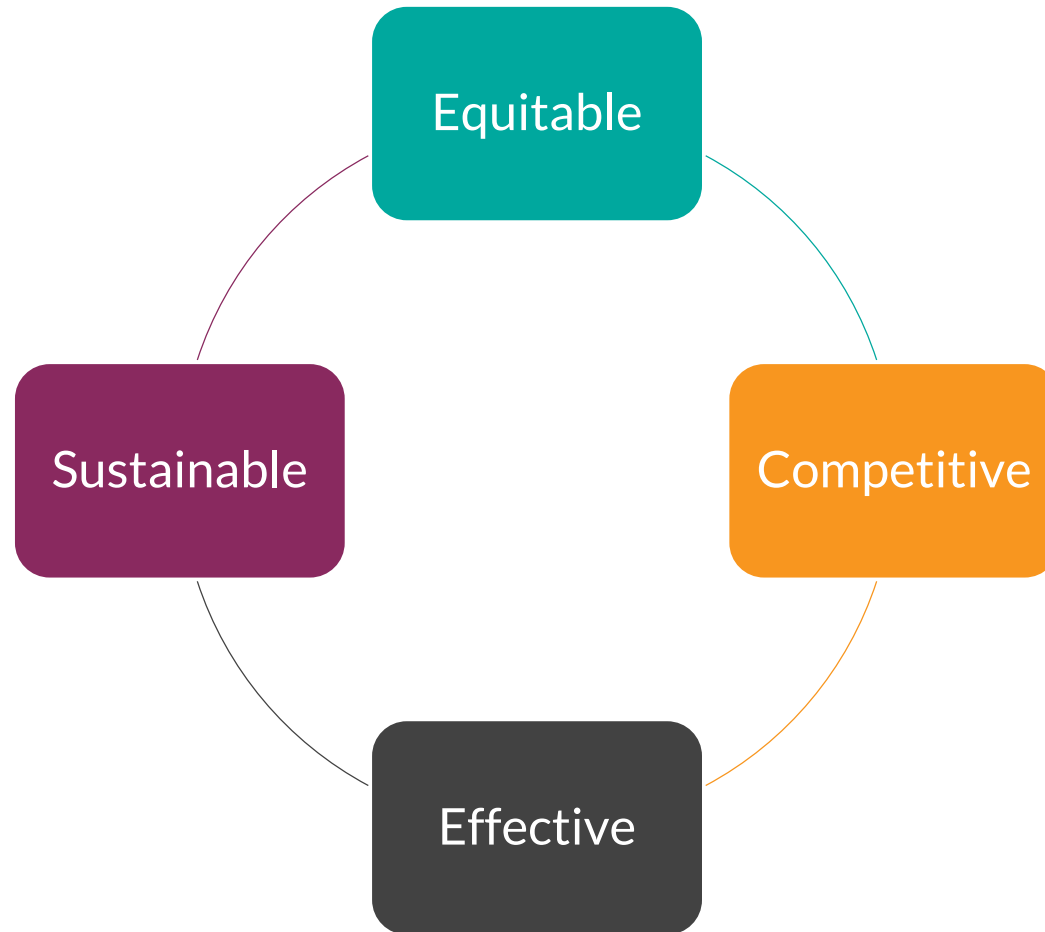
Health  
Professions  
Training Program

Chief Workforce  
Officer

High-Functioning  
Managers

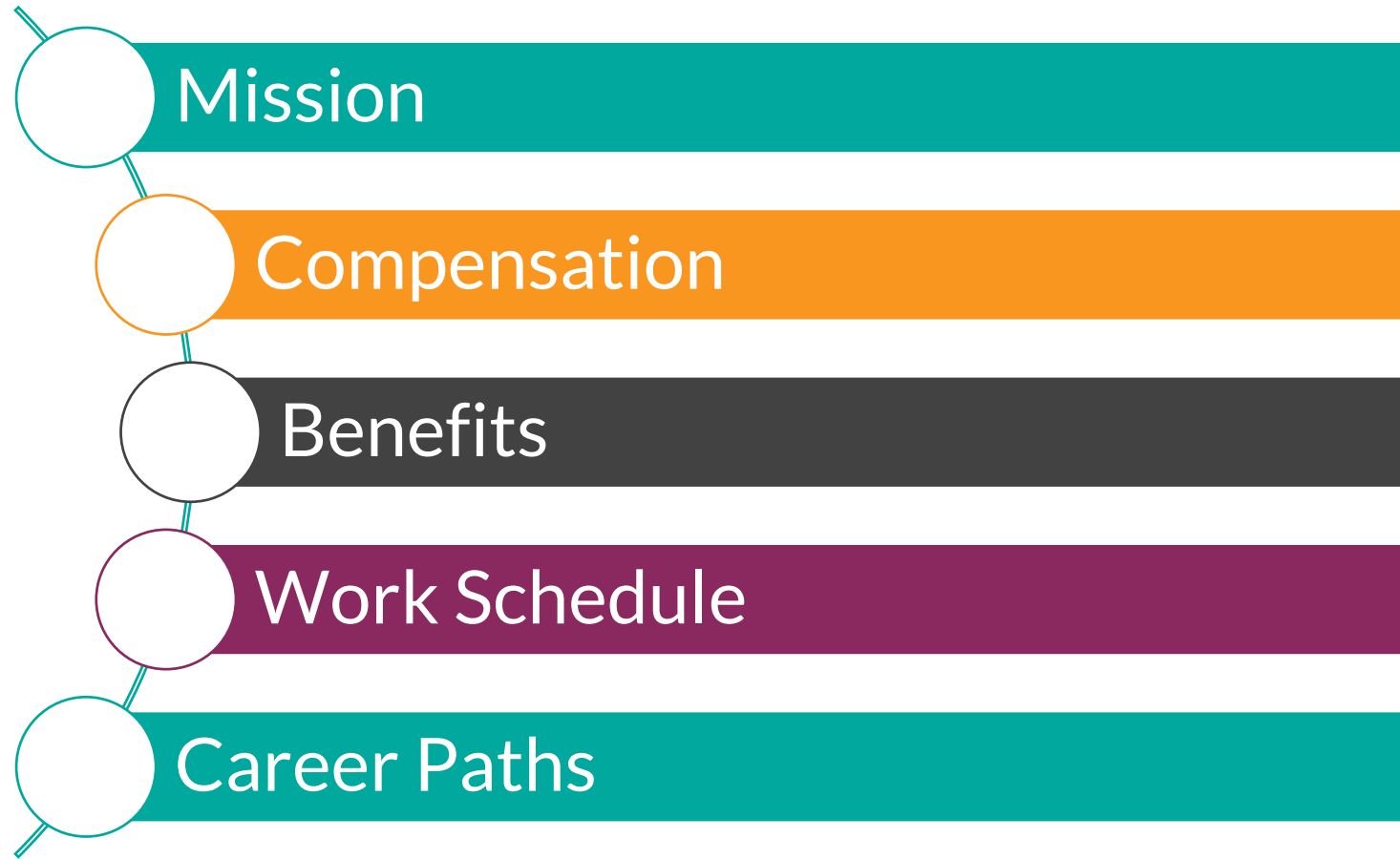
Policies that  
Support Diversity  
& Cultural Respect

# FOCUS ON COMPENSATION



**Equitable** and **effective** compensation structure defines a **sustainable** approach to total compensation that is **competitive** and attractive to potential and current staff and maintains fairness.

# RETENTION PLANNING & COMPENSATION



# TOTAL COMPENSATION PACKAGE

- Salary
- Bonuses
- Benefits
- Professional Development
- Career Pathways
- Promotions
- Culture
- Financial Wellness





menti.com

1468 3749

How do you define  
compensation  
equity?



menti.com

1468 3749

Where is your  
organization when  
it comes to pay  
equity?



# WAGE STAGNATION

From 1979 to 2020, salaries grew by 17.5%.

In contrast, productivity grew by 61.8%.

- Juhohn Lee, CNBC, [Why American Wages haven't Grown Despite Increases in Productivity](#)



# WHAT IS PAY EQUITY?

## Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value



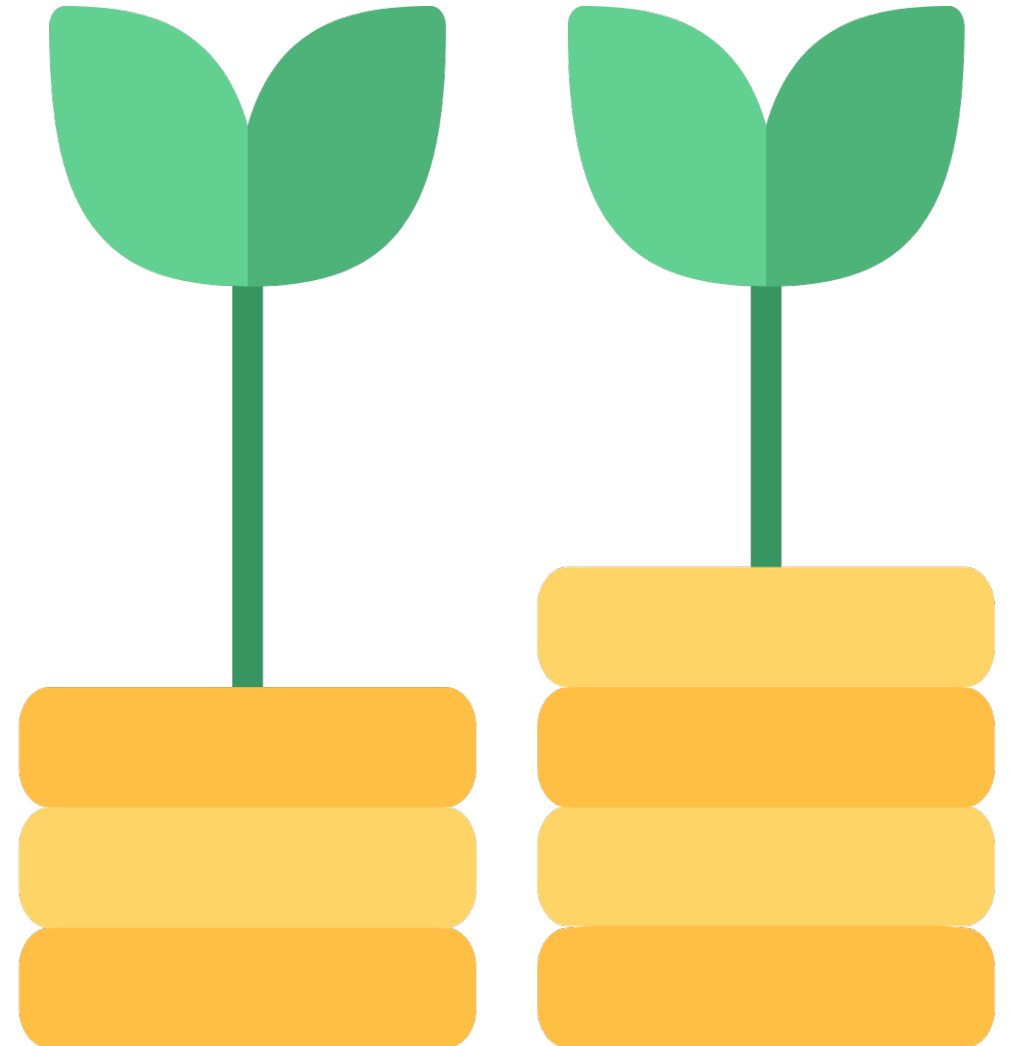
# COMPENSATION EQUITY

***“...workers essential to social functioning and safety are among the least respected and lowest paid. In the health sector, all workers are essential, but not all workers are treated—or paid—equally...The health care sector may be reaching a point at which it can no longer ignore how workers are treated.”***

- Nicole Hallett, JD, AMA Journal of Ethics, [Wage Theft and Worker Exploitation in Health Care](#)

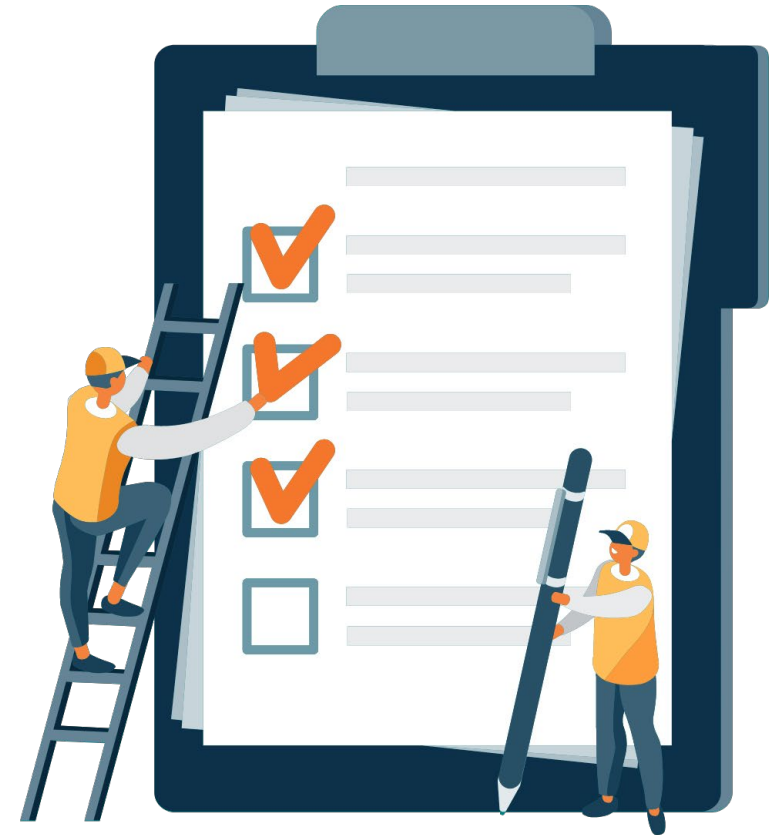
# PAY EQUITY STRATEGIES

- Conduct regular pay audits
  - Identify pay gaps
- Prioritize salary adjustments
- Practice pay transparency
- Develop a compensation philosophy and policies
- Develop an employee-focused organizational pay culture



# ELIMINATE PAY INEQUITIES

- Regularly communicate with staff about compensation
  - Train managers to talk about compensation with their direct reports
- Stop using salary history
- Create equitable, inclusive, and fair salary ranges
  - Post in job announcements
  - Stick to it!
- Understand the importance of pay equity and transparency
  - Ensure leadership buy-in!
- Assess current market rates
- Conduct a thorough analysis of current pay policies



# COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY

- Formal written statement (similar to a mission statement)
- Serves as the foundation for an organization's compensation policies and practices
- Helps to determine pay structures
- Guides the planning and execution of a pay equity audit
- Highlights organizational commitment to its workforce and correcting pay disparities
- Focuses on pay, benefits, and other factors that contribute to the total compensation package
- Should involve all staff and be made available to the entire organization

*"Transparency: We openly share our approach and all salaries to create trust, hold ourselves accountable, and serve as a resource for the industry. Simplicity: We aim to maintain an easy-to-understand formula that allows anyone to easily see how we arrive at any individual salary. Fairness: We ensure that those with the same role and responsibilities who are at the same experience level are paid equitably. Generosity: We pay above market to attract the team we need, thrive as individuals, and avoid exceptions and inequity resulting from negotiation."*

*– Caryn Hubbard, Buffer, [How We Decide What To Pay Our Team: Our Salary Formula and Compensation Philosophy](#)*



menti.com

1468 3749

Does your  
organization have a  
compensation  
philosophy?



# TALKING TO STAFF ABOUT COMPENSATION

- Assume staff already talk to each other (federally protected in most cases)
- Be prepared to explain:
  - Policies and procedures
  - Salary ranges and reasoning
  - Deciding factors for bonuses and raises
    - Bonuses should be for **ALL** staff regardless of role
  - Benefits – show value
- Be open to concerns, critiques, feedback, and different staff needs
- Brainstorm flexible, adaptable benefits and career paths



# COMPENSATION, JOB ANNOUNCEMENTS, & INTERVIEWS

- Include salary ranges in job postings
  - Required in several states
- Discuss compensation right away
  - First interview
    - Ensure pay expectations between candidate and health center align
    - Explain compensation philosophy
- Discuss benefits
- Take a JEDI lens
  - Understand the history of pay inequity and marginalized populations
- Speak to your health center's commitment to pay equity



# COMPENSATION & ONBOARDING

- Make compensation a conversation priority
- Explain benefits & **educate staff on how to maximize them**
- Conduct stay interviews
  - Discuss salary
- Discuss career paths and ladders
- Ensure new hire understands compensation policies and procedures



# FINANCIAL WELLNESS

- Provide **financial literacy classes**
- Host speakers and training opportunities
- Offer solutions to ease your employee's financial stress
- Hold annual workshops for retirement planning help and setting long-term financial goals
- Pay employees a **thriving** wage



# COST OF LIVING

Salaries are **NOT** keeping up with the cost of living for many workers.

- In 2022, lowest earners spent an average of \$5,090 on food, representing 31% of their income.
- In contrast, highest earners spent an average of \$15,713 on food, representing 8% of their income.
- Cost of living varies by state (important to understand the cost of living in your state)
  - Hawaii is the most expensive with a total average annual expenditure (for essential expenses) of \$55,491, leaving about \$5,929 of annual disposable income
- As of February 2024, average home-sale price was \$385,000
  - In 22 states you need at least a six-figure income to buy a home
- The average rent for a 899 sq. ft. apartment is \$1713

*Keep in mind this is an average. Individuals and family most likely pay more and where you live can create significant cost differences. These figures only represent essential needs. It does not account for medical debt, student loan debt, college expenses, unforeseen emergencies, or any other expenses not deemed “essential.”*

# WHAT IS A THRIVING WAGE?

---

*A thriving wage goes beyond a living wage. While a living wage focuses on necessities, a thriving wage accounts for necessities, disposable income, and savings. This may mean providing salaries that are 50% or more above an area's living wage estimate*

*- Mala Nagarajan, Vega Mala Consulting, [How do we quantify a thriving wage?](#) (as cited in the [STAR<sup>2</sup> Center Pay Equity White Paper](#))*

# FOCUS ON BENEFITS



Speak with the workforce about what they need/want!



# FOCUS ON BENEFITS



- Does your healthcare plan include transgender care?
- Does your leave include maternal and paternal leave? Is it paid?
- Is holiday leave flexible and does it include people of different backgrounds and belief systems?
- Do you offer mentorship programs? If so, is it specific to BIPOC and other underrepresented/diverse groups?
- Are training programs offering students what they need?
- Does your leave policy define family broadly? (ex: bereavement leave)
- How much emphasis is put on continuing education and career ladders? Are you looking at it from a DEI lens?
- Do your benefits take into account parents (especially single parents)?
- How important is work-life balance in your benefits package?

# PAY EQUITY AUDIT

1. Secure leadership buy-in
2. Develop a compensation philosophy
3. Identify goals, outcomes, timelines, and resources
4. Understand the legal context of pay equity
5. Research internal compensation policies and practices
6. Gather data
7. Run an analysis to identify pay discrepancies
8. Interpret data
9. Communicate findings and propose action steps
10. Act and implement remediation practices
11. Continue to test and monitor



# INVEST TO AVOID TURNOVER

## Turnover is **EXPENSIVE!**

\*Calculate your health center's turnover costs by using the [STAR<sup>2</sup> Center Financial Assessment for Provider Turnover Tool](#)



As leaders, ask yourselves:

- What's the actual cost of turnover?
- What's the cost of a provider vacancy?
- How much does it cost to recruit?
- How much money is your organization losing to these workforce issues?
- How can you better invest money to retain staff and minimize losses?

*"Pay equity touches on every aspect of the acronym [JEDI]; as we work towards pay equity we are doing justice by undoing systemic marginalization of those people who have been and continue to be undercompensated at work. The "e" is in the statement itself—we are creating a more equitable organization by examining pay structures; we are increasing diversity by showing we value everyone's work and contributions; and we are creating inclusive spaces that demonstrate our organizational values."*

---

*- Helen Rhea Vernier, ACU, Associate Director of Workforce Development*

# COMPENSATION SCENARIO

## **\$100,000**

- 2 CHWs (both just started at the CHC one year ago as part of a new program; each works full time and makes \$47,000 per year pre-tax)
- 1 HR Staffer (full time; has been with the CHC 3 years and makes \$62,000 per year)
- 4 Front Desk/Admin/Billing staff (3 full time, 1 part time; have been with CHC between 6 months and 12 years; each paid \$22/hr, which is \$45,760/yr)
- 1 CHRO (full time, 10 years at CHC, makes \$92,000 per year)
- 1 CEO (full time, 3 years in role, makes \$125,000/yr)
- 1 Medical Director (full time, 10 years at CHC, makes \$190,000/yr)
- 2 PAs (full time, 1 and 4 years at CHC. 1 year newbie makes \$112,000; 4 year makes \$107,000)
- 3 RNs (full time, 2, 5, and 15 years at CHC. 2 year makes \$65,000; 5-year makes \$55,000; 15-year makes \$57,000)
- 2 MAs (both have been with the CHC for 8 years and are full-time with optional OT at \$18 per hour or \$37,440/yr excl OT pay)
- 1 Custodian/Maintenance Staff (20 years at CHC in this role; currently full time at \$45,000 per year)
- You also have a volunteer staff of 5, including one licensed clinical social worker who comes in one day per week but is looking to get back into the workforce after being retired for 2 years

\*Assume no one has received a raise since 2018, but there were bonuses provided in 2020 and 2021 during the Pandemic ranging from \$2000 to \$15,000 depending on staff member

# STAR<sup>2</sup> CENTER RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

## Pay Equity Checklist

STAR<sup>2</sup> CENTER  
Health Center Pay Equity Checklist

**WHAT IS PAY EQUITY?**

Pay equity means equal pay for work of equal value. It is important to distinguish pay equity from pay equality, which means equal pay for equal work. Pay equity overlooks the inequities and restrictions marginalized groups face when seeking to access the same professional opportunities as other employees in an organization, who are often times, the most highly compensated individuals. Pay equity bridges that gap by connecting equal pay to work of equal value.

**HOW TO STRIVE FOR PAY EQUITY?**

- Conduct regular and ongoing pay audits
  - Gather employee data
  - Account for pay differentials
    - Questions to consider when assessing pay differentials:
      - Are there clear and written policies that outline decisions for pay differentials? Does staff know and understand this information?
      - Are pay differentials based solely on non-subjective factors? (i.e., experience, education)
      - Does your organization provide pay raises that align with salary increases for new hires?
  - Identify the causes of pay gaps
  - Assess the role, race, gender, age, disability status, etc. play in the identified pay differentials
  - Implement remediation policies and practices
  - Update operational procedures
- Prioritize salary adjustments
  - Provide yearly pay raises - beyond a cost of living adjustment (account for inflation)
  - Provide regular pay bonuses
  - Provide professional promotions that include meaningful pay raises
- Practice pay transparency
  - Develop salary ranges and make them public
  - Discontinue use of salary histories
  - Develop clear compensation policies (e.g., pay raises based on tenure)
- Develop an employee-focused organizational pay culture
  - Provide a thriving wage (beyond a basic living wage) for all staff regardless of career level or education
  - Align pay equity with the organization's mission and values
  - Move away from subjective evaluation-based compensation models to more objective measures (e.g., experience, tenure, location, true cost of living)
  - Speak to staff about their compensation needs
  - Identify pay equity as a fundamental component of justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion (JEDI)
  - Understand the importance of pay equity and transparency in the retention and recruitment of different workforce generations

**IMPLEMENTING PAY EQUITY**

After reviewing the components of the pay equity checklist and selecting key changes to make in your organization, regularly test\* the new strategies, procedures, and/or policies by asking the following questions to ensure there is an effective and successful implementation process.

\*The testing time frame is based on your organizational needs and resources, but it is recommended to evaluate strategies, procedures, and/or policies at the three month, six month, and one year mark. If the strategy is not working, reevaluate, identify ways to improve, and make necessary changes. If the strategy is successful continue evaluating its efficacy.



**RESOURCES & REFERENCES**

- Forbes, [A Push to Fix Pay Equity Has Focused On the Median Pay Gap. A New Report Says Doing So Created an Unfair 'Glass Floor'](#)
- Harvard Business Review, [How to Identify - and Fix - Pay Inequality at Your Company](#)
- Ontario Equal Pay Coalition, [Factsheet 3: The Difference Between Equal Pay and Pay Equity](#)
- Reuters, [How Employers Should Handle Pay Equity Issues in 2021](#)
- Society for Human Resource Management, [SHRM Research Shows Pay Equity Pays Off for Employers](#)
- Society for Human Resource Management, [The Importance of Pay Equity](#)
- Syndio, [2021 Pay Equity Trends What Leaders in Fair Pay Are Doing Differently](#)
- Syndio, [How to Achieve Fair Pay Policies](#)
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, [Facts About Equal Pay and Compensation Discrimination](#)

This report is made available by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a special funding agreement with the non-profit organization. The content is the property of the author(s) and it is not necessary to cite HRSA as the source of the information. For more information, please visit HRSA.gov

  [www.clinicians.org](http://www.clinicians.org) [www.chcworkforce.org](http://www.chcworkforce.org)



Click [here](#) to access the Pay Equity Checklist!

# STAR<sup>2</sup> CENTER RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT

## Pay Equity White Paper





Click [here](#) to access the  
Pay Equity White  
Paper!

**EQUAL PAY FOR WORK OF EQUAL VALUE:**  
*Establishing Pay Equity Principles to Advance  
Workforce Financial Wellness*

**STAR<sup>2</sup> CENTER**  
WHITE PAPER 2023

This project is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$707,964 with 0 percentage financed with non-governmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit HRSA.gov



[www.clinicians.org](http://www.clinicians.org) [www.chcworkforce.org](http://www.chcworkforce.org)

The image shows the cover of a white paper. At the top, there are three photographs: a group of people sitting and talking, two women looking at a tablet, and a person in a wheelchair. Below the photos is an orange banner with the text "EQUAL PAY FOR WORK OF EQUAL VALUE:". Underneath that is the subtitle "Establishing Pay Equity Principles to Advance Workforce Financial Wellness" in a serif font. To the right, the title "STAR<sup>2</sup> CENTER WHITE PAPER 2023" is displayed in a bold, sans-serif font. At the bottom, there is a small disclaimer in a very small font, followed by the ACU and STAR<sup>2</sup> CENTER logos and two website URLs.

# COMPENSATION EQUITY RESOURCES

---

- Buffer – Salary Calculator: <https://buffer.com/salary-calculator/>
- GOBankingRates – This Is the Living Wage You Need in All 50 States: <https://www.gobankingrates.com/money/jobs/living-wage-every-state/>
- MIT – Living Wage Calculator: <https://livingwage.mit.edu/>
- Payscale – How to Ask for a Raise and Get It: <https://www.payscale.com/research-and-insights/how-to-ask-for-a-raise/>
- Vega Mala Consulting – How Do We Quantify a Thriving Wage: <https://www.vegamala.com/how-do-we-quantify-a-thriving-wage/#>