



University of  
Pittsburgh

Policy & Practice

Center for Health Equity  
Graduate School of Public Health

## Influencing Practice

The **Pennsylvania Maternal Mortality Review Committee (MMRC)** reviews de-identified summaries of all pregnancy associated deaths in the commonwealth, regardless of cause of death and including drug-related deaths, homicides, and suicides. The committee determines if the death was related to the pregnancy, identifies contributing factors, determines if the death could have been prevented, and makes recommendations to prevent future deaths.

The **Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI)** is a multi-part effort dedicated to addressing community violence by influencing policy in how hospitals provide services for gun-shot victims and piloting an innovative approach to train returning citizens for construction and health-service jobs.

The **Black COVID-19 Equity Coalition** is comprised of a group of physicians, researchers, epidemiologists, public health and health care practitioners, social scientists, community funders, and government officials concerned about addressing COVID-19 in vulnerable populations. The coalition aims to ensure an equitable response to the coronavirus pandemic, based on socio-economic and culturally relevant data, that produces culturally relevant responses to reduce health inequities and improve health and well-being in general.



Speaker at the CHE "Cultural Sensitivity Symposium", 2018.

## Racism as a Public Health Issue

The charge of the **Pitt Public Health Social Justice Action Committee (SJAC)** is to confront systemic and structural racism at Pitt Public Health and beyond. This committee is developing systemic solutions and actionable recommendations that the school should implement to achieve social justice and racial equity and bring about transformative change.

Drs. Noble Maseru and Dara Mendez testified and contributed to the recommendations preceding the Pittsburgh City Council passing legislation in 2019. This legislation then led to Allegheny County passing a motion to identify **racism a public health crisis** in May 2020.

**CHE Mission** *To understand and ultimately eliminate health inequities in under resourced, vulnerable, and underserved communities and populations, particularly those in Western Pennsylvania. The CHE addresses issues attributed to institutional racism, develops strategic partnerships across sectors and communities, and advances a health equity perspective in all policies that support the public sector's role in achieving health equity for its' citizenry.*



[publichealth.pitt.edu/  
healthequity](http://publichealth.pitt.edu/healthequity)



[healtheq@pitt.edu](mailto:healtheq@pitt.edu)



## Amplifying & Advocating

**Human Rights Working Group:** CHE is a member organization of the Human Rights Working Group, which is an initiative to strengthen working relationships between the University of Pittsburgh and community leaders addressing a variety of human rights concerns in the region. The aim is to amplify human rights on the region's and university's agenda and to raise public consciousness and discourse around human rights.

**Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA):** CHE collaborates in organizing LCLAA's community outreach events, which have a socially emancipatory message. Formed in 1972, LCLAA is a nonprofit, nonpartisan Latino(a) organization to provide Latino trade union members in the United States with a more effective voice within the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), to encourage Latino participation in the democratic process, and to encourage the organization of Latino workers into labor unions.



*Black Environmental Collective meeting, 2018.*

## Environmental Justice

CHE is a member of the **Water Equity Task Force**, created in 2019 to promote a diverse workforce, green jobs, water affordability, clean and safe water, infrastructure, and address climate change.

CHE is a member of the **Black Environmental Collective** which focuses on environmental justice, the social and built environment, and impacts on Black communities in Southwestern Pennsylvania.



*"Civil Society Response to Latino Immigrant Issues" panel event at GSPH, 2019.*

*Panelists speaking at the "Human Rights in Pittsburgh and the World" event, 2018.*

