

Northwest Health FOUNDATION

February 12, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

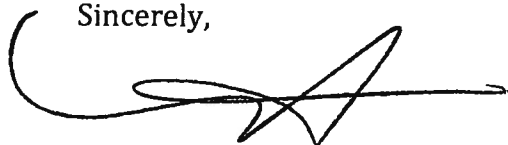
The mission of the Northwest Health Foundation is to advance, support, and promote the health of the people of Oregon and southwest Washington. In order to truly fulfill our mission, we promote and advocate for certain societal conditions, including our conviction that deliberate strategies are required in order to effectively overcome health inequities.

Designing deliberate strategies to promote health equity requires a comprehensive understanding of the needs and assets of Oregon's communities, especially fast-growing populations in communities of color, and immigrant and refugee communities. It is clear, however, that data collection and disaggregation standards used by state agencies are often inconsistent and insufficient to adequately assess the status and needs of these communities. Inadequate standards make it difficult to analyze how race, ethnicity, and language impact individual and community health, making services more expensive and less effective for everyone and significantly impacting communities experiencing disparities.

The Northwest Health Foundation believes that Oregon needs uniform standards for collection and disaggregation of all health and human services-related data on race, ethnicity and preferred language. A standardized methodology will assist in the promotion of policies that address disparities among racial and ethnic groups. Such a methodology also allows for the demonstration of progress toward reductions in racial and ethnic disparities by increasing transparency in reporting indicators by race and ethnicity. Finally, it promotes consistency with federal reporting expectations and facilitates comparison of Oregon's progress to address racial and ethnic disparities with national trends.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,



Nichole June Maher
President
Northwest Health Foundation