

Trinity County Equity Assessment update

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Trinity County equity assessment team

- **Trinity County Public Health Branch**

- Marcie Jo Cudziol, RN, PHN, MPA
- Kirsten Ford

- **Data Strategy Consulting**

- Sarah Marikos, MPH
- Yvonne Ezenwa, MPH
- Jenny Mercado, MPH
- Lucinda Hammond, MSPH



Background and Rationale

- Equity was identified as a priority for the Trinity County Public Health Branch (TCPHB) Strategic Plan created in early 2019
- Through a “Health in All Policies” approach TCPHB explored how environments, historical trauma, and social determinants of health lead to inequitable outcomes
- Trinity County has some of the worst health outcomes in the state. If we want better health and well-being for the residents of Trinity County we must address the factors driving the inequities that result in poor health outcomes
- With this assessment and the General Plan update, we have a tremendous opportunity to bring innovation to complex equity issues and operationalize “Health in All Policies”



Trinity County equity assessment goals

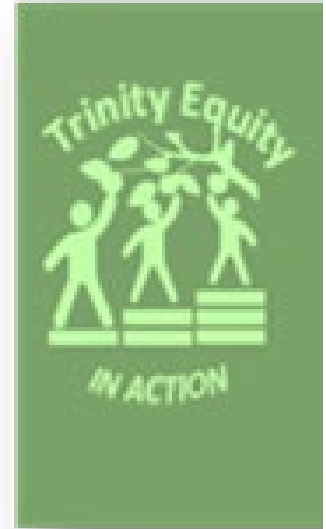
1. Identify key drivers of health inequities in Trinity County
2. Identify potential strategies to address health inequity in Trinity County
3. Inform equity strategic plan



A health equity definition

“Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.”

Source: Braveman P, Arkin E, Orleans T, Proctor D, and Plough A. *What Is Health Equity? And What Difference Does a Definition Make?* Princeton, NJ: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2017.



Methods



Multiple sources of data and information from many levels, sectors, and perspectives were obtained

- **County and state perspectives**

- Obtained data and information from local and state data systems, across sectors
 - Quantitative data from more than 15 data sources

- **Community and organizational perspectives**

- Obtained data and information from Trinity County leadership, service providers across the county, and other systems and sectors
 - Focus groups
 - Key informant interviews

- **Residents**

- Community survey



The community and organizational perspectives were obtained through focus groups and interviews.

The goal of this qualitative strategy was to:

1. Expand upon and provide contextual reference to quantitative findings
2. Explore core social, environmental, and institutional foundations of inequities
3. Reflect on diverse manifestations of inequity for residents and people who provide key services
4. Identify promising strategies to reduce inequities and sustainable models of change
5. Inform planning efforts to improve health outcomes and build more equitable systems of care

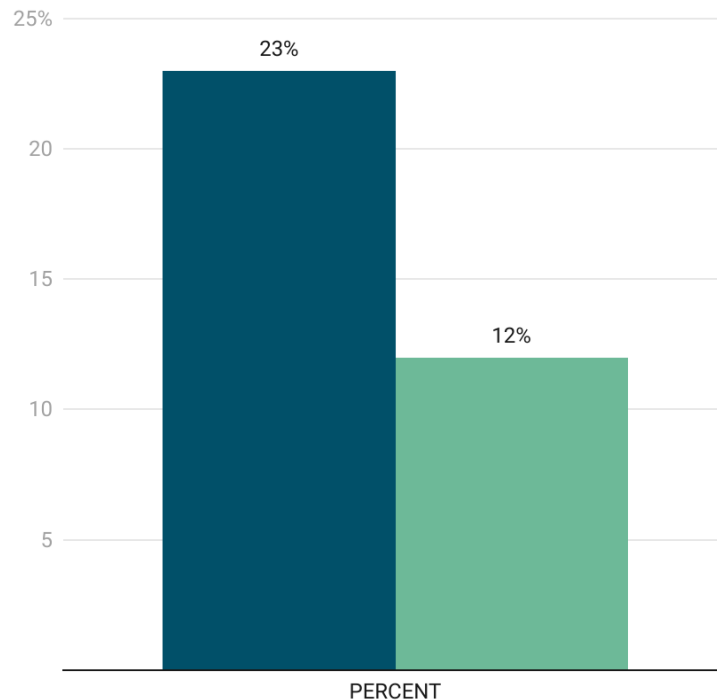
Results

Many Trinity County residents struggle economically

Trinity County residents are twice as likely to live below the federal poverty level than residents statewide

Percent of the population below the federal poverty level

■ TRINITY COUNTY ■ CALIFORNIA

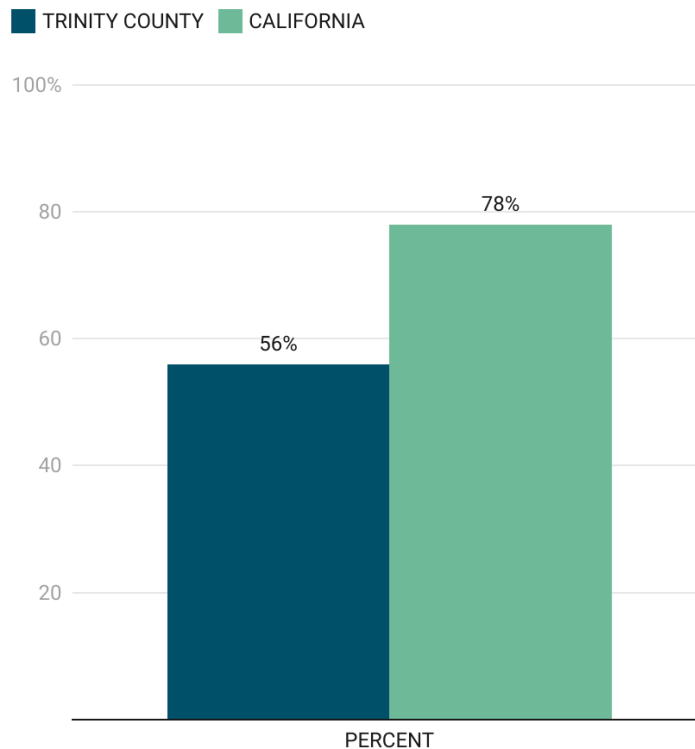


Source: American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates, Table S1701 • Created with Datawrapper

Many Trinity County residents struggle economically

There is a lower workforce participation rate in Trinity County (56%) compared to statewide (78%)

Workforce participation rate among residents 20 to 64 years old



Source: American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates • Created with Datawrapper

There is a lower rate of post- secondary education

Trinity adults* are less likely to have a **Bachelor's degree** or higher (19%) compared to residents statewide (35%).

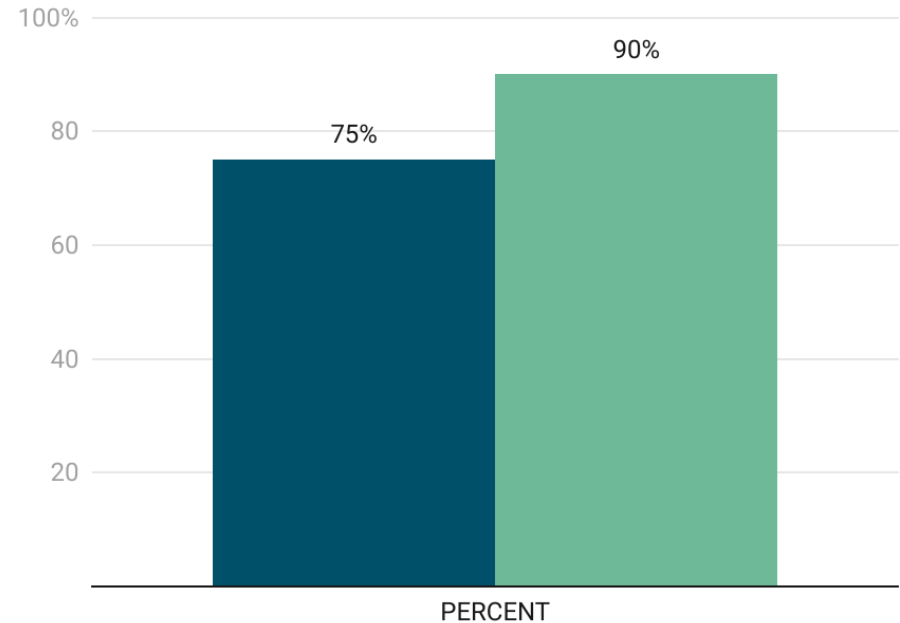
**25 years and older*

There are a
variety of
challenging living
conditions in
Trinity County

Trinity County households are less likely to have broadband internet at home than households statewide

Percent of households with broadband internet access

■ TRINITY COUNTY ■ CALIFORNIA

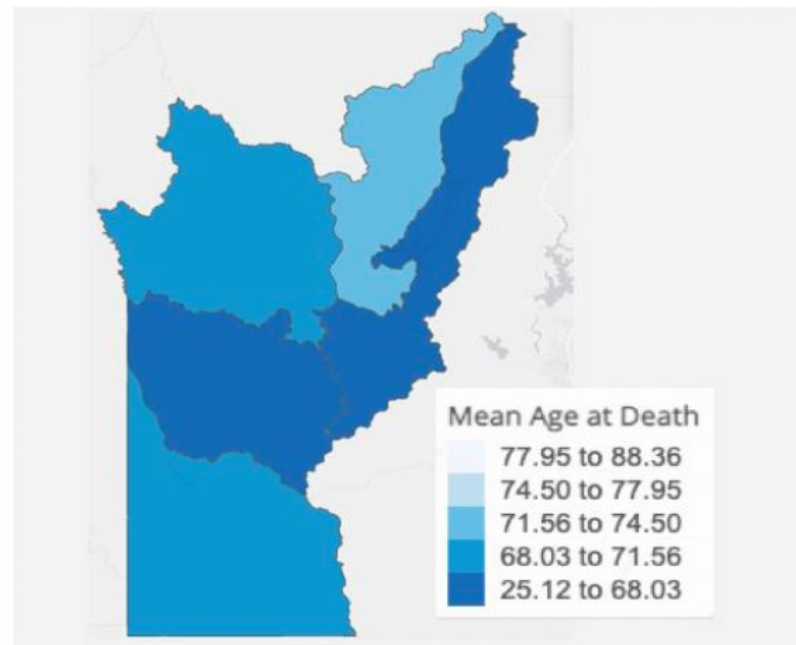


Source: American Community Survey, 2021 5-Year Estimates, Table B28003 • Created with Datawrapper

Inequities contribute to a shorter lifespan in Trinity County

The mean age at death varies by community

Figure 7. Mean age at death in years by census tract



Source: California Community Burden of Disease Engine

Inequities
contribute to
highest rate of
premature death
in the state

Trinity County has more than twice the rate of premature death than California

Age-adjusted rate of premature death (Years of Life Lost before Age 75) per 10,000



Source: California Community Burden of Disease Engine, 2018-2022 • Created with Datawrapper



Community | *What does equity mean to them?*

Definition of equity

- “Meeting people where they are”
- Ensuring that people have access to the things (knowledge, opportunities) to lead healthy and productive lives and to achieve their full potential
- Equity is everyone has the same tools and resources they need to access *care*

“We don’t always have the best ideas about what people’s needs are – we should ask them”



Community | *What are the greatest barriers to equity?*

- Physical landscape - rural, frontier, dispersed, remote
- Transportation and lack of access to essential resources and services
- Technology deficits - both infrastructural limitations
- Poverty and economic instability; generational poverty; learned helplessness; lack of viable economic opportunities
- Policies at the state and local level; policies constantly changing, lack of consumer education on navigating healthcare policies, policies impacting ability to effectively deliver services
- Limited resources across several social service domains (housing, reproductive and sexual health, mental health)
- Lack of staff and human resources, lack of providers, consistent 'brain drain'
- Anti-government sentiments, distrust, culture of independence
- Normalization of unhealthy behaviors, public apathy



Community | *How do residents experience inequity in their personal lives?*

- 2 out of 3 survey respondents reported experiencing inequities
- 4 in 10 respondents reported experiencing "lack of access" in their personal or professional life
- 1 in 4 reported experiencing "bias/discrimination"



Community | *Where have efforts have fallen short?*

- Failing to invest the necessary time and effort to earn the community's trust
- Limited engagement and consensus building with micro-communities
 - Micro-communities have their own autonomy and leadership
- Poorly addressing the root causes of inequity
- Lack of funding, human resources, and data



Community | *What could have the greatest impact on equity?*

- Partnerships, working across sectors
- Improving accessibility of services (particularly to low and middle-income)
 - Mobile and field-based services
- Improving technological access and infrastructure
- Increasing availability of substance use and mental health services
- Expanding youth workforce development programs
- Developing and maintaining trust and robust communication with micro-communities



Community Voices

“Where you are geographically determines what you will receive”

“Lack of economic resources for self-direction”

“Food stamps do not cover much when you have to shop at the most expensive grocery store and don’t have access to others”

“Each micro-community has its own culture and needs...much of the work has to be around how to bring providers and other resources to the area, which means Trinity being an area that has housing, quality education, and other characteristics to offer those who may choose to live and/or stay in our county”

“Youth have few incentives to stay in county, must move to get an education, good job or have a baby.”



Discussion | Predominant Themes

- Impact begins with authentic, personalized engagement
- Predominant barriers are rooted in structural and environmental challenges
- Poverty is both a symptom and driver
- Early and school-based investments create dual opportunity
- Specialized talent is expensive but its absence is costlier
- Social safety nets still leave many exposed
- Housing is a fundamental component of stability
- Identity may be leveraged to combat distrust



Discussion | Strategies and recommendations

- Build sustainable partnerships
- Expand broadband access
- Increase community based services
- Support affordable housing initiatives
- Expand workforce investments
- Pool resources for broader impact

Next steps



Where do we go from here?

- Develop the Equity Plan
 - Re-engage constituents; develop steering committee
 - Establish core objectives and priorities
 - Outline specific activities, timelines, and resource requirements to address the identified health equity issues



Thank you

To read the report and learn more, visit:

www.trinity-equity.com



TrinityEquity@trinitycounty.org



TDD: (530) 623-1233
Toll Free: 1(800) 851-5658