



NEWS RELEASE

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Reframing Health: Health Equity Network of the Americas Responds to PAHO Commission's Recommendations for Health Equity

[Los Angeles, CA, 24 September 2018]. Although improvements in health have been made over the years, regions across the Americas continues to suffer from wide health and longevity gaps between the rich and the poor, the educated and uneducated, those at-risk of violence and those without risk violence.

Today, we announce two efforts addressing these gaps: the launch of the Health Equity Network of the Americas (HENA) coinciding with the recommendations of the PAHO Commission on Equity and Health Inequalities in the Americas'. Titled '*Just Societies: Health Equity and Dignified Lives*', this Executive Summary are recommendations that nations and communities must take to ensure health equity and wellbeing for all populations.

The Commission: The Commission's 12 recommendations, reported today at the 56th Directing Council; 70th Session of the Regional Committee of the World Health Organization for the Americas, recommends steps the government can take to reach better health equity.

Professor Sir Michael Marmot, Commission Chair, states: "*better health and greater health equity will only happen when the conditions for all people to achieve their highest possible level of health and to lead dignified lives is achieved.*"

Recommendations of the PAHO Commission's '*Just Societies*' describes specific actions to be taken in these areas:

1. Achieving equity in political, social, cultural and economic structures;
2. Protecting the natural environment, mitigating climate change, and respecting relationships to land;
3. Recognizing and reversing the health equity impacts of ongoing colonialism and structural racism;
4. Promoting equity from the start – early life and education
5. Making decent work available
6. Promoting dignified life at older ages

7. Ensuring income and social protection
8. Reducing violence for health equity
9. Improving the environment and improving housing conditions
10. Implementing equitable health systems
11. Securing government arrangements that support health equity
12. Fulfilling and protecting human rights

The detailed recommendations can be found at www.healthequityamericas.org.

HENA:

HENA comprises health equity experts from 26 countries that represent non-governmental organizations, civil society, academia and government agencies. HENA focuses its energy on research, policy, and advocacy work, sharing knowledge and promoting policy that encourage political, economic and social equality for men and women, particularly in regions of significant health inequity.

“As we launch HENA into the spotlight, these recommendations from The Commission are an important alignment with our mission to promote knowledge sharing and intersectoral action for health equity and human rights as priority issues in the Americas,” says Michael A. Rodriguez, MD, MPH, founding director of HENA. “We are proud to serve as a collaborator to help implement these recommendations through HENA members coming from civil society, academia and government agencies in the region.”

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Notes to Editor

1. The PAHO Commission was established by PAHO in 2016 to explore the drivers of health inequities and inequalities across the region and make concrete proposals for action. Professor Sir Michael Marmot chairs the commission that comprises 11 other members and secretariats at UCL and PAHO.
2. HENA was established at the November 2017 Summit on Health Equity in the Americas in Cuernavaca, Mexico when Summit participants pledged to Collaborate, Build Power and Take Action to address health disparities across gender, race, ethnicity and other social determinants of health.
3. Both Sir Michael Marmot and Dr. Michael Rodriguez are available for interview. Please contact our press contact person below.
4. Press kit is available at HealthEquityAmericas.org. Kits include: backgrounders (FAQs, Fact Sheets), spokespersons also available for interview; other data on health equity; photo images for Rodriguez and Marmot

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