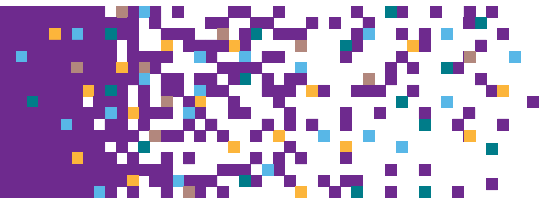# How can we understand equity in digital health?

What is Digital Health Equity?

Health equity is fairness in health care and outcomes. It means that differences between people (due to race, culture, geography, income, sexual and gender orientation, etc.) should not result in differences in access to health care or other structural barriers to care. Digital health equity means that when health care is accessed or delivered through technology, there should not be any barriers to care, or worse outcomes for some groups or people.

What are social determinants of health and how do they impact health equity?

There are social and economic factors—social determinants of health—that can have a profound impact on health equity. These include:

Income and social status

Employment

Education

Childhood experiences

Physical environments

Social supports and coping skills

Health behaviours

Access to health services

Biology and genetics

Gender

Culture

Race/racism

What are digital determinants of health?

With virtual health and digital health technologies, there are a number of factors that can impact health equity. These include:

Access to digital health resources (e.g. hardware, internet)

Use of digital resources for healthcare needs

Digital health literacy

Beliefs and values about digital health

Integration of digital resources into community and health infrastructure

What is the Health Equity Impact Assessment-Digital Health Supplement (HEIA-DH)?

The HEIA-DH is a tool to guide the identification of barriers in health equity in a digital health service, program, or intervention. The HEIA-DH enables community members and healthcare partners to come together to discuss social and digital determinants of health as they relate to a specific technology/ service; identify unintended impacts of the technology/service; how to address these impacts; and how we can meaningfully evaluate our progress in increasing equity.

camh
mental health is health