



The Partners for Advancing Health Equity Collaborative hosted the 2022 Summit, *On the Front Lines of Equity & Justice*, December 4–6, 2022. The Summit brought together leaders in health equity and justice to foster collaboration across sectors, and to promote action in advancing health equity in research, practice, and policy. This report provides a synthesis of key takeaways from the breakout session, *Communication, data visualization and storytelling*.

Session Voices



Dr. Alice Feng, Data Visualization Developer, [The Urban Institute](#)



Bob Ortega, Fellow, [Center for Health Journalism](#), Senior Writer, [CNN](#)



Dr. Lillie D. Williamson, Assistant Professor, [Department of Communication Arts, University of Wisconsin-Madison](#)

Key Takeaways

Tell stories using data visualizations. Data visualizations tell a story in addition to presenting facts to keep the attention of consumers of information while enhancing their understanding of the data. From developing the initial sketch to the final graphs, panelists highlighted the ways data visualizations convey impactful narratives and illustrate systemic issues. For example, interactive graphs exemplify the [disparate effects of COVID-19 by race and ethnicity](#), demonstrating how COVID-19 has worsened health and economic racial inequities. As data consumers react to visualizations, storytellers must be mindful of ensuring that health inequity data is presented through impactful and easy to read visuals, and amplified by collaboration with communications personnel.

Ensure data is accurately and honestly represented by abiding by best practices for graphical integrity. Data visualizations must share information in a clear and straightforward manner that enhances audience understanding. Data visualizations are powerful dissemination tools which, when not [thoughtfully designed](#) can mislead and misinform data consumers. Honest data visualizations include simple designs, proportionality in number representations, and clear and detailed labeling of data points. Poorly designed graphs covering [gun deaths](#) and [COVID-19 deaths](#), emphasize the importance of displaying data accurately and in ways that advance our collective understanding of public health issues.

Adapt data visualization approaches to address health inequities. Data visualizers and storytellers must consider their desired message, audience, topic area, and the effects of disseminated data during the design phase. There are many [different ways adapt data visualizations](#) based on topic area. For health inequities, these considerations are critically important as the way data are presented can impact policy decisions and the behaviors of the users of the data.

Share your thoughts!
What did you think of this topic? Would you like to hear more from these speakers? Do you have any resources you would like to share with us? [Email us!](#)

Interested in hearing more? The full recording from this session is available [here](#). For more Partners for Health Equity content including more summit sessions, past webinars, and a resource library, visit the P4HE [website](#).