



Illinois Health and Hospital Association

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Contact: Paris Ervin  
(217) 541-1153  
pervin@team-iha.org

**Best-Selling Author Heather McGhee to Serve as Keynote Speaker for  
IHA's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Health Equity Action Day**

*Virtual Event Set for May 13th to Celebrate Efforts and Assess Progress by Illinois  
Hospitals to Advance Racial Health Equity*

**NAPERVILLE** – The Illinois Health and Hospital Association (IHA) today announced that New York Times best-selling author Heather McGhee will deliver the keynote address, entitled “The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together”, for IHA’s second annual Health Equity Action Day.

“IHA is excited to host Health Equity Action Day and we look forward to sharing how Illinois hospitals are working hard to address long-standing racial health inequities,” said IHA President and CEO A.J. Wilhelmi.

IHA’s Health Equity Action Day is scheduled for Friday, May 13 from 9 – 11:30 a.m. For those interested in attending, registration is available [here](#).

The virtual event is designed to give healthcare leaders and staff new insights and tools to reduce health disparities and improve health outcomes in the Illinois communities that they serve.

In addition to the keynote address, the event will include panel discussions on health disparities, a health equity policy briefing, and an update on the *Racial Equity in Healthcare Progress Report*. The *Progress Report* is a long-term accountability tool used to document the progress Illinois hospitals are making toward achieving equitable healthcare across the state.

“Racism is a serious public health crisis and we must take action to ensure all individuals and communities have access to high quality healthcare. We know lives are depending on it,” Wilhelmi added.

Health Equity Action Day will also feature hospital stories focusing on the four pillars of the *Progress Report*: Our People, Our Patients, Our Organization and Our Community.

“Health Equity Action Day is a great opportunity to celebrate the progress achieved by Illinois hospitals to address systemic inequalities,” said Lisa Harries, IHA’s Assistant Vice President of Health Equity and Policy. “We hope this event fosters collaboration and inspires change that will address the disparities that continue to impact vulnerable communities and populations across Illinois – especially communities of color.”

IHA’s Health Equity Action Day was created as part of the work of IHA’s Committee on Health Disparities, which was formed in the summer of 2020 in response to systemic racism, injustice, and inequality in the U.S. that was underscored by the tragic killing of George Floyd and the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black, Brown and other marginalized groups.

For more information on Health Equity Action Day, click [here](#). For more information about Heather McGhee and her effort to create solutions to inequality, click [here](#).

### **About IHA**

The Illinois Health and Hospital Association, with offices in Chicago, Naperville, Springfield and Washington, D.C., advocates for Illinois’ more than 200 hospitals and nearly 40 health systems as they serve their patients and communities. IHA members provide a broad range of services—not just within their walls, but across the continuum of healthcare and in their communities. Reflecting the diversity of the state, IHA members consist of nonprofit, investor-owned and public hospitals in the following categories: community, safety net, rural, critical access, specialty and teaching hospitals, including academic medical centers. For more information, see [team-iha.org](http://team-iha.org). Like IHA on [Facebook](#). Follow IHA on [Twitter](#).

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