

April 29, 2020

Governor Ned Lamont
Office of the Governor
State of Connecticut
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106
Via email

Dear Governor Lamont,

Again, we want to thank you for the many steps the state has taken to date to address the ongoing pandemic, including the release of some race and ethnicity data in COVID-19 reporting. Today, we write to ask that a COVID-19 data dashboard be established to ensure that accurate and timely information is available to evaluate and respond to health disparities.

Recent reporting nationally and in Connecticut has quantified the disparate impact of the pandemic that many had predicted from its start. A publicly available COVID-19 dashboard, [like those created in 32 states](#), could better facilitate data-driven decision making to address these inequities. Connecticut has taken the important step of reporting race and ethnicity data for cases of and deaths related to COVID-19. Improving the consistency and accessibility of this data by presenting it in a uniform manner that is easy to understand and shows the progress of the pandemic over time would allow policymakers and service providers to evaluate the reach of programs and make adjustments to ensure all Connecticut residents' needs are met.

So that the dashboard can illuminate opportunities to promote health equity during the pandemic and subsequent recovery period, we recommend the following:

Interactive data visualizations: A platform allowing Connecticut advocates, policymakers, providers and consumers to filter data by features such as race and ethnicity, geography, and time period (and view the overlap of multiple characteristics, when feasible) would allow decisionmakers to quickly access information. With accessible information, policy changes can respond to the disparate impact of rapidly changing response efforts.

Geographic mapping: Mapping COVID-19 associated deaths and cases by race and ethnicity for the 10 largest Connecticut towns would provide information on spatial clustering and regional differences in policy implementation. Mapping disaggregated data can help to identify and tailor response efforts to areas of elevated risk.

Leveraging existing data sources: COVID-19 continues to exacerbate existing social and economic inequities. Establishing a COVID-19 dashboard that continues to evolve can inform the recovery period and future emergency response efforts. Data collected by the CT Departments of Energy and Environmental Protection, Housing, Health, and Social Services could be leveraged to identify and respond to communities with unmet needs in a collaborative manner.

Data highlights the need for action. If we cannot evaluate equity in pandemic response and recovery efforts, underserved communities will continue to face higher rates of COVID-19 infection and death in the immediate future and disproportionate difficulty recovering from this crisis.

Again, we are grateful for all you and your staff have done to mitigate the impact of this pandemic. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

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