

# MED ZED



## ADDRESSING HEALTH DISPARITIES

DR. STACY TARRADATH

## COMPASSIONATE CARE

MEDZED'S MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM STEPS INTO THE MEMBER'S WORLD

MEET OUR NEWEST CLIENT SUCCESS TEAM MEMBER: KATRINA HOPKINS



**EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT**  
MOHAMMED AL-ALI





## Addressing Health Disparities By: Dr. Stacy Tarradath, MD

*A study says eliminating racial/ethnic health disparities would reduce healthcare costs by \$230 billion in indirect costs of excess disease and mortality by more than \$1 trillion over four years.*

What Can the Health Care Sector Do to Advance Health Equity? (n.d.). RWJF. <https://www.rwjf.org/en/insights/our-research/2019/11/what-can-the-health-care-sector-do-to-advance-health-equity.html>

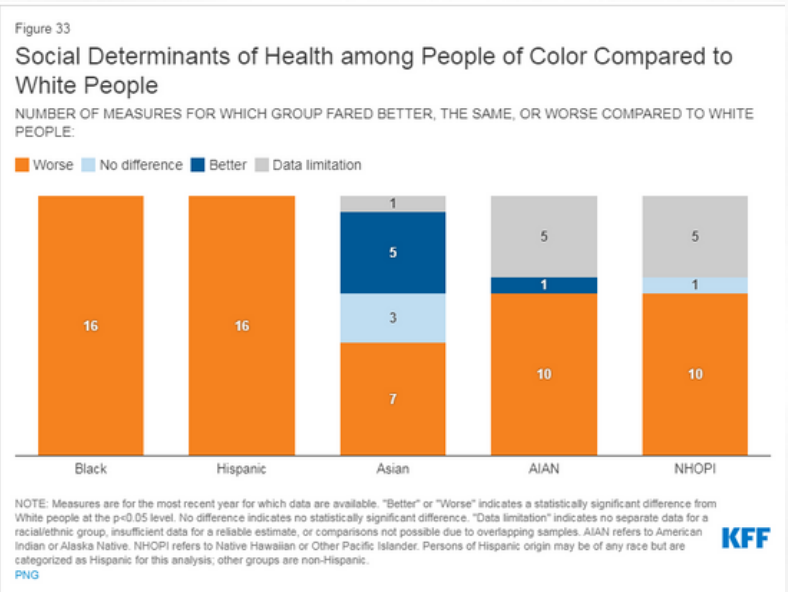
Recent studies have shown that despite the improvements in the overall health of the country, racial and ethnic minorities experience a lower quality of health care: they are less likely to receive routine medical care and face higher rates of morbidity and mortality than non-minorities. The reasons are numerous and varied, including but not limited to genetics, poor access to care, inadequate access to healthy foods, poverty, and environmental conditions. At the highest level, reducing health care disparities to achieve more equitable health care outcomes is a major goal of US public health. Partnering with health plans to engage and treat high-need patients who are underserved by the health system, MedZed has an important role to play in understanding and addressing many of these factors in an integrated and personalized way.

As the leader of our clinical programs, I work to design and implement a team-based approach that focuses on identifying, prioritizing, and addressing all the social and medical disparities each patient is experiencing. In my experience treating patients in this model, I have insight into the challenges and barriers to achieving the best health outcomes as a result of health disparities. It is important that we can recognize what they are facing--and truly empathize with them. We hire teams based in the same communities as our patients so we can provide culturally appropriate care when we assess a patient's social and medical needs at their initial provider and community health navigator (CHN) visits.

Because our providers act as an additional layer of care to the patient's existing primary care and specialty providers, they are able to provide care focused on closing health gaps, increasing awareness of preventative care, improving health literacy, and addressing behavioral health matters which often complicate chronic health conditions and can negatively impact health outcomes.

Our community health navigators (CHNs) work not only to address immediate needs, but also find long-term solutions. For a new patient experiencing food insecurity, we will offer food boxes while working on securing long-term resources (e.g., applying for EBT) to address their needs. Additionally, in our provider guided LVN-only visits we, provide supplemental disease education to increase health literacy and help members better manage their health problems.

I love when we graduate patients from our programs, and they express appreciation for the positive on their lives by MedZed's interventions. Patients often say, "I was a mess" when we first met but "I'm doing better today because of you all." These moments are a testament of the ability of our unique patient-centered and community-oriented care delivery process positions us to quickly and meaningfully address health disparities and support MedZed's mission of advancing health equity.



Hill, L., Ndugga, N., & Artiga, S. (2023, March 15). Key data on health and health care by race and ethnicity. Kaiser Family Foundation. <https://www.kff.org/racial-equity-and-health-policy/report/key-data-on-health-and-health-care-by-race-and-ethnicity/>

# Compassionate Care: MedZed's Multidisciplinary Team Steps into the Member's World

In the ever-evolving healthcare landscape, MedZed stands out for its transformative approach that transcends traditional models. At the core of this innovation is our interdisciplinary team, working harmoniously to provide comprehensive care that empowers individuals to thrive in all aspects of their lives. With a complex care provider (CCP), a field nurse (LVN), a Community Health Navigator (CHN), and a Care Coordinator collaborating seamlessly, MedZed's approach is a symphony of expertise and compassion.

## Meeting Members Where They Are

A fundamental pillar of MedZed's approach is the team's commitment to empathizing with members and understanding their unique and often complex needs. The CHN leads the effort in reaching out to connect with members where they are, figuratively and literally. By engaging members in their comfort zones, the CHN builds trust and develops a deep understanding of their challenges and requirements. With this empathetic approach as the foundation, the CHN becomes a trusted guide for the member, as they navigate the complexities of available resources and the healthcare system.

## Painting a Full Picture of the Individual

As part of getting to truly know the member, the team conducts in-depth assessments to understand the member's medical conditions and social challenges and their unique interplay. Observing and interacting with the member in their own environment provides the LVN with unparalleled insights that traditional practices often miss. They share this information via a telemedicine platform with MedZed's CCP, a seasoned provider who specializes in addressing complex medical issues. MedZed's telemedicine platform acts as a vital bridge, transcending geographical barriers and enabling the CCP to interact with and deliver specialized care directly to the member, facilitated by the LVN.



## Addressing Social Determinants of Health

MedZed's approach extends beyond medical concerns, acknowledging the profound impact of social determinants on health. The interdisciplinary team maps out a care plan that prioritizes medical issues and weaves in interventions to address the member's identified social needs. For example, one member was struggling to manage his multiple chronic conditions, including hypertension and hyperlipidemia. He was also eager to move out of his elderly parents' cramped home. The CCP assessed his conditions and how he was managing them and increased his blood pressure medication. The CHN then took care of numerous supports to make sure the member could engage in his own care. She obtained a blood pressure machine so he could monitor himself, helped him get an insurance card and the proper documentation for future appointments. She got him set up with transportation and helped him apply for disability and his own housing. By keeping the complete picture of the member's needs in mind, the CHN provides the necessary education, guidance, and resources to overcome the obstacles to better health.



## Navigating the Maze of Healthcare

For MedZed's members, the journey to better health is often complicated. For this reason, the team also includes a Care Coordinator who helps the member with key steps along the way, including accessing the referrals made by the CCP, for a seamless transition to specialized care and coordinating the acquisition of durable medical equipment, so members have the necessary tools to manage their health effectively.



## The Power of Collaborative Care

Each team member plays a distinct role, and their individual contributions enhance the others to form a unified, comprehensive solution. For the members, the result is a holistic healthcare journey, where their medical and social needs are addressed as integral components of their overall well-being. In a world where healthcare can often feel impersonal and fragmented, MedZed's interdisciplinary team transforms the care experience. By acknowledging that health extends beyond physical well-being and by stepping into the member's world, the team's work is an embodiment of care, compassion, and genuine human connection. MedZed doesn't just provide healthcare; we become a partner, a guide, and a friend on the journey to better health and a better life.



## Employee Spotlight: Mohammed Al-Ali

At MedZed, Mohammed has been on a journey of education and working to create change. Originally from Iraq, he came to the United States with a background in microbiology and experience as a public relations manager working with the United Nations Election Commission, but once here, he had to begin all over again. He started taking classes in culture and civics to immerse himself in his new home and began to learn about healthcare—and was amazed at how complicated it was, “it was a completely different world.”

### ***“To make change, to improve, you need to teach”***

“So many people helped me and took the time to teach me and answer my questions so I could learn and figure out my way. I promised myself I would pay it back one day.” He worked as a healthcare enrollment specialist, then a care coordinator and saw how many people—not just immigrants like himself—struggled with inequities that prevented them from advocating for themselves and getting what they needed to be healthier.

Mohammed’s work at MedZed, first as a CHN and now leading teams in the San Diego area brings it all together, because it’s about making it simple for members and guiding them so they can understand what their needs are, what help they can get, and how they can move forward. “When a member goes to the ED, they get help in the moment, but it doesn’t solve their problem. But we educate them so they can make change and improve.” A commitment to learning has helped put Mohammed on a path to a new future; now he is indeed giving back by teaching and helping others to do the same.



## Client Success Welcomes: Katrina Hopkins

Katrina Hopkins joins MedZed as our newest Client Success Manager. She brings over a decade of experience in the healthcare field with a passion for relationship building, implementing solutions, and driving better patient outcomes. When not growing our partnerships, Katrina can be found spending time outdoors with her family or on the soccer field.

## Voice of the Customer Survey

Please take the time to complete our very short Voice of the Customer survey. It takes less than 10 minutes to complete and is an opportunity for you to let us know how we can improve our service to you. We are very invested in receiving your feedback and thank you for taking the time to let us know how we’re doing. Please look for an email from Wendy Atkinson or your CS representative for the link to the survey.

