

A Theory-based Framework to Incorporate Health Equity in Economic Assessments

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Background

- Disparities result from failures in receiving recommended health care services along the care continuum.
- Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) barriers can result in health-care related failures, such as low levels of screening or delay in initiating care.
- As defined by Healthy People 2030, SDoH are the conditions in the environment where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect risks, health, functioning, and quality-of-life.
- Existing models do not offer a comprehensive approach to collect data elements required to conduct health equity focused economics research.

Objective

To create a framework that provides an equity lens to drive data collection and support economic analysis that will allow for data-driven decision making on strategies and policies to address health disparities

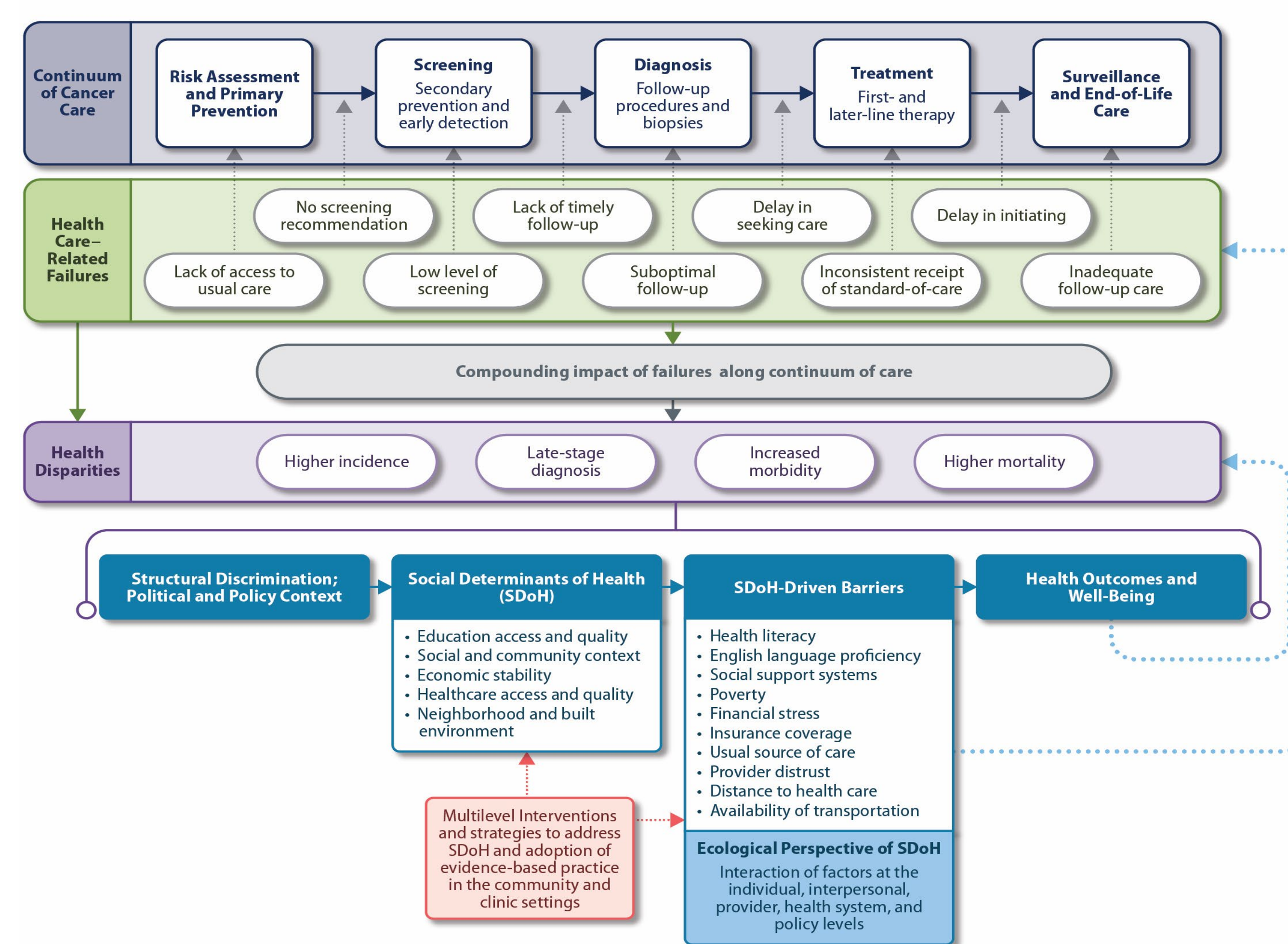
Methods

The conceptual framework was developed using a consultative and iterative process.

Step 1	Developed initial pathway to show linkage between SDoH and health outcomes
Step 2	Reviewed by 12 health equity experts in two virtual panels to ensure inclusion of a complete set of drivers, barriers and impacts
Step 3	Created two-component initial framework, using the cancer care continuum to illustrate application of the equity framework
Step 4	Presented two-component framework to health equity experts and made edits to the description of health care failures
Step 5	Added a third distinct economic assessment component to allow for a more detailed assessment of economic determinants and their impact
Step 6	Reviewed by three health economists and finalized three-component framework

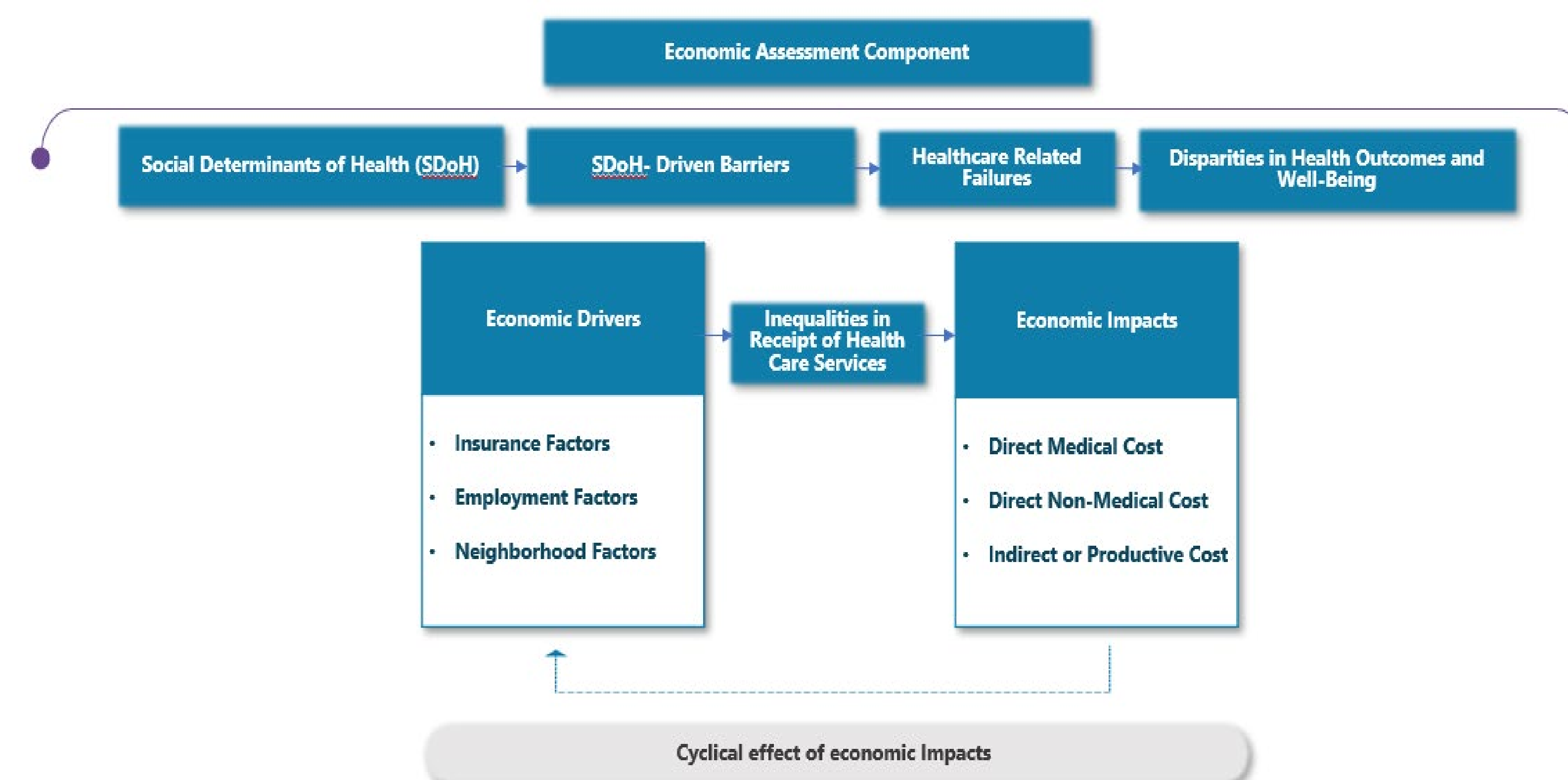
Health Equity and Economics Assessment Linkages (HEEAL) Framework - Application

- The first component presents the four-step pathway, from structural determinants to SDoH, which result in SDoH-Driven barriers that impact health outcomes.
- The second component presents the mechanism by which these barriers impact health outcomes.



Detailed Overview of the Economic Assessment Component of the HEEAL Framework

The third component highlights the relationship between economic determinants and economic impacts.



Examples of HEEAL Framework Implementation

We tested the robustness of the HEEAL framework in two economics studies:

Survey on SDoH barriers related to screening, diagnosis and treatment

Created listing of the key barriers

Identified the failures along the care continuum to develop measures

Developed complete list of financial and cost measures

Microsimulation model on disparities in colorectal cancer early diagnosis

Assessed real-world screening compliance based on key SDoH factors

Incorporated key economic drivers along with economic impacts

Conclusions

- Economic assessments must apply both theory and data-rooted techniques to address health disparities.
- The HEEAL framework can support the collection of comprehensive data elements, which allow for a more complete assessment of the interlinkages of various factors that result in health disparities.
- Conceptual frameworks are important to generate data-informed policies and strategies to address health disparities.

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