



# Growing Thoughts: Beyond Do No Harm

## Translating Research into Practice

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## RESOURCE INFORMATION

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### TITLE

[Beyond Do No Harm: Structural Racism in Tech-Forward SDOH Solutions](#)

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### SPONSORS

Health Leads

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The IRIS team believes in people's ability to know what their community needs. Our passion for helping communities drives us to support champions in building connections for families so that they may connect to the services and the resources they need to thrive. While technology provides communities with a valuable method of streamlining their referral processes, success is commonly met when the community leads the work. When implementing IRIS, we partner with community champions ingrained within a community. In supporting local advocates, we embrace the community-led approach to embrace equitable implementation. By putting the power of change in the hands of the community, we have found that the IRIS implementation process promotes a collaborative environment that supports local community partners and families.

This month, we gathered to review the Health Leads online seminar "[Beyond Do No Harm: Structural Racism in Tech-Forward SDOH Solutions](#)." In this video, four panelists discussed how tech-forward solutions often propagate structural racism and bias when attempting to address Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) within a community, risking the normalization of structural racism in technology solutions. The panelists further considered and offered steps to limiting and addressing harm committed to the community when implementing modern technology to improve health outcomes.

For the IRIS team, our values are at the heart of what we do; we put people first, improve existing systems, seek to amplify voices, and focus on integrating local experts at all levels of implementation. We saw our values reflected in the thoughtful discussions presented by each panelist. In the webinar, the panelists argued that community members serve a vital role in

creating equitable solutions to SDOH. In their experience, a solution can lead to higher marginalization if focused on the priorities of one system or funder, rather than centered on the community's needs.

We value members of the IRIS community, the individuals we work with, and the needs of the families they serve. We encourage our partners to take ownership of their network and expand their resources to their community. In doing so, we amplify the voices of our partners and their constituents, harnessing community voices to shape decisions. The panelists emphasized the importance of creating a well-informed, community-led system that adds seats to the table. This notion is integral to our work, as we recognize that people are experts in their own lives, and healthy communities lift all voices.

Technology alone cannot address the conditions that affect the quality of life; IRIS is not a solution to SDOH – it is the people and the approach that changes the lives of families. This webinar reinforced our responsibility to examine both the intent and impact of IRIS. If our values align with panelists' vision, where do our actions fall short? Has our tech solution or implementation process harmed systems or families? We received the panelists' remarks as a call to action. Family agency to consent to referrals and data collection, transparency around data ownership and use, and authentic inclusion of the perspectives of those with lived experience are a few areas we are addressing. Over time, we must remain accountable for examining how we can limit harm to community systems and what it means to have authentic community engagement where the community voice is directing the intervention.

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## PANELISTS

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- Rey Faustino, Chief Impact and Strategy Officer, Alluma
- Ngozi Moses, MSc, Executive Director, Brooklyn Perinatal Network
- Jen Lewis-Walden, Co-Founder, Shift Health Accelerator
- Jason Cunningham, DO, Chief Executive Officer, West County Health Centers
- Artair Rogers (Moderator), Director of Programs California, Health Leads