



Chris T. Pernell, MD, MPH, FACPM
Chief Strategic Integration and Health Equity Officer,
University Hospital

Dr. Chris T. Pernell is a dynamic physician leader and social change agent. In her public health practice, her focus is health justice, community-based advocacy, and population-wide health promotion and disease prevention. Recently, she joined University Hospital in Newark, New Jersey as the first Chief Strategic Integration and Health Equity Officer. She oversees a portfolio which includes Population Health, Strategic Planning, Community Affairs, and the Human Experience. Her office is responsible for health equity strategy development and integrating equity and inclusion within the system and across all operations.

Prior to joining University Hospital, she led the 1199SEIU/League Labor Management Initiatives (LMI) Workplace and Community Health Program. Working with leaders and frontline workers of 1199SEIU, and partners across NYC healthcare institutions, her efforts centered on workplace health strategies, worker empowerment, health equity, and health system transformation.

Dr. Chris is a charismatic and leading voice in preventive medicine and public health. NJBiz named her a Public Health Hero in 2020. Known for her spearheading work in the Greater Newark, New Jersey area, she was tapped to serve on the Essex County Civilian Task Force as a medical expert. Prison reform and care for justice-involved populations along with issues such as evidence-based wellness programs, civic health, and high-quality education have been areas of impassioned focus. Dr. Pernell is a frequent contributor across television, radio and print media leveraging her lived experiences and expertise as a public health physician and health equity champion. She regularly speaks at professional symposia and public forums on topics in the public interest, including racial equity, population health, social justice, community well-being and faith-based initiatives.

Dr. Chris graduated cum laude from Princeton University before attending Duke University School of Medicine. She received her Master of Public Health from the Columbia Mailman School of Public Health, and completed the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health General Preventive Medicine Residency. Dr. Pernell is a fellow of the American College of Preventive Medicine and holds an appointment as a Clinical Assistant Professor at the Rutgers New Jersey Medical School.