

# Caroline Morkel

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**Practicum Site:** Takeda Pharmaceutical Company

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## ***Addressing Social Determinants of Health through Partnerships and Alliances***



**Introduction:** For my practicum placement, I spent my summer in the Center for Health Equity & Patient Affairs Department of Takeda in Cambridge, Massachusetts. I worked with their Health Equity Alliances & Partnerships team, and in collaboration with their R&D Patient Engagement team. The Center for Health Equity and Patient Affairs aim is to expand health equity through partnerships with organizations, combine resources, and shine a light to address global health issues. There are three main partnerships: Springer Nature, Discovery Education, and the Global Commission.

**Methods:** With Springer Nature, the overarching aim is to co-create paths that improve “Access to Equity.” One focus is leveraging all programmatic aspects to eventually build an online resource library. The aim of the library is to be used as a central resource to facilitate and support the adoption of new ideas and best practices in patient insights. A second branch of the partnership with Springer Nature is the Nature Awards. These new, international awards recognize Health Equity researchers. The awards are managed, and maintained by the publisher, and aim to discover, recognize, celebrate, and promote innovation and quality in Health Equity. A third branch of the partnership is the International Health Equity Conference/ Nature Café, which is a virtual, international external health equity conference to bring together experts to discuss new perspectives and advances.

The second partnership I was involved with was with Discovery Education whose aim is to empower the next generation of health equity champions. This three-year, globally scalable program for students K-12 provides awareness, demystifies complexities around Research & Development, and empowers students to educate their own communities.

The final partnership I was involved with was the Global Commission with the objective to spur innovative, equitable, and globally relevant solutions to tackle barriers in rare disease diagnosis.

**Results:** In each of these partnerships, I spent my time thinking through how we could truly tackle the Social Determinants of Health, and not simply use buzzwords. Ultimately leading me to use data to generate a story. I created multiple internal dashboards using public, and private, data sources.

**Conclusions:** These platforms were integrated into the Center’s workflows and are used to gain insights, understand how their current ecosystem, how their partnerships tackle SDoH, and assist in thinking through future partnerships. With the aim to change the discussion around research, youth education, and creating a culture where health equity is interwoven into every discussion.