The 7 As of Access

Master of Health Care Innovation faculty member Kevin Ahmaad Jenkins offers a 7-point framework for assessing and expanding access in health care organizations:

**Awareness**
Inform patients about your services.
Are you communicating effectively to the public?
Are you raising awareness that your services are available to underserved populations?

**Affordability**
Address barriers to cost.
Is your care affordable to underserved populations?
Do you have a sliding scale? Are patients aware of it?

**Acceptability**
Understand what constitutes acceptable service from the patient standpoint.
Are you asking patients what works for them, and what they need to build a relationship with your organization?

**Accessibility**
Consider physical barriers to access.
Do patients have to travel too far to access care?
Is transportation inconvenient, unaffordable, or nonexistent?

**Availability**
Create capacity to meet patient needs.
Does your organization have enough personnel, and offer appropriate services, to suit the populations served? And, if not, can you refer patients to accessible specialists?

**Accommodation**
Assess the flexibility of your services.
Do you have email and telehealth access? Can you offer services when patients are available, in the evening or on weekends?

**Accountability**
Building mechanisms to hold your organization responsible.
Do you set targets and track metrics for access and equity? Is staff accountable for its attitudes and actions? Do you communicate that accountability to all constituents—including patients?

Adapted from Penchansky and Thomas (1981)
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