

# Confronting Racism



LIGHT of HEARTS VILLA

*A Ministry of the Sisters of Charity Health System*

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*“We cannot tolerate or turn a blind eye to racism and exclusion in any form and yet claim to defend the sacredness of every human life.”*

POPE FRANCIS, JUNE 3 GENERAL AUDIENCE

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Racism within any context is an affront to the core values of Catholic teaching which acknowledges the inherent dignity of each person, calls for the furthering of the common good and seeks justice. Catholic health care recognizes the profound effect racism has on the health and well-being of individuals and communities and is committed to addressing the causes of health disparities among the underserved members of the population. As such we are committed to working with partners who share these convictions to implement any needed changes to eliminate racism in our marginalized communities.

We must listen meaningfully and engage effectively by involving in the decision-making process those most affected by health care disparities in order to develop and implement requisite changes. As community health leaders we are in a unique position to bring about such changes. We must be actively anti-racist, lead through accountability, develop community engagement built on trust and demonstrate measurable impact in the communities we are called on to serve.

## We Are Called

TO HEAL. TO UNITE. TO JUSTICE.

## **We Commit to Immediate Action to Achieve COVID-19 Health Equity By:**

- Engaging our communities of color and community leaders to identify and address community health needs where the impact of COVID-19 is most devastating.
- Providing that COVID-19 testing is available and accessible in minority communities.
- Providing health care in our local communities for populations experiencing racial/ethnic, gender or socioeconomic-related healthcare disparities. We will leverage resources to improve access and available care.
- Ensuring that new treatments are distributed equitably as they become available; and
- Providing vaccinations for those individuals and families at higher risk - elder populations, communities of color, and Native American communities.

## **We Commit to:**

- √ **EVALUATING OUR OWN HOUSE.** We will examine all aspects of our organizations including how we provide clinical care; how we recruit, hire, promote and retain employees based on merit; how we conduct business operations including diversity and inclusivity at the decision, leadership and governance levels; and how we hold our leaders accountable in these processes. We will leverage our assets towards proactively eliminating health disparities where they are found to exist.
- √ **MAINTAINING RIGHT AND JUST RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR COMMUNITIES.** We will maintain and strengthen trust with communities of color. This includes fostering and sustaining relationships based on mutually agreed upon goals; "leaning in" to listen; understanding the needs of the community; determining how we can best partner together to bring about sustainable change; measuring the impact of our efforts; and making adjustments as needed as our combined work and relationships evolve.
- √ **ADVOCATING CHANGE TO END HEALTH DISPARITIES AND RACISM.**  
We will leverage our voices to advocate changes that:
  - Work to eliminate health disparities. We will advocate policies that ensure access to quality health care services for all; end racial and ethnic disparities in health outcomes; promote and improve the delivery of culturally competent care; and increase the diversity of the health care work force.
  - We will oppose policies that exacerbate or perpetuate economic and social inequities as that contribute to health disparities. We will call for changes to policies that shape people's lives - education, housing, nutrition, and the environment - so that every man, woman and child in our society may flourish.