



MARCH 2021

Diversity & Equity, & Inclusion

Racial, Social, and Medical Justice Quarterly Report

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Update

March 2021



Introduction

We have made concrete progress to further social and medical justice within the Northern Light Health system. In this report, you will learn about the trainings, policies, and initiatives that will allow us to further this important work. We also have links to stories from our own employees' reflections on Black History Month, which was in February, and what it means in their lives.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council Activity

Our last report outlined initiatives for the council over the next year. This report provides updates on two of those:

Education

Our first foundational training is underway, Unconscious Bias and Microaggressions. This training is currently offered to all employees, and we are expanding the availability to reach as many people as possible. We will be providing four sessions a week starting March 1, with 17 sessions in all during the month, to make this easily available.



It was heartwarming to hear attendees in this round of discussion open up and share deeply personal stories of events that had happened to them or that they had witnessed. Many stated they learned much in this training about issues they had either been curious about or topics they didn't fully understand and had been too uncomfortable to ask about. We couldn't be more pleased with the success of our first training and continue to marvel at the resilience of the human spirit. We will have a new training module in April. Stay tuned for more information on the new module soon.

Policy

We're happy to announce the adoption of a new policy on discriminatory requests for providers or workforce members, effective February 1, 2021. The key language of the policy is as follows:

-Patient/family/guardian requests or demands for a specific type of care Provider/Workforce Member based on characteristics which are identified in this Policy section will not be accommodated. These characteristics include, but are not limited to, race, national origin/ethnicity, religious creed, gender, gender identity or expression, genetic information, sexual orientation, age, disability, veteran or active military status, and immigration status. In rare circumstances, non-discriminatory requests for gender-related accommodation may be considered if the request is due to cultural beliefs regarding modesty or for victims of sexual assault or other trauma. All requests, regardless of gender, should be evaluated within the lens of trauma-informed care.

For the complete policy language, employees can go to the policy portal on the intranet and look up policy 17-135.

Black History Month

We celebrated Black History Month at Northern Light Health with various programs to educate and enlighten all who attended.

These included Zoom round tables with community leaders and experts on Black History:

February 10 – Zoom session featuring UMaine history professor Mary Freeman, on the impact and significance of black history month

February 22 – Zoom session featuring Husson University history professor Dr. David Haus, on the Impact of Black Leaders on Medicine & Science

February 24 – Zoom roundtable with Maine community leaders discussing microaggressions in the community. Participants included:
Tania Jean-Jacques – Hampden School Board
Angela Okafor – Bangor City Councillor
Deqa Dhalac – South Portland City Councillor



Three of our employees graciously shared their own stories on how people in their own lives inspired them to pursue careers in healthcare. They included Darmita Wilson, Interim Director of Physician Practices at Northern Light Mercy Hospital, Terraela Owes, Administrative Assistant III at Northern Light Home Care & Hospice, and James Fullwood, DPM, Podiatrist at Northern Light Seabasticook Valley Hospital. Their stories were shared in our series of Friday Reflections during Black History Month.

Podcast Report



James Varner

The Tim Talk podcast included a series of distinguished guests and incredible, thought-provoking discussions. For a special series during Black History Month, we were honored to welcome Clive Callender, MD, Howard University professor of surgery and a pioneer in the acceptance of organ donations among minority communities in the United States. Dr. Callender shared his experiences in building transplant programs while being challenged by almost no funding and a reluctant public.



Dr Kimberly Whitehead, PhD



Clive Callender, MD

Our other featured guests during the month included James Varner, director of the Maine Human Rights Coalition, pioneer activist, and co-founder of the Bangor chapter of the NAACP, Kimberly Whitehead, PhD, and chair of the University of Maine DEI Council, and our own Dr. James Fullwood, Podiatrist at Northern Light Seabasticook Valley Hospital, who shared his journey to understanding medical justice around the world.

Upcoming episodes will be focusing on medical and social justice issues from Native American perspectives. Towards the end of spring, we'll also be compiling the most notable segments from what will be a full year of Tim Talk podcasts.



Marwa Hassaniien

Synopsis of Northern Light's HRSA Federal Grant

A lack of diversity in the nursing education pipeline has led to a lack of diversity among registered nurses. Diversity in education environments can improve learning outcomes, improving skills such as active thinking, intellectual engagement, and motivation, as well as certain social and civic skills, such as the ability to empathize and have racial and cultural understanding.



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Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Grants

Marwa Hassaniien, our new DEI director, is working with grant-writing experts at Northern Light Health Foundation, including David Leach, to pursue available grants to fund DEI initiatives. These grants can be used to support education, presentations, and DEI initiatives, such as using hospital simulation centers to train for situations where diversity considerations should be applied. We may be able to pursue grants that could create more trainings on diversity.

We have already applied for a HRSA federal grant and we'll hear back in July. Northern Light Health joined forces with UMaine nursing school to pursue this grant. Marwa is the educational leader on the application.



**Northern Light
Health**SM