

ENGAGE Initiative: Racial Equity Statement

We acknowledge that structural racism against Black people has infiltrated our society and our healthcare system at multiple levels that have led to suffering and premature mortality. We denounce the racism and systems of oppression that led to the murder of George Floyd, the deaths of Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery, and so many others. With this statement, we aim to deepen understanding, build connection, and take meaningful action together.

As a coalition, we lack representation from the Black community. We commit to being allies and taking anti-racist action within our organization and to advocate for anti-racist policies.

We are dedicated to ensuring that mental illness is never a barrier to cancer care or research. As clinicians, caregivers, advocates, and people with experience with mental illness and cancer, we advocate inclusion and policy change as essential priorities and recognize that the systems of cancer and mental health care discriminate against people of color. We commit to examine structural racism as we forge community partnerships, design and conduct research, increase access to clinical care, and develop an advocacy agenda.

We will take the following action steps:

- We will educate ourselves and assess our implicit biases and privileges as individuals and as an organization. We will reflect together and share resources that have helped us to reflect: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zmuXZDFSDzVeK-l2Zpp_f9BQn7tKsTZUcChYBEW_JM/edit?usp=sharing
- We will conduct an internal inventory over the next two months to address how we can strengthen the inclusion and diversity of our stakeholder board, clinical team, workgroups, and the broader Engage Initiative including strategies for hiring and internships

- We will strengthen community partnerships and advocate for anti-racist policies in research, clinical care, and training for mental health and cancer care
- We will apply an anti-racist lens to our clinical model of mental health and cancer care including addressing implicit bias and barriers to clinical care and research participation.
- We will examine how race can compound inequities experienced by individuals with mental health diagnoses and their caregivers

During this time of violence and fear, being part of the Engage Initiative has helped us to see things differently and to witness the potential of coming together to advocate for individuals who may have been voiceless. We hope to build on this work together to advocate anti-racist policies that foster meaningful change.

We will gather feedback, discuss the results of our internal inventory in 2 months, develop infrastructure to sustain this growth together. We invite you to participate.

Please email: mghengage@partners.org to share your thoughts and join us in this work.

The Engage Initiative Stakeholder Board
www.engageinitiative.org

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