



July 1, 2020

In our community and around the world, we are seeing the devastating impact of COVID-19 and its disproportionate effect on underserved populations. At the same time, recent events have served as a catalyst for meaningful discussions around the issue of racism and are encouraging organizations and businesses to evaluate how we can better serve the community.

One month ago, we shared with you a promise to not only acknowledge racism as a public health crisis, but to take swift action in addressing this topic with resources, education and tangible commitments.

We are proud to share with you phase one of Summa Health's new action plan: Summa Stands With Our Community. This comprehensive plan encompasses employee and community driven solutions to ensure we practice and promote equity, inclusion and opportunity for each person we employ and serve as a provider and an insurer. We have identified three areas of focus to address racism.

- **Education:** To ensure we create a common understanding of the crisis, address unconscious bias and create forums for meaningful and productive dialogue.
 - Unconscious bias training
 - Dialogue platforms for the community and employees
 - Empowerment webpage with ways to take action
- **Advocacy:** To create visibility and transparency, drive local community engagement and partner with elected officials to shape key public policies that would help African Americans and other underserved populations access health and economic improvement opportunities.
 - Summa employee pledge to report racism in the workplace and to stay engaged and informed of social justice and inequality topics
 - [Employee Resource Group](#) participation
 - Public support and transparent communications
- **Health:** To support enhancements in access to care, address/reduce healthcare disparities and develop culturally competent and relevant health education and literature.
 - COVID-19 community based testing in high priority areas
 - A [webpage](#) to educate on risks and resources for COVID-19 in African Americans
 - Grassroots health and wellness initiatives driven by our communities
 - Continuing our commitment to address disparities through the Center for Health Equity

Our action plan is underway. On June 23, we hosted a Facebook Live event, "A Pandemic Within a Pandemic: COVID-19 and Structural Racism" to launch our racism as a public health crisis dialogue. Click [here](#) to watch the video. This past weekend, Summa Health along with Summit County Public Health sponsored a community-wide COVID-19 testing event. We are proud to bring these important resources to a population who is more likely to be impacted by COVID-19.

There will be more to come on these action items and how to get involved. In the meantime, please visit summahealth.org/empowerment to learn more.

At Summa Health, we continue to stand with those fighting for justice and will hold ourselves accountable to these commitments to eliminate disparities in healthcare and beyond. Thank you for standing with us and showing the community we stand together to advocate for impactful change.

Dr. Cliff Deveny

President and CEO

Anthony Lockhart

Chair, Summa Health Board of Directors

Iriel Hopkins

System Director, Community Relations and Diversity

June 1, 2020

As we continue to watch together the impact of recent and current events happening across the nation, we want to take a moment to reflect on the pain that we all are experiencing. From COVID-19 to the current protests taking place in cities throughout the country, we are deeply saddened at Summa Health by what is happening.

We have witnessed how the pandemic has disproportionately taken its toll on the African American Community. Many local families and thousands more have lost those they love. Throughout our community, many have lost jobs. Seeing people dying unnecessarily adds to the collective pain that we are feeling.

At times like these, we offer thoughts and prayers as a show of support. We will grieve these tragedies together. However, this is not enough. We must acknowledge that structural racism is a public health crisis as much as the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a very real attack on humanity and needs to be acknowledged by all of us. It also demands our commitment – of time, resources, and education – to address the issue of racism and its impact on the health of our communities.

Summa Health is a place of hope and determination, health and healing. We care for each other. We believe in respect for all. We support those looking for peaceful change and the opportunity for a brighter future. Our mission is to contribute to a healthier community. This commitment guides us, motivates us, and inspires our organization to take action. It requires our continuous focus on reviewing our own efforts to ensure equitable care and service delivery, enhancing our cultural competency education, supporting the community as ongoing needs arise, and participating in constructive dialogue that will bring about systemic change.

We stand with all of those who are fighting for equity and justice and we pledge to continue our work to eliminate disparities – in healthcare and beyond – for our employees at Summa Health and in our communities through constructive dialogue and, more importantly, decisive action. Over the coming weeks, we will accelerate and enhance our ongoing plans to address health disparities and racism in our communities.

We look forward to working with our employees, caregivers, and communities to create an environment that is inclusive for everyone we serve. We need your input, invite your collaboration, and welcome your feedback today as we work to establish a plan to share in the weeks to come.

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