

AU2200 – ANTI-RACISM POLICY

PREAMBLE

Interior Health (“IH”) recognizes that Racism exists in Canadian society and within the British Columbia healthcare system, and this includes systemic Racism against Aboriginal, Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) and other Racialized groups. IH expressly recognizes the legacy of colonization and the negative impact it has on Aboriginal Peoples.

Racism involves more than obvious racially-motivated acts such as violence on or segregation of Racialized groups. It is pervasive and harmful and rooted in established institutions and, in the context of healthcare, has an adverse effect on the proper functioning of the system.

Everyone has the right to work and receive health-related care and services in an environment that is Anti-Racist and values diversity, inclusion and equity. IH recognizes that a key step towards eliminating Racism is to establish an environment of Anti-Racism that aims to develop, foster and implement Anti-Racism policies, practices and programs.

In November 2020, the In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care Report was released. The report found that, “widespread Indigenous-specific stereotyping, racism and discrimination exist in the B.C. health care system.”¹ In addition, the “requirements for cultural safety and humility addressing Indigenous-specific racism are not adequately embedded throughout policy and standards.”² This policy is, in part, intended to action the recommendations outlined in the report and demonstrate Interior Health’s commitment to truth and reconciliation.

This policy aligns with the following federal, provincial, and regional commitments: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action 23 and 24, Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls to Justice 7 and 15, adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the B.C. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act, Métis Nation Relationship Accord II, Declaration of Commitment to Cultural Safety and Humility, and the Interior Partnership Accord.

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- acknowledge that systemic Racism exists in the workplace and healthcare;
- declare clear commitment to eliminate Racism in Interior Health workplaces and healthcare;
- Define the differences between Racism, Systemic Racism and Anti-Aboriginal Racism;
- address the unequal power dynamic affecting Racialized groups and the structures that sustain it;
- identify, remove, and eliminate barriers created by systemic Racism;

¹ Finding #1 outlined in the In Plain Sight Full Report (page 36)

² Subsection of finding #9 outlined in the In Plain Sight Full Report (page 133)

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- eliminate harms and eliminate negative experiences resulting out of race-based discrimination at individual and systemic levels;
- create racial equity throughout Interior Health; and
- outline responsibilities and procedures to respond to Racism.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

| TERM | DEFINITION |
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| Aboriginal | All Indigenous people of Canada. The Canadian <i>Constitution Act, 1982</i> Section 35 (2) recognizes three groups of Aboriginal people: First Nations/Indians (status and non-status), Métis, and Inuit. These three separate groups have their own unique heritages, languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs. It is at the discretion of Interior region First Nation and Métis partners that IH has committed to using the term 'Aboriginal,' rather than 'Indigenous.' |
| Act | The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples BC that incorporates the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples' 46 Articles covering all facets of the human rights of Aboriginal peoples such as culture, identity, religion, language, health, education and community. |
| Ally | Any person that disrupts oppressive spaces by educating others on the realities and histories of marginalized people. An Ally speaks up in the face of Racism and discrimination. |
| Anti-Aboriginal Racism | The systems of power that advantage and privilege some people and disadvantage Aboriginal people. A core element of anti-Aboriginal Racism is beliefs about the superiority of non-Aboriginal people over Aboriginal people including intelligence, abilities, appearance, culture, and other attributes that justify higher status. This presumed hierarchy serves to limit opportunities and to magnify differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. |
| Anti-Racism | The practice of actively identifying, challenging, preventing, eliminating and changing the values, structures, policies, programs, practices and behaviours that perpetuate racism. It is more than just being "not racist" but involves taking action to create conditions of greater inclusion, equality and justice. |
| BIPOC | Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour |
| Client | Anyone receiving care or services from IH and includes patients and those who reside in the Interior region. |

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| TERM | DEFINITION |
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| Microaggressions | Everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon bias toward historically marginalized groups. |
| Race | Refers to a group of people who share the same physical characteristics such as skin tone, hair texture and facial features. Race is a socially constructed way to categorize people and is used as the basis for discrimination by situating human beings within a hierarchy of social value. |
| Racialized | Anyone who belongs to a group that has historically been or is currently treated differentially on racial grounds and impacted negatively in work and social life. This includes people who identify as a “visible minority” under BC Human Rights, Black, Indigenous/Aboriginal, and People of Colour (BIPOC) and may also include individuals impacted by anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. |
| Racism or Racist | The belief that a group of people are inferior based on the colour of their skin or due to the inferiority of their culture or spirituality. It leads to discriminatory behaviours and policies that oppress, ignore or treat racialized groups as ‘less than’ non-racialized groups. |
| Safety | The absence of harm and/or threat to Staff or Client mental, spiritual, physical, or emotional well-being. Safety includes the experiences of psychological and Cultural Safety. |
| Staff | Staff, physicians, medical staff, volunteers, students, contractors and other persons working or acting on behalf of IH. |

3.0 APPLICATION

This Policy applies to all Staff in relation to any IH matter, including the delivery of health-related care and services to Clients.

4.0 POLICY

4.1 IH is committed to eliminating Racism and actively fostering and engaging in Anti-Racism through the following principles:

- Systemic focus: IH is focused on proactively identifying and removing and eliminating systemic Racism in addition to individual Racism and Anti-Aboriginal Racism;
- Inclusive process: IH will meaningfully engage Aboriginal and other Racialized groups to understand their perspectives in order to inform its response to racism and reconciliation;

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- Distinctness and intersectionality of Racism: IH acknowledges Racism is experienced differently by various Racialized groups, and within such groups along intersectional lines, including history of colonization, creed, age, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation;
 - Transparent, evidence-based approach: IH will develop measurable goals and outcomes regarding its Anti-Racism strategy that are tracked and publicly reported; and
 - Evaluation: Measurement of the effectiveness of the policy will be developed in collaboration and partnership with stakeholders. The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the policy steward.
 - Sustainability: IH acknowledges that it is building the foundation for long-term Anti-Racism efforts.
- 4.2 IH is committed to ensure that no Staff member or Client is subject to Racism while working for or receiving health-related care or services from IH, and to addressing and preventing Racism when it is identified.
- 4.3 Staff can expect to experience and contribute to an Anti-Racist work environment. Staff have mechanisms to report Racism in the workplace or in the provision of health-related care or services by IH, and have it addressed and prevent future instances.
- 4.4 Clients receiving health-related care and services from IH can expect Staff to conduct themselves in an Anti-Racist way. Clients have mechanisms to report Racism while receiving such care and services from IH and have it addressed and prevent future instances.
- 4.5 IH is committed to providing Anti-Racism education, training and professional development opportunities for Staff. Staff are responsible for attending such education and training as required.
- 4.6 IH is committed to consistently applying this Policy across the organization and utilizing this Policy as an Anti-Racist lens through which other IH policies are developed, reviewed and revised.
- 4.7 IH will develop a workforce that values diversity, inclusion and equity and enhances organizational efficiency and effectiveness through the incorporation of diverse perspectives and points of view in accordance with IH Policy [AU2100 Diversity and IH Policy AD0200 Aboriginal Cultural Safety](#).
- 4.8 IH will establish protocols for monitoring, evaluation and accountability to further its Anti-Racism objectives.
- 4.9 IH has zero tolerance for Racist conduct. Any breach of this Policy may lead to discipline up to and including termination of employment for just cause or such other outcome or resolution as may be appropriate, and the situation requires.

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5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Managers are responsible for:

- o ensuring the provisions of this Policy are implemented and adhered to;
- o ensuring Staff are knowledgeable of the required standards of Anti-Racist conduct in the workplace and in the provision of health-related care or services by IH, and understand the consequences of non-compliance with such standards;
- o adhering to AU1000 Workplace Environment policy and guideline, which identifies unacceptable Racist conduct such as, stereotyping and prejudice, racial profiling, subtle racial discrimination and microaggressions;
- o organizing Anti-Racism education, training and professional development opportunities for Staff;
- o designating those with authority to address inquiries or matters related to the required standards of Anti-Racist conduct in the workplace and in the provision of health-related care or services by IH;
- o ensuring that all breaches of this Policy are promptly and effectively investigated, and action that is appropriate on the basis of the investigation results;
- o ensuring that confidential information is handled with proper care and discretion; and
- o delegating authority and responsibility, as and when applicable, to apply this Policy within IH.

5.2 Supervisors and Managers at IH are responsible for:

- o implementing and properly applying this Policy within their respective portfolios of responsibility;
- o communicating with Staff regarding Anti-Racism issues;
- o ensuring that confidential information is handled with proper care and discretion; and
- o assisting Staff with the processing and resolution of complaints under this Policy in accordance with IH Policy [AU1000 Workplace Environment Policy](#).

5.3 Staff are responsible for:

- o adhering to this Policy and complying with the required standards of Anti-Racist conduct in the workplace and in the provision of health-related care or services by IH;
- o attending Anti-Racism education and training sessions as required;

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- communicating with their respective supervisors, managers or Human Resources representatives when they are uncertain of any requirement of this Policy or have any question about the Policy, its scope or application;
- reporting all work-related breaches of this policy as per AU1000 Workplace Environment Guide;
- participating as Allies in initiatives and activities that address Anti-Aboriginal Racism and support Aboriginal Cultural Safety, and speak up in the face of Racism and discrimination;
- protecting their own and other people's Cultural Safety in the workplace; and
- modelling the behaviours and actions that are consistent with a Culturally Safe, respectful and anti-racist workplace, including but not limited to, respect, inclusiveness, self-reflection and self-awareness, and non-judgmental behaviour.

6.0 ACCOUNTABILITY

- The Vice-President of Human Resources will be responsible for the proper implementation of any systemic Anti-Racism initiatives under this Policy.

7.0 PROCEDURES: COMPLAINT PROCESS

- 7.1 IH will support Staff and Clients to safely, and without repercussions, recognize report and respond effectively to Racist behaviour or behaviours.
- 7.2 Staff have mechanisms to report and resolve complaints of systemic or individual Racism within the organization under IH Policy [AU1000 Workplace Environment Policy](#) and the reporting procedures in that Guide.
- 7.3 Staff have mechanisms to report unsafe workplace incidents within the organization under the Workplace Health Call Center 1-866-922-9464.
- 7.4 Clients have mechanisms to report complaints of systemic or individual Racism within the organization under IH Policy [AK0100 Client Complaint Management](#).
- 7.5 IH will investigate and address any allegation of Racism within the organization through the existing processes and procedures set out in IH Policies [AU1000](#) and [AK0100](#), and such processes and procedures may be adapted as necessary or appropriate to respond to the particular circumstances of the complaint.
- 7.6 All Staff, including self-identified and non-self-identified Aboriginal individuals, individuals who identify as BIPOC, 'visible minority' and/or racialized, can expect to experience a culturally safe, racism-free and discrimination-free work environment. Staff will take steps to contribute to anti-racist environment for others.

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7.7 IH will take steps to support Staff experiences of an anti-racist work environment including:

- Supporting workplace environments that are free of discrimination, racism and Culturally Unsafe behaviours as per AU1000 Workplace Environment and AU0100 Standards of Conduct for IH Employees;
- Developing a workforce that values diversity and enhances organizational efficiency and effectiveness through the inclusion of diverse perspectives and points of view as per AU2100 Diversity; and
- Promoting Staff psychological well-being, including cultural well-being, and actively working to prevent harm to Staff psychological health in negligent, reckless, or intentional ways as per AV3000 Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace.

7.8 In circumstances where a breach of this Policy is found, appropriate relief and remedies, including possible termination of employment, will be implemented.

7.9 The type of remedies, reconciliation and/or resolution implemented will be informed by the situation and may vary depending on all the circumstances, including the particular behaviour or behaviours at issue and the people or systems involved. For example, Staff may ask that a cultural resolution process be incorporated into the resolution process if appropriate.

8.0 REFERENCES

- Dr. Mary-Ellen Turpel-Lafond (Aki-Kwe); In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care Report, November 2020
- Adapted from Ontario Public Service Anti-Racism Policy Overview, February 2018
- Declaration of Commitment to Cultural Safety and Humility First Nations Health Council (2019)
- Interior Partnership Accord: Interior Region Nation Executive and Interior Health Authority
- Government of British Columbia (2019) Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act
- Government of British Columbia (2016) Métis Nation Relationship Accord II Truth and
- Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) Final Report: Calls to Action UN General
- Assembly (2007) United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Related policies:

- IH Policy [AD0200 Aboriginal Cultural Safety and Humility](#)
- IH Policy [AK0100 Client Complaint Management](#)
- IH Policy [AU1000 Workplace Environment](#)
- IH Policy [AU2100 Diversity](#)
- IH Policy [AV3000 Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace](#)

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