

Purpose

Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare (MAHC) recognizes there are distinct racialized and marginalized groups that have long been disadvantaged both in employment and health care. In recognition of this and to achieve MAHC's vision "Together we provide outstanding integrated care to support people to live their healthiest lives", we have adopted the following policy.

Scope

The policy pertains to all staff, volunteers, committee volunteers, credentialed staff and Board of Directors at MAHC.

Policy

MAHC is committed to advancing equity, inclusion, diversity, and addressing bias and discrimination, in order to achieve better outcomes for all patients, families, providers, and staff. All people will be treated with respect and dignity, and barriers to safe, and quality health care will be eliminated. We are committed to employing the right people to provide the best possible health care and encourage applicants from underrepresented and equity seeking groups because we know the importance of reflecting the diversity of our community in our governance, leadership, and workforce.

Definitions

Discrimination: Any form of unequal treatment based on the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, whether imposing extra burdens or denying benefits. It may be intentional or unintentional. It may involve direct actions that are discriminatory on their face, or it may involve rules, practices or procedures that appear neutral, but have the effect of disadvantaging certain groups of people. Discrimination may take obvious forms, or it may occur in very subtle ways.

Diversity: Diversity is the presence of a wide range of visible or invisible human qualities and attributes within a group, organization or society. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, ancestry, culture, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, race, language, physical and intellectual ability, religion, sex, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

Equity: Equity is a condition or state of fair, inclusive and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences.

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a level playing field among all individuals and communities. This requires recognizing and addressing barriers to opportunities for all to thrive in our society.

Harassment: Engaging in a course of vexatious comments or conduct that are known, or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. The term "vexatious" refers to comments or conduct that annoy, upset, or cause distress to another person without reasonable cause. A single incident can be considered harassment if it is serious enough and has a lasting, harmful effect. Less serious behaviour can also be considered harassment if it is repeated or persistent, there is a power imbalance, or other circumstances make it more serious.

Inclusion: Inclusion is based on the principle of acceptance and inclusion of all employees, credentialed staff, volunteers, patients and their families. They see themselves reflected in their physical surroundings and the broader environment, in which diversity is honoured and all individuals are respected.

Procedure

To create a sense of belonging, MAHC will nurture an inclusive and culturally safe environment for diverse, racialized and marginalized staff, providers, volunteers, patients and their families. As partners in health care, we will support every patient's culture, history and perspectives to advance safe, quality health care.

To ensure efforts to address equity, diversity and inclusion are a top priority for MAHC, the Board of Directors has four focus areas to address diversity and equity issues.

1) Delivering an exemplary patient experience

MAHC will establish a baseline and use equity data to inform future decisions regarding policies, programs, guidelines, and practices. Develop metrics that will continuously measure our progress and successes towards creating a sustainable environment that supports equity, diversity and inclusion for all and an exemplary patient experience.

2) Embracing our community

MAHC will establish and maintain collaborative relationships and partnerships with all communities and stakeholders so that the perspectives and needs of all staff, providers, patients and families, are recognized and addressed through shared and committed leadership. Ensure that our diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, actions, and results are transparent and synergistic.

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3) Empowering our people

MAHC is committed to the principle that every person is entitled to work and/or receive care in a respectful, positive environment, free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, and exclusion. People need the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills to identify and eliminate discriminatory biases and systemic racism.

4) Ensuring Health Equity

MAHC is committed to fair, equitable and culturally safe access to healthcare through community partnerships and engagement of underrepresented groups.

The board will ensure that there are clear reporting procedures for any type of discrimination or harassment combined with follow-up procedures to prevent future incidents.

Through the Resources and Audit Committee, the Board of Directors will oversee the implementation of the formal diversity and inclusion strategy by MAHC's operational/staff Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Anti-Racism Committee, and receive reports periodically from the Committee regarding its activities.

All Board of Directors committees will ensure members are active on a daily basis to improve IDEA and incorporated important matters into the committee work plan. The Board of Directors committees will oversee their actions and take responsibility to report and track as it relates to the Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Policy. Annual committee evaluations will be conducted.

Cross Reference

MAHC Policy – Workplace Diversity
 MAHC Policy – Respectful Workplace

Notes

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References / Relevant Legislation

[Ontario Health's Equity, Inclusion, Diversity and Anti-Racism Framework](#)
[Ontario Human Rights Code](#)

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