

We stand with the black community. As human beings and members of society, we all have an obligation and responsibility to uphold core values such as equality, justice, compassion and kindness. The actions that have been occurring for generations do not align with these values and instead show where our society is broken. The lives of black people and other oppressed groups are as important as everyone else's and they should be treated in a manner that reflects our values. They deserve justice when they are treated unfairly and answers when their loved ones are injured or murdered. Those who commit such crimes should be held accountable for their actions.

We feel it is important to draw attention to the healthcare disparities that the black community faces. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2017) showed that 32% of Black Americans personally experienced racial discrimination when going to a doctor or health clinic and 22% avoided seeking care out of concern about discrimination. In Ohio, the Department of Health reported as of April 30, 2020, 24% of coronavirus patients were African American, while they only make up 13% of the state's population.

As an organization dedicated to the health and wellbeing of healthcare professionals, we care deeply about their experiences reflecting the reality of overt racism, systemic racism and microaggressions present in our society and within the healthcare system. We fully support them in their fight for equality within the system and encourage institutions to devote resources to increase awareness of these injustices and provide tools to help promote change.

By carrying out OhioPHP's mission of facilitating the health and wellness of healthcare professionals, we also elevate the quality of care provided to patients in our healthcare systems and increase awareness that people of all races and ethnicities need to be treated with respect and compassion. As healthcare professionals, we have a privilege and voice that should be utilized to promote equality and ensure that all our patients and colleagues feel safe and welcome when they enter a healthcare setting/institution. We recognize that we must all continue to listen, elevate, and learn from black voices. Black lives matter and we are committed to doing better as members of the healthcare community.

We encourage individuals to begin to act. Below are some suggestions on what we can do as individuals to start making a change:

- Be mindful and become more aware of the actions occurring around you
- Be willing to acknowledge the discomfort of the situation
- Be willing to acknowledge your own feelings regarding the issues of racism, racial justice and equality
- Be open and nonjudgmental when listening to the stories of other's experiences
- Listen with curiosity and to seek understanding
- Do not tolerate racist language or behavior
- Speak up for those who are oppressed
- Use our own power/privilege to encourage justice and equality

In memory of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tamir Rice, and many others who have suffered from deadly actions of discrimination, we encourage you to reflect on the powerful words spoken in 2019 by civil rights icon, Congressman John Lewis, who recently passed away: ***"When you see something that is not right, not just, not fair, you have a moral obligation to say something. To do something. Our children and their children will ask us, 'What did you do? What did you say?'"***

We must continue the fight for justice and carry on the legacy of the many men and women who embodied nonviolent change and promoted equal rights for all.