ANTI RACISM PRINCIPLES

Anti-racism is about more than pledges and good intentions. To meaningfully combat racism in healthcare, we need to think about tangible actions. This series of briefings highlights concrete steps that healthcare providers can take to ensure that their services work for everyone, regardless of the colour of their skin.

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1. DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP BY NAMING RACISM

INTRO

To effectively tackle racism, it's vital that those in positions of authority demonstrate leadership by naming racism and engaging seriously and continuously with the ways in which racism impacts the lives of patients and the public. We've found that in organisations where leaders acknowledge and name racism, it starts to signal that it's 'safe' for staff and others to discuss racism. This recognition acts as an enabler for the conversations that need to happen to start addressing it. As well as naming racism, leaders at all levels of an organisation should aim to understand the ways in which structural and institutional racism impact on health and be clear about where accountability lies for improving access, experience, and outcomes.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The first step to solving a problem is by acknowledging that there's a problem in the first place. We've seen that a driving factor for inaction on tackling racism is the fact that people – especially leaders – are afraid to speak about it, often because they don't want to appear complicit. Many leaders will not acknowledge the existence of racism in their organisation through fear that it will reflect on their leadership and their personal character. The impact of this fear, however, is that racism remains hidden. Where leaders are reluctant to speak about racism, this informs the culture of entire institutions – staff don't feel safe to enter discussions about how racism manifests

Professor Camara Jones, epidemiologist and public health clinician, describes the act of 'naming racism' as three distinct actions:

- acknowledge racism exists
- ask 'how is racism operating here?'
- commit to organising, strategising and acting to address it[1].

Acknowledging racism exists involves recognising what the data and information about your organisation, system,or service are indicating about the experiences of your racially minoritised patients, staff, and communities. For example, what does your organisation's Workforce Race Equality Standard data report tell you about the culture of your organisation?

Understanding how racism is operating in your context involves reviewing indicators for inequalities of access, experience, and outcome and asking questions that recognise racism as a determinant of health. What does your outcome data look like when stratified by race or ethnicity (see Principle 4); who is advantaged or disadvantaged by the formal and informal policies and practices in place in your context? (see Principle 5); and what are the accountability mechanisms for ensuring that approaches designed to address racial and ethnic inequalities are addressed (see Principle 2).

People working at all levels of an organisation can demonstrate leadership by naming racism, this responsibility doesn't lie solely with people with 'equality' or 'equity' in their job titles. Everyone can commit to addressing racism wherever they find it and senior leaders have a critical duty to model the culture they expect by explicitly and actively naming racism.

- If you're a **leader**, *explicitly* name racism in communication with your staff and other stakeholders. Make space for potentially challenging conversations by signaling your support for anti-racism work. This might mean making

- If you're a **practitioner**, use data and information to understand where racial and ethnic inequalities are and to monitor progress against initiatives to address these.

- If you're a **commissioner**, request and review data disaggregated by race or ethnicity and enable the allocation of resources required to facilitate an understanding of where and how inequalities are being introduced or perpetuated.

- **Everyone** should share their learning about approaches that effectively reduce racial and ethnic inequalities in their context.

- **Everyone** should educate themselves about racism in health, and anti-racism strategies and approaches.