

National Pharmacy Organizations Unite to Take a Stand Against Racial Injustice

The recent deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and too many others have ignited strong emotions and continue to shed a glaring light on the day-to-day experiences of Black Americans. Sadly, racism and discrimination are a thread that has been woven into the fabric of this country for far too long.

Adding to the challenges of the global pandemic of COVID-19, which disproportionately impact communities of color, there is a greater public health crisis plaguing our country: racism and discrimination. People of color and other marginalized groups experience a continuum of systemic racism, discrimination, and injustices that result in ongoing health inequities created by numerous factors impacting social determinants of health.

As pharmacists, we took an oath that includes, as its first statement, “I will consider the welfare of humanity and relief of suffering my primary concerns.” Humanity includes all people, and we have the responsibility in this country to care for those who are disproportionately suffering. As health care professionals, we are trained to provide the best care to all and to “advocate for change that improves patient care.” Advocating against racism, all forms of discrimination and injustice can improve patient care. This is an urgent priority.

- We, as a profession, stand in unity to advocate for the dismantling of systems that have historically marginalized and oppressed Black Americans in this country.
- We stand and advocate against police brutality and law enforcement misconduct.
- We advocate for measures that eliminate inequities resulting from racism and discrimination in every facet of our profession, including patient care,

pharmacist and pharmacy technician continuing education, student pharmacist education, workplace practices, pharmacy school admissions, leadership opportunities, and organizational policies.

- We advocate for health equity in marginalized communities to eliminate disproportionate health outcomes.

The time is now to engage in intentional dialogue and action. All forms of racism, discrimination, and injustice are unacceptable. We must all listen, learn, and collectively address this crisis directly. We encourage self and team accountability for upholding actions and social justice to bring forth peace and healing in our communities. The profession of pharmacy, represented by the organizations signed onto this statement, will begin actions to ensure that the care provided by pharmacists and within pharmacies upholds the highest standards. These actions include but are not limited to—

1. Working together to provide opportunities to address health care disparities and strengthen affected communities.
2. Providing pharmacist, student pharmacist, and pharmacy technician education on social injustices and systematic challenges impacting health care.
3. Delivering strategies that focus on change through communications, partnerships, and solutions to address health care disparities.
4. Continuing dialogue among pharmacy organizations and stakeholders to identify and implement change.

Let us work together now to weave new threads that embrace our diversity, honor our humanity, and support people of color and any marginalized populations for the benefit and promotion of current and future generations.

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