



**Advancing Equity,
Inclusion & Diversity Here,
TAKES ALL OF US.**

Equity, Inclusion, & Diversity Strategic Plan

2023



**Westchester
Medical Center**

Westchester Medical Center Health Network

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Introduction

WMCHHealth's mission is to provide the highest-quality care for all residents of the Hudson Valley. We believe the work we do in equity, inclusion, and diversity will not only reinforce our ability as an academic medical center-led network to provide the highest quality, patient-centered care in a respectful and compassionate environment but also lead the transformation of health care in the Hudson Valley to continuously respond to the needs of its diverse population.

The Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Strategic Plan represents WMCHHealth's commitment to:

- Improve access to equitable care and advance health equity;
- Foster a strong culture of inclusion in the workplace;
- Optimize employee diversity to better reflect the communities we serve; and
- Promote economic equity and a more inclusive supplier base.

The Equity, Inclusion and Diversity (EID) Strategic Plan, offers a comprehensive and integrated approach to embed EID principles into the way we operate, and outlines the specific goals and action we believe will address key areas of opportunity identified in the 2022 current state assessment.

These goals are ambitious and will take time to achieve, but WMCHHealth is committed to the success of the Plan as we see this as an investment in our future that will yield long term benefits for our patients, valued members of our workforce, and communities across the Hudson Valley.

Purpose of This Document

The Plan serves as a roadmap to advance equity, inclusion and diversity goals across the network. This document lays the foundation for future planning and implementation to support the successful integration of equity, inclusion and diversity best practices.

Through this document, we demonstrate our commitment to provide culturally competent, patient-centered care to all, maintain and grow a diverse workforce, and ensure every patient, visitor, and employees feels welcome and safe.

Vision & Approach

WMCHealth embraces the multiple identities and experiences of all those who work, provide and receive healthcare services and is committed to action to promote equity, inclusion and diversity best practices to support an inclusive workplace, diverse workforce, and deliver equitable care that leads to improved health for patients and communities across the Hudson Valley.

Vision

In advancing equity, inclusion and diversity, we elevate the standard of care for others and each other through efforts to:

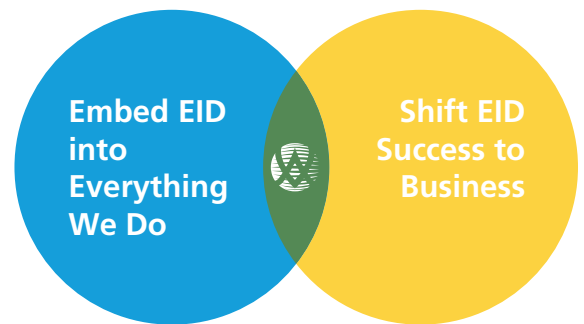
- **Build a culture of equity** that leads to better care delivery and health outcomes.
- **Inspire a culture of belonging** to create a welcoming and affirming environment.
- **Promote diversity** to ensure we reflect the communities we serve.

Our Approach

Make equity, inclusion and diversity everyone's responsibility by involving business partners and leaders to help drive implementation and results.

Through our collective action, we work to build a more equitable and inclusive organization where everyone recognizes the importance of equity, inclusion and diversity in their work, and strives to integrate best practices to support the organization's equity, inclusion and diversity priorities and goals.

Members of the equity, inclusion and diversity team are seen and serve a consultative role to support successful implementation and alignment across the network.



Shared Meaning & Purpose

The concepts used in the strategic plan can have varied meanings. Our progress in this journey relies on having a shared meaning of the concepts, and a shared purpose to help drive and align our collective efforts to embed equity, inclusion and diversity as part of doing business. The following definitions aim to create a shared understanding as we move this work forward.

Definitions

Equity	Fairness in the way people are treated.
Inclusion	Action and behavior that encourages participation and creates environments that honor individual uniqueness and fosters a sense of belonging for everyone.
Diversity	Similarities and differences in the range of human identities in socioecological, historical, and cultural contexts.
Cultural Competency	Ability to provide care to patients with diverse values, beliefs and behaviors, that includes tailoring health care delivery to meet patients' social, cultural and linguistic needs.
Social Determinants of Health	Conditions in the environment where people are born, live, learn, work, play worship, and age that affects a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.

Through **ATTENTION, INTENTION, and ACTION**

WMCHHealth commits to integrating and sustaining equity, inclusion and diversity principles.

Our Why

Equity, inclusion and diversity principles serve as a catalyst for improved delivery of equitable care and health outcomes, and creates conditions where patients, visitors, and employees, regardless of their identities and perspectives, feel welcome and sense of belonging.

It is our hope that all members of the WMCHHealth community embrace our commitment to equity, inclusion and diversity and take the necessary action to support the integration of these principles to better serve patients and families and cultivate an inclusive workplace climate where everyone can thrive.

Words from Leadership to Put into Action



What Guides the Work

WMCHHealth’s commitment to equity, inclusion and diversity is guided by our values of integrity, respect, trust, compassion, innovation, collaboration, inclusion, quality, accountability, and excellence. We seek to drive change with a focus on those who stand to benefit from the success of the equity, inclusion and diversity change initiative.



Our People

Champion an Inclusive Workplace and Diverse Workforce



Our Patients

Promote Access to Equitable, Culturally Responsive Care



Our Community

Build Healthier Communities

Value of Equity, Inclusion, & Diversity

Investing for the Future

A substantial body of research strongly supports the view that a tangible, continuous commitment to equity, inclusion and diversity development, where there is sustained investment in people and culture creates organizations that are more resilient and effective at achieving their mission.

The case for equity, inclusion and diversity extends beyond social and moral reasoning and organizational optics. The integration of these foundational principles into organizational operations produces individual, institutional, and societal benefits. Diversity has been tied to improved innovation, increased financial returns, and a recruitment advantage.

However, we recognize that diversity alone is not sufficient to achieve these performance advantages. The power of diversity is greatly amplified in organizations that value differences and cultivates a culture of inclusion that embraces equitable and fair practices. Equity and inclusivity, when coupled with diversity, enhances mission effectiveness and innovation.

In healthcare specifically, equity, inclusion and diversity are vital to driving:

- A better understanding of those in need of care in order to enhance the provision of care to be more responsive to the diverse needs of patients;
- Improved hiring and retention of a workforce that reflects the patient population; and
- Gives employees and patients a voice in providing and receiving high quality, patient-centered care.

Effective equity, inclusion and diversity strategic programs extend beyond the provision of culturally responsive care to our patients by advancing initiatives that benefit the general health and well-being of the broader community.

Workplace Benefits

Improved understanding of those you work for, with, and around

Creates a work environment that allows everyone to reach their full potential

Increases retention rates

Opens the door to diverse talent

Boosts employee morale

Better performance outcomes

Increases employee productivity

Strategic Goals

Over the next five years, the organization will apply an integrated approach aimed at strengthening internal capacity and creating sustainable systems and models to achieve the following overarching goals.

Promote Access to Equitable, Culturally Responsive Care

- Facilitate a culturally responsive and affirming clinical environment.
- Enhance education, protocols, and systems to support inclusive and affirming care.
- Foster equitable patient experiences.

Champion an Inclusive Workplace and Diverse Workforce

- Foster a culture and climate of inclusive excellence.
- Support inclusive hiring and advancement.
- Create leadership development and mentorship program.
- Coordinate and expand workforce diversity exposure and pipeline programs.

Invest to Build Healthier Communities

- Optimize community partnerships to promote equitable health and well-being.
- Identify community needs and programs for investment.
- Advance education and coalition building.



BUILD new structures and practices to promote inclusive excellence and equity for **our people**.



IMPROVE the clinical experience of **our patients** through accessibility, cultural responsive and affirming care.



INVEST in our **community** through education, service, and advocacy.

Organizational Alignment

Equity, inclusion and diversity initiatives are aligned with and enable the overall strategic direction for the organization. Aligned with WMCHHealth's vision and strategic goals, we will embed equity, inclusion and diversity practices to support efforts to:



Be the provider of choice for Hudson Valley residents.

Equity, inclusion and diversity initiatives will augment service delivery through personalizing care, outcomes and experience to improve our understanding of patients' cultural, linguistic and religious needs. By strengthening capacity to provide culturally competent care, we improve our ability to tailor services based on how each person may want to be treated.



Be the employer of choice.

Lead the way as an employer who values the principles of equity, inclusion and diversity and is committed to action that fosters an equitable and inclusive work environment that attracts diverse talent who live our values and advance our mission.



Meet the needs of the communities we serve.

Continue WMCHHealth's long-standing mission to serve the healthcare needs of all communities in the Hudson Valley, we commit to making further investments through the integration of equity, inclusion and diversity best practices to ensure our people, talent and resources serve patients and families by meeting people where they are in order to improve their care and outcomes.

Process Toward Implementation

Methodology

Current State Organizational Assessment

In 2022, the Office of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity initiated a process to assess existing data, policies and practices and conduct engagement surveys, focus groups and informational interviews with key stakeholders. After reviewing and analyzing the data and information, a set of overarching goals, objectives, and action items were developed that provides a framework for the organization focused on **six core areas: leadership and governance, equity and access, culturally responsive care, workplace inclusion, workforce diversity, and supplier diversity.**

Through this process, we identified the specific opportunities to inform the strategy, prioritize efforts, and set goals.

Framework

The framework represents key areas of opportunity for the development and implementation of activities and initiatives to support integration efforts and build organizational capacity to achieve the desired outcomes in each of the six core areas.



Infrastructure

To support and drive implementation, a governance structure was established to offer direction, guidance, and oversight for the development and implementation of equity, inclusion and diversity activities and initiatives to meet the desired goals. Learn more about the governance structure in the following page.

Equity, Inclusion, & Diversity Steering

Governance Structure

WMCHHealth's **Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Steering Committee** serves to advise and actively engage to meet the organization's equity, inclusion and diversity goals.

Members advise and recommend policies and initiatives to advance the integration of best practices, with a focus on the following priorities:

- Promote inclusive practices to foster a welcoming climate for staff, patients and visitors.
- Advance initiatives to support culturally responsive patient-centered care.
- Develop approaches to address disparities in care and health outcomes.
- Strengthen the organization's capacity to attract, retain, and develop diverse talent.
- Elevate the equity, inclusion and diversity presence across the network.
- Connect diverse business groups to promote economic equity.
- Develop ways to measure and inform program improvements, service delivery models, identify priority populations, and drive evidence-based intervention initiatives.



The governance structure includes an **Executive Committee**, made up of network leaders, who offer guidance and oversight to ensure equity, inclusion and diversity initiatives remain aligned with organizational priorities and goals.

Membership







Robin Altman	Chief, General Pediatrics and Pediatric Hospital Medicine
Fredrick Bierman	DIO and Director of Graduate Medical Education
Rosemary Byrnes	Vice President, Patient Experience
Keith Guerra	Director of Security
Daniel Marcy	Director, Government and Community Relations
Kathryn Martin	Attending, Pediatric Surgeon
Vanessa McFarlane	Vice President, Accreditation and Regulatory
Anu Paulose	Associate General Counsel, Legal Affairs
Anna Pinilla	Assistance Vice President, Supply Chain Management
Matilde Roman	SVP and Chief Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Officer
Kelly Soldano	Vice President, Human Resources
Bruno Villazhinay	Senior Administrator, OB-GYN Department
Latrevette Walker	Director of Critical Care

The Road Map

The strategic plan offers a high-level direction toward reaching our vision and goals. Subsequent operational plans will detail the specific actions to be taken to meet each aim described in these six core areas.

	<p>Leadership and Governance Demonstrate our commitment to equity, inclusion and diversity through strong accountability, visibility and resources.</p>
	<p>Equity and Access Produce more equitable health outcomes by identifying and reducing disparities and effectively addressing social determinants of individual and population health.</p>
	<p>Culturally Responsive Care Eliminate inequitable barriers to effective care through the delivery of culturally responsive, patient-centered care.</p>
	<p>Workplace Inclusion Foster a strong culture of inclusion and belonging in the workplace that places trust at the center of the relationship between the system and its people (workforce).</p>
	<p>Workforce Diversity Promote employee diversity through its corporate policies and practices to ensure the workforce reflects the communities WMCHHealth serves.</p>
	<p>Supplier Diversity Advance economic equity and an inclusive supply base through programs that connect diverse business groups with procurement opportunities.</p>

2022-2023 is a foundational period, focused on data gathering, evaluating our current state, identifying opportunities, and developing the strategy to move the work forward. While operational plans will further define actions we will take, the following high-level strategic objectives mark the direction forward to meet the aims and goals:

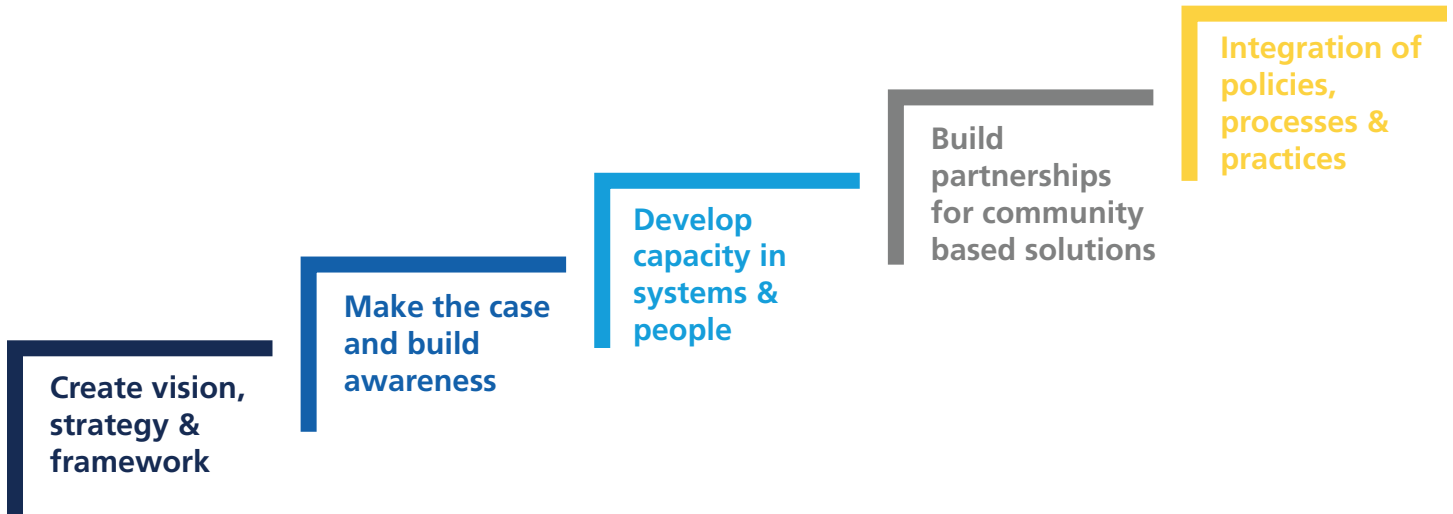
						
Build infrastructure and enhance leadership engagement to drive and sustain integration efforts.	○					
Define and develop metrics to measure progress and strengthen accountability.	○					
Amplify and elevate equity, inclusion and diversity through communication, advocacy and partnerships.	○					
Improve the reliability and accuracy of patient demographic data to support the delivery of culturally-responsive care and address health disparities.		○	○			
Address the social needs of patients through improved processes, resources and pathways.		○	○			
Create innovative programs and approaches to advance health equity.		○				
Build organizational capabilities to improve the delivery of culturally responsive care.			○			
Strengthen workforce capacity to promote inclusive practices in the workplace.				○		
Enhance policies, systems and processes to support diversity and inclusion for our employees				○	○	
Develop strategies and initiatives to support recruitment, retention and development of diverse talent.					○	
Strengthen processes and develop strategies to better connect diverse business groups to procurement opportunities.						○

Path Forward

The activities and actions in each core area will be fully developed and implemented over a five-year period. The alignment with the organizational strategic priorities and goals will support the continued advancements beyond the five-year planning and building period.

An essential part in building our strategy was having a comprehensive understanding between where we are and where we need to be. The following steps mark key milestones toward achieving the organization's stated goals and objectives.

Steps in Our Journey



What Success Looks Like

Successful integration will be realized when people within the organization gain the capacity and agency to apply equity, inclusion and diversity best practices within their respective function or role, and actualized when the principles are:

- Rooted in our policies and business operations
- Embedded in our learning and development
- Championed by our leaders
- Modeled by our employees

Simply put, it will be the way we do business.

Timeline Progression



Assess and Establish Foundation | 2022-2023



Understand Current State



Conduct Organizational Assessment

- Research and evaluate organizational readiness
- Perform internal stakeholder engagement
- Gather and analyze existing data



Create the Building Blocks



Identify Goals and Priorities

- Analyze focus group and survey contributions to identify broad themes
- Develop vision and strategy and identify priorities
- Establish governance structure to support and drive the work



Set the Strategy and Approach

- Solicit input from stakeholders
- Build EID core team
- Identify resources
- Develop and disseminate Plan



Implementation | 2023-2027



Goal setting and advance implementation

- Develop operational plan(s)
- Articulate annual goals and metrics to be used
- Build consensus for the strategic plan across the organization
- Scale infrastructure to support integration and sustain goals
- Implement initiatives and activities, evaluate progress, and adjust accordingly

