



Stanford MEDICINE

June 30, 2021

Dear Community,

Following through on our promise, we are writing to share our initial plans to address the findings and recommendations made in the Stanford Medicine Commission on Justice and Equity's [final report](#).

We would first like to thank again our Commission members for their significant efforts in producing this document and for the careful consideration that went into developing recommendations that will guide us toward becoming a more just, equitable, and diverse Stanford Medicine. We want to reaffirm that we agree with the findings of the report and look forward to making substantive change in our community and beyond. We would also like to thank our community for your continued engagement, including the feedback you have shared since the report was published a few weeks ago.

By coming together and participating in this process, we have taken an important step forward as an organization. But we recognize that the most crucial step is the one yet to come: translating the report's recommendations into actions that drive meaningful progress. Here, we feel it is vital to acknowledge two things upfront.

First, progress in confronting an issue as complex as systemic racism will not come overnight. Achieving transformative change will demand a long-term focus and sustained effort from us all. It must be a shared commitment. Equally important, before any initiative reaches the implementation stage, it must have arrived at that point with the input of our community's diverse stakeholder groups. This is not the kind of work that gets done in weeks; it will require ongoing cooperation and community involvement over a period that we expect to span months and even years.

Second, making headway on certain issues may at times come more slowly. There will be disagreement about which actions we should take and when. In these moments, we humbly ask that you place your trust in the process. You have our commitment -- and that of the leadership team -- that we will live up to our [Pledge](#).

Today, we are offering an early preview of what's to come. Below, we've outlined several foundational priorities that we believe are essential to 1) achieving the goals detailed in the Commission's report and 2) establishing structures and incentives needed for Stanford Medicine to address many of the report's recommendations.

This message is simply that -- a starting point. Given the scale of actions recommended by the Commission, we will need to continue the due diligence process

before we can share, in detail, specific implementation plans and additional commitments. However, we will continue to move swiftly and plan to share regular updates as this work progresses.

Foundational Priorities

1. Recruit a Chief Diversity Officer and Create a Management and Governance Structure to Oversee and Amplify Stanford Medicine's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Efforts

The Commission's report identified what we all know: there is a wealth of meaningful DEI work already underway at Stanford Medicine. At the same time, our organization is considerably complex and multilayered, which can lead to programs operating in siloes or failing to achieve their full potential. We see tremendous value in aligning this work by recruiting a Chief Diversity Officer and establishing a governance structure that spans our three entities and connects to the University. Centralizing our approach in this way will help amplify our efforts and keep us all accountable to a shared set of goals.

We also recognize the importance of creating a centralized way for our community to address acts of discrimination and harassment. Having a common reporting mechanism in place is imperative to creating a safe and supportive environment for our people and patients. To this end, we will be working to align reporting and adjudication for incidents of bias and prejudice across Stanford Medicine. Through the Commission's report, we've heard clearly that we must continue to emphasize safety on campus, and we are committed to building upon -- and when necessary, revamping -- current practices. The Commission has already had a significant role on this front at the University level.

Last year, President Marc Tessier-Lavigne created the [Community Board on Public Safety](#) to assess the needs and concerns of the University community related to policing, including safety and equity of experience among students, faculty, and staff. The Board aims to foster communication and trust between Stanford's Department of Public Safety and the broader University community. We're appreciative that our Commission had the opportunity to share insights from their assessment of Stanford Medicine to the Board chairs. Additionally, we are proud that Dr. Iris Gibbs, the School of Medicine's associate dean for admissions, and Marc Jones, University trustee, vice-chair of Stanford Health Care's Board of Directors, and Stanford Medicine Commission on Justice and Equity member, both serve on the Community Board on Public Safety.

2. Incorporate DEI Principles and Standards into Performance Review and Training Processes

We will immediately begin addressing performance review planning to include DEI principles and practices in training and performance review goals. This work will also extend to executive management and their performance and incentive plans.

The Commission also cited the "diversity tax" experienced by our minority faculty, staff, and students who predominantly lead our DEI efforts, yet go unrewarded for the work. We hope to begin to address this by fundamentally adjusting our incentive plans. As these metrics are being defined, increasing Black and other underrepresented minority community member representation at all levels will be a key area of emphasis.

We also support the Commission's recommendation to incorporate inclusion, diversity, and health equity (IDHE) principles and standards into trainings and onboarding programs and making those mandatory for our faculty, staff, and students. Participation in these ongoing programs will directly factor into individual performance reviews.

3. Develop a Plan to Become a National Leader in Health Equity

The long-standing health inequities exposed by COVID-19 have disproportionately impacted communities of color across the nation. To help address this critical issue, Stanford Medicine is committed to developing a plan that will enable it to become a national leader in health equity.

Because Stanford Medicine already has a number of transformative health equity efforts occurring across the enterprise, our plan will focus on aligning and strengthening this ongoing impactful work. Critically, we also will engage and further build trust with our local communities of color.

Further, we will explore the creation of a Center for Health Equity Excellence and reexamine Stanford Medicine's mission statements to ensure that they embrace health equity.

Next Steps

Having now established these priorities, we're committed to taking concrete actions in the coming weeks. We will remain transparent, and you can expect regular updates as our plans roll out and to learn about opportunities to get more involved.

Though we recognize that, as the leaders of Stanford Medicine, we set the direction for the organization, we can only succeed by working together. We are excited to begin implementing these initial priorities and look forward to your partnership as we take the next step.

Sincerely,

Lloyd Minor, MD
Dean, Stanford School of Medicine

David Entwistle
President and CEO, Stanford Health Care

Paul King
President and CEO, Stanford Children's Health

