



SUSTAINABLE GROWTH MAKES US **STRONGER** **TOGETHER**

**Diversity, Equity and
Inclusion at Children's
National Hospital**



Children's National.

Annual Report • July 2023 – June 2024

From the Chief Diversity Officer Denice Cora-Bramble, M.D., M.B.A.

Our efforts to build a diversity, equity and inclusion culture at Children’s National Hospital in collaboration with our employees and the communities we serve continues to make outstanding forward progress.

It’s important to note this progress because over time, many such initiatives can lose momentum or run into opposition from internal or external forces that slows or stops progress.

But that isn’t the case for this important work at Children’s National. Some of our success is due to the fact that our DEI Program and its subcommittees simply created a stronger and sustainable infrastructure for what already existed here – a decades-long commitment to equity. The framework of the DEI Program served to bring us closer together at critical time in the United States, when our renewed energy and focus on these issues expanded what was possible.

Today, the people within our program and across Children’s National continue to give time, energy, enthusiasm and effort to this work, and every day, more engage in our DEI culture. For example, bias reporting and response continues to serve as a valuable accountability and learning tool. Additionally, divisions and programs are using DEI-related data collection to identify challenges, remove barriers to health equity and increase diversity.

Our leadership and board also have maintained a steadfast dedication to diversity, equity and inclusion because it’s the right thing to do, even when it isn’t easy. This is especially true for our new President and CEO, Michelle Riley-Brown. She has embraced these efforts and further amplified them as critical to our mission and to our organization’s success from her early days here. We are thankful to the board and to Ms. Riley-Brown for their engagement and work to champion our DEI culture.

This leadership example has helped us grow and given us the confidence to continue to find innovative ways to support people when they need it. Personally, one of the greatest challenges I faced this year was finding a way to create constructive channels for employees to have open and honest conversations when tension and emotions were at an all-time high related to the war in Gaza. A special thanks to colleagues who shared their thoughts and feelings with me regarding this difficult time.

This year’s report highlights our DEI Program’s progress and leadership’s unwavering commitment in spite of anti-DEI headwinds at the national level. It also captures the many ways we are reaching beyond our walls to share the lessons learned with other children’s hospitals and health systems that are on their own equity-focused journeys. Our progress would not have been possible without team members’ dedication, effort and passion, for which I am thankful. As our journey continues, I hope you enjoy reading about this year’s progress.



Denice Cora-Bramble, M.D., M.B.A.
Chief Diversity Officer, Children’s National Hospital

Data-driven health equity goals drive clinical improvements for children

10

TARGET AREAS to Measure Equity in Care



This is the fourth year that the DEI Program has been actively engaged in measuring and improving equitable patient care.

Use of the data-driven framework to measure equity in clinical care is already impacting the practice of medicine for specific patient populations.



Measuring and managing chronic pain for children with sickle cell disease

Andrew Campbell, M.D., director of the Comprehensive Sickle Cell Disease Program, and his team are applying this data to change the trajectory of care for children with chronic pain and sickle cell disease.

Across all hospital units on average, patient reported pain scores reduce by 85% between a patient's admission and their discharge. However, a deeper dive into that data revealed that children with chronic pain from sickle cell disease had a different pain experience. Their reported pain levels did not change nearly as much from the time they were admitted until they were discharged—meaning they were going home without appropriate pain relief.

As one of the largest programs in the country treating children with sickle cell disease, Dr. Campbell and his team analyzed the data and were immediately compelled to create a multi-strategy approach to address the challenge that includes:

- **Individualized pain plans** for all chronic pain patients and for those who experienced a recent increase in emergency department visits or hospitalizations. Each plan uses shared decision making with the child's family and includes an opportunity to identify other factors including social determinants of

health and care gaps that need to be addressed. The plans are reviewed monthly when needed.

- **Improving emergency department pain management** by encouraging families to call Hematology upon arrival at the emergency department, aiming to shorten the time it takes for a child to receive pain medicine to within the first hour of arrival. The emergency department order sets were also updated to address any existing gaps in care for this population.
- **Increasing referrals to the multi-disciplinary Enhanced Integrative Pain Clinic** to incorporate additional pain strategies, including holistic therapies, into the child's pain plan.
- **Creating better patient education materials for pain management** that help families plan ahead for a pain crisis.

The team plans to measure the impact of these strategies through several clearly defined quality measures, including length of stay in emergency department and hospital, repeat measures of admission and discharge pain scores and monthly surveys of patients and their families for 6 months after implementation .



NICU strategies to address disparities in infants discharged on breast milk

The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) team identified in 2021 that only 57% of infants whose families identified as Black or African American were discharged from the hospital on breast milk, as compared to 82% of White infants. This racial disparity is not unique to Children’s National and has been reported in literature.

Recognizing that the unit could improve these rates through focused intervention, the team formed a work group that immediately researched strategies to address the root causes for this challenge, including formula marketing practices, generational and family trends, prolonged pumping during a long NICU stay for the infant, stress levels, lack of support in the workplace and lack of time.

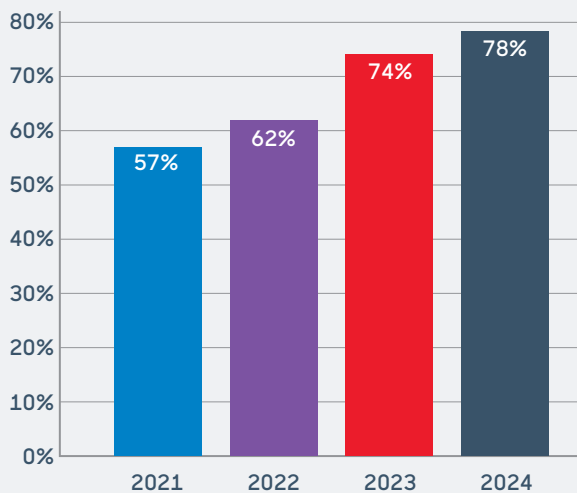
The team then mapped out several strategies designed to address this challenge and selected a set of strategies for implementation, including:

- Freezers for breastmilk storage at every bedside
- A program that allows families to purchase consignment lactation pumps for a reduced price

- Creation of a dedicated team made up of NICU nurses, lactation consultants and dietitians who have the unique responsibility of helping new moms feel supported as they navigate what can be a complicated and stressful experience: breastfeeding.
- Adding additional certified lactation consultants
- Offering meal vouchers and delivery
- New, more inclusive and representative images of breastfeeding and the partner activities that support it, including skin-to-skin contact, used in all educational materials

The NICU team’s multipronged strategies have been successful as evidenced by a 21 percentage point increase in discharged African American or Black infants leaving the hospital on breastmilk in 2024. The team is now focused on refining the current strategies to continue making progress. They are exploring the use of text messages to reach families earlier in their hospital stay and making further updates to educational materials to ensure they are inclusive of everyone.

PERCENTAGE OF INFANTS who are African American or Black discharged from NICU being fed breastmilk



Since 2021, the percentage of NICU infants who go home from the hospital being fed breastmilk has increased by 21 percentage points.



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21 PERCENTAGE POINT INCREASE

in discharged African American or Black infants leaving the hospital on breastmilk in 2024.

DEI at Children's National's Research Institute

The Center for Cancer and Immunology Research (CCIR) and the Center for Neuroscience (CNR) are partnering to further DEI initiatives across the two centers. External consultants were hired to help frame and implement efforts to increase diversity within these centers. The center teams are committed to focusing their efforts on two shorter term goals and one longer term goal:

✓ Shorter Term Goals

• Recruitment and retention

- **Re-think the current hiring process:** The centers are assessing and updating where open positions are posted and how positions are marketed or advertised. The aim is to standardize questions for interviews, and add to consistency and avoid bias.
- **Identify and promote benefits to attract candidates:** The centers are assessing current employee barriers such as cost of living or parking to identify benefits that might assist, such as telework.

- **Create joint mentorship program:** The centers are exploring the feasibility of creating a joint mentorship program to leverage the talent of both centers and standardize mentoring practices.
- **Expanding the visibility of DEI effort:** Bring attention to DEI initiatives across centers through the appointment of a dedicated Children's National Research Institute Associate Chief Diversity Officer.

✓ Longer Term Goal

Diversifying the pipeline: The centers are exploring youth outreach to encourage young people to explore a career in research and therefore building the pipeline of research talent earlier. One goal is to expand an established outreach program with Howard University.



Leading the Way: Sharing and Collaborating Across the U.S.

True systems change can't happen in a single institution. As children's hospitals and other health care systems look for models and best practices, they increasingly recognize the expertise found at Children's National. From speaking engagements to published research, the DEI Program aims to share evidence-based outcomes, best practices and challenges locally and across the nation. Here are a few highlights of our participation in conversations and knowledge-sharing across the United States.

Denice Cora-Bramble, M.D., M.B.A., named 2023 Boston Children's Hospital Medical Staff Organization Visiting Professor for Health Equity and Inclusion

Dr. Cora-Bramble was honored to present at Pediatric Grand Rounds for Boston Children's Hospital in December 2023 as the Visiting Professor for Health Equity and Inclusion. Her presentation shared the data-driven framework behind the DEI Program as well as the ten "success factors" that have led to significant progress for these initiatives over the last four years, despite national political and policy headwinds that seek to curb these efforts.

10 DEI Program Success Factors



WHAT THEY SAID:

"Your presentation was excellent....you ignited the cohort and certainly catalyzed their thinking."

- David Acosta, M.D., Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer, AAMC

Active engagement at the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)

Dr. Cora-Bramble serves as a leader and faculty in diversity, equity and inclusion at the AAMC, an association dedicated to transforming health through medical education, health care, medical research and community collaborations. Their membership includes 171 accredited medical schools in the U.S. and Canada, 400+ teaching hospitals and health systems and 70+ medical societies.

In addition to serving as faculty in the AAMC's Healthcare Executive Diversity and Inclusion Certificate Program (HEDIC), she was recently invited to serve as a consultant to a national advisory committee that will redesign the HEDIC curriculum.

National and local DEI committee and task force membership

Participating in national conversations about diversity, equity and inclusion with leaders and peers from across the United States, including:

- U.S. News & World Report & RTI Health Equity/Diversity/Inclusion Working Group
- Children's Hospital's Association's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Group
- Health Equity National Leadership Group
- D.C. Hospital Association
- Maryland Hospital Association
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Academic Pediatric Association
- Council on Medical Student Education in Pediatrics

Sharing best practice and findings through articles in peer-reviewed and other publications

Publishing articles in peer-reviewed publications and presenting at professional meetings are important ways to disseminate critical findings in academic medicine. A few of the year's diversity, equity and inclusion highlights include:

✓ Publications by DEI Program's steering committee members (denoted by *):

- Payne AS*, Moore K, Casazza A, Parikh K, Cora-Bramble D*. *Initiative to Increase Equity in Clinical Care: Experience at 1 Children's Hospital.*

Published in the peer-reviewed, high impact journal *Pediatrics* from the American Academy of Pediatrics, this publication shared organizational context and process for diversity, equity and inclusion and health equity work; described the process to increase the completeness of racial demographic data; and detailed the process to identify, understand and address clinical disparities at Children's National. The authors also included lessons learned in an effort to inform similar efforts at other institutions.

✓ Other publications and presentations:

- Dooley D* (editor), de la Torre D*, Falusi O*, Kinlow T*, Dixon G*, Abraham A. *Untangling the Thread of Racism: A Primer for Pediatric Health Professionals.* American Academy of Pediatrics. 2023.
- King S*, Roberts-Turner R*, Floyd T*. *Inclusive Leadership: A Framework to Advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Cultivate Belonging.* Nurse Leader. Dec 2023.
- Knight A, Kind T, Dixon, G*, et al. *Changing the Approach in Supporting and Advancing Underrepresented in Medicine (UIM) Medical Students.* MedEdPortal. 2024;153(3):e2023063714.
- Gborkorquellie TT, Ward MC, Falusi O*, Barber AN*, Smith TK. *Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice in Medical Education: A Faculty Development Perspective.* *Pediatr Ann.* 2023 Jul;52(7):e266-e272.

- Gborkorquellie T, Avent G, Falusi O*, Barber A*, Olujide M, Smiley Y, Lichtenstein C. *Fostering Community Engagement to Address Racism: Development and Implementation of a Service-Learning Curriculum for Pediatric Residents*. Acad Pediatr. 2023 Nov-Dec;23(8):1496-1499.
- Cruz AT, Palmer CA, Augustine EM, Casper TC, Dowshen N, Elsholz CL, Mollen CJ, Pickett ML, Schmidt SK, Stukus KS, Goyal MK*, Reed JL. *Concordance of Adolescent Gender, Race, and Ethnicity: Self-report Versus Medical Record Data*. Pediatrics. 2024 Jan 1;153(2),
- Goyal M*, Alpern ER, Webb M, Brousseau DC, Chamberlain JM, Zorc JJ, Frey T, Wiersma A, Barney BJ, Drendel AL; *PECARN IMPROVE and PECARN Registry Study Groups; Agreement of electronic health record-documented race and ethnicity with parental report*. Acad Emerg Med. 2024 Jun;31(6):613-616.

International presentation:

- Sran S*, Zhao X, Agrawal D*, Zaveri P, Koutroulis I. "Effective Use of Simulation to Promote Diversity in Program Admissions." *Workshop at International Pediatric Simulation Symposia and Workshops 2024*. Denver, CO. May 2024.

 **Building Toward Equity: A Report on Maryland Hospitals Progress** June 2024

This report from the Maryland Hospital Association highlighted work at Children’s National to build an anti-racist residency program through the creation of the Building Equity in Graduate Medical Education (BEING) initiative.

The efforts of BEING has produced... tangible innovations in how pediatricians are trained to better serve an increasingly diverse group of children and families.

- Maryland Hospital Association, 2024

To replicate similar efforts, we suggest first that institutions establish an organizational structure of DEI that permeates both the culture and leadership.

- Payne, et. al., Pediatrics 2024



 **Grant funded projects led by DEI Program steering committee members:**

1. Kavita Parikh, M.D., and Gabrina Dixon, M.D., M.Ed., recently were awarded a 5-year National Institutes of Health grant, Health Equity Academic Research in Pediatric Hospital Medicine to address disparities across the acute care continuum by both delivering a health equity research curriculum to pediatric hospitalists and supporting a diverse academic workforce within pediatric hospital medicine (new grant).
2. In 2024, the Division of Nursing received funding from the American Nurses Association (ANA) National Commission to Address Racism in Nursing to implement the Hair for You: Moving from Missed Care to Equitable Care quality improvement project. The project aims to create structural changes for equitable care based on feedback and experiences shared by patients and families related to hair care practices. Research has shown that proper hair care in the hospital can have an impact on patient health outcomes. An interprofessional team, led by Renee Roberts-Turner, D.H.A., M.S.N., R.N., N.E.-B.C., C.P.H.Q., executive director of nursing excellence, works closely with the ANA to design, develop and implement changes that meet the needs of patients and improve nursing education, practice, policy, research and product acquisition related to hair care. The project plan includes creation of educational programs and standardized grooming kits for diverse hair care. Key activities to date include:

- Research to demonstrate the impact of hair care on patient health outcomes and hospital costs.
- Creation of educational videos on hair care history and assessments.

- Exploration of innovative products and technology solutions to enhance hair care delivery in health care settings.
- Advocacy of policy changes and funding support for hair care initiatives.

The vision is to pioneer a national standard that addresses the diverse hair care needs of all patients in U.S. hospitals (new grant).

3. Thanks to the generous support of the Jesse Ball DuPont Foundation, the ADAPT Research Lab, led by Monika Goyal, M.D., M.S.C.E., has established the Building an Anti-Racist Health System: A Quality Improvement Project. The goal of this project is to use a community-engaged approach to address systemic inequities in care within Children’s National Hospital to ensure that we provide fair, equitable and evidence-based care to the patients and families we serve in the Emergency Department (ED). While this work focused on patients seen and treated for asthma and mental health conditions, it serves as a model. Through focus groups with patients, caregivers and clinical staff, quantitative EHR data and feedback from the community (Patient and Family Advisory Committee, clinical staff providing mental health and asthma care in the ED), the team identified key drivers, smart aims and interventions. The team is currently implementing interventions in the ED and measuring the impact through changes in key metrics (ongoing grant).



Comfort Roundtables connect diverse employees in the midst of international strife

In the aftermath of the Hamas attacks in Israel on **October 7, 2023**, and as Israel declared war on Hamas in Gaza, Children's National offered "Comfort Roundtable" sessions to create a safe and constructive environment for employees to find support during this emotionally charged and difficult time.

The conversations were moderated by Chief Diversity Diversity Officer Dr. Denice Cora-Bramble. Chaplain Kathleen Ennis-Durstine, Human Resources Employee Wellness Consultant Zahra Jilani and Security Chief Paul Quigley were present to offer professional support and reassurance. All employees were invited. Forty-five employees with varying viewpoints participated, including many with strong ties to the region.

"These were challenging conversations to have and to lead, and more difficult because the sessions brought such diverse perspectives together," says Dr. Cora-Bramble. "The emotions were raw and so was the discussion. But we didn't shy away because people badly needed this outlet and support."

Many grateful roundtable participants offered unsolicited feedback after the sessions to share how much they appreciated the opportunity.

"I know it is not easy, and I recognize the complexity, but I so appreciate everybody hearing out opinions and staying focused on how we can create a positive and inclusive environment here and for our children."

"Witnessing the unimaginable devastation of the entire region, especially the death and suffering of children and families in Palestine and Israel is especially gutting for all of us who have dedicated our lives to children and speaking out against systems of oppression, so thank you for creating this space for everyone."

"I appreciated your ability to redirect the conversation from the fraught politics of the region to the personal pain that unifies us."

This feedback reinforced the value of these types of sessions for the employees. It also shows the importance of established mechanisms for creating venues that allow safe, constructive discussion when unforeseen, emotionally charged events occur, even when those conversations may be daunting or difficult to face.

"I appreciated your ability to redirect the conversation from the fraught politics of the region to the personal pain that unifies us."

– Comfort Roundtable participant





2024 Excellence in DEI Awards



The Excellence in DEI Awards recognize a Children’s National employee (faculty or staff) and a team who have made outstanding contributions to promote diversity, equity or inclusion at Children’s National or in the community. The awards recognize, honor and celebrate people who have demonstrated excellence through DEI-focused efforts that might include leading equity, diversity, inclusion and anti-racism initiatives

Individual award: Naimah Saleem, L.P.C., R-D.M.T., P.M.H.-C.

Naimah Saleem, L.P.C., R-D.M.T., P.M.H.-C. is the lead behavioral therapist in the Developing Brain Institute (DBI). A Washington, D.C., native, Ms. Saleem is deeply committed to her work within the community.

Ms. Saleem oversees the team providing interventions within the DBI Mommy & Me project, which includes behavioral therapy, individual patient navigation and care coordination with a maternity care specialist, and peer-support groups for mothers and families, especially those who need significantly better access to resources. Ms. Saleem also provides many

low-income and historically underrepresented women a judgment-free space to talk through challenges that are both universal to mothers and unique to each person’s lived experience. Her peers report that she equally cares for the care providers themselves, who are often impacted and frustrated by the barriers people face when navigating complex medical and social systems. Her colleagues write, “We cannot express enough our gratitude for her dedication or how superbly qualified she is for this award.”

Group award: LGBTQ+ subcommittee

The LGBTQ+ subcommittee was established in 2020 as part of the DEI Program at Children’s National. In a short period of time, this committee has created events, activities, programs and systemic changes that have already had significant impact on institutional culture. This subcommittee leads work to compile and address benchmarks from the bi-annual Human Rights Campaign Health Equality Index (HRC HEI) program.

The hospital’s score has improved from 50/100 in 2017 to 100/100 in 2022 and 2024.

The subcommittee also worked closely with Human Resources to develop and improve employee benefits and training related to people who identify as LGBTQ+. Collaborations with PR and Marketing have promoted available LGBTQ+ health resources and educated the community about LGBTQ+ health-related topics.

Honorable mentions

INDIVIDUAL: Tesa White, Child Health Advocacy Institute

Ms. White partnered with people and divisions across Children's National to launch the Community Health Advisory Council in July 2022. The council incorporates the voices of people who live in the communities served by the hospital into the decision-making, design and evaluation of programs, healthcare services, and community partnerships. Since its creation, the council has become vital to the work of the hospital and provides important advancement in building trust with communities, especially those impacted by structural racism and inequities in resources and healthcare.

GROUP: Safe Kids Worldwide

In 2024, Safe Kids Worldwide launched a new strategic plan focused on "Equity in Child Safety." The plan sets an innovative path for the prevention of unintentional childhood injury by prioritizing an equitable approach to activities. There are four priority focus areas identifying and engaging with communities that have been marginalized and underserved in all aspects of the organization's work, and then three specific injury areas based on the three top causes of death in children under 14 years old – drowning, motor vehicle crashes and unsafe sleep environments. Implementation of the plan started with equity prioritized through its three pillars – research, education and advocacy.



The Excellence in DEI Awards were presented to the winners during Community Health Improvement Week at Children's National.

Other Achievements

Newsweek names America's Greatest Workplaces for Diversity

For the second year, Newsweek named Children's National Hospital one of America's Greatest Workplaces for Diversity. The recognition, which Newsweek launched in 2023, is based on a "thorough examination of publicly available data, interviews with

HR professionals and an anonymous online survey conducted among a diverse group of employees at companies in the U.S." Our organization received a total of 4.5 stars out of 5.



Women We Admire: Top 50 Women Chief Diversity Officers

Dr. Cora-Bramble was named by Women We Admire as one of the nation's Top 50 Women Chief Diversity Officers in 2024. The list celebrates the accomplishments of the leading chief diversity officers from every sector, including Fortune 500 companies, health care and beyond. Dr. Cora-Bramble was

recognized for her trailblazing career focused on improving access to health care services for under-resourced communities, developing innovative programs and leading diverse and effective teams, including in her current role as the first chief diversity officer at Children's National.

Ongoing pipeline programs at Children's National

ADAP program for medical students

The Advancing Diversity in Academic Pediatrics (ADAP) program, funded by the DEI Program, recruits medical students who are underrepresented in medicine (UIM) to the Children's National pediatric residency program. A cohort of UIM medical students, recruited from across the United States, participate in a month-long clinical rotation, mentorship and immersion experience at the institution, while receiving a stipend.

Conway Nursing Pathway Program

The Conway Nursing Pathway Program helps aspiring nurses establish rewarding careers in pediatric nursing at Children's National. This program is made possible by a philanthropic gift from William and Joanne Conway. It aims to help young people in high school, college or nursing school, who hope to pursue a nursing career, experience pediatric nursing. Conway Pathfinders receive mentorship from existing Children's National nurses who are seeking advanced degrees. Participants also have a variety of opportunities to benefit from career preparation and advancement, including summer work and scholarship.

Pharmacy

In partnership with Howard University and Shenandoah University, a robust pipeline program was developed which provided unique opportunities to Pharm.D. candidates who are from underrepresented communities. In 2024 the program includes 16 interns. Notably, two program graduates are now working at Sanofi Pharmaceuticals and at Children's National. Additionally, this residency program has established a unique fellowship with Howard University and Glaxo-Smith Kline that is training 15 Pharm.D. fellows from minority communities.

STEM programs for high school students, educators and librarians

METEOR version 3.0 is a National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) funded program for UIM high school students from the Washington, D.C., region and teachers in training from the George Washington School of Education. The program supports and builds biomedical research skills through hands-on learning in laboratories, clinics and the community. Students are integrated into teams where they learn basic science

concepts, laboratory methods and the importance of collaboration and mentorship.

Discover SCIENCE with Dr. Bear is a National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) funded Science Education Partnership Award with a goal of providing health-focused science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) learning. The program uses an online curriculum augmented by videos and hands-on art and science activities that can be used by teachers, informal educators and librarians. Discover SCIENCE has been adopted by organizations including Girl Scouts of NY, the District of Columbia Public Library,

the MOTT Foundation network and Chicago Public Schools as a fun and adventuresome way to stimulate curiosity and build STEM identity. The newest grant is JOURNEYS, also funded by NIGMS, which aims to implement a program with hands-on age-appropriate STEM activities adapted for hospitalized children and their families and children receiving outpatient care. JOURNEYS will incorporate robotics, patterns, mechanisms and computing tied to a child's health data to help them learn about diagnostics, treatment and how health care teams help kids get well.

Women (Physicians and Scientists) @ Children's Hospital (W@TCH) joins DEI Program

A longstanding program created at Children's National to build growth and leadership opportunities for female faculty will now function under the auspices of the DEI Program. The Women (Physicians and Scientists) @ Children's Hospital (W@TCH) was established in 1999 by Naomi Luban, M.D., vice chair of faculty affairs, at a time when women were commonly underrepresented in leadership positions. In recent years, the program expanded to represent all faculty, residents and fellows, regardless of their gender. W@TCH now offers quarterly Brown Bag lunches and short workshops

with invited speakers on a range of topics, including: promoting equity, managing up, resilience and wellness and leveraging social media for career advancement. The program sponsors a competition for one junior faculty person to attend the AAMC Women in Medicine annual conference and hosts events to honor faculty accomplishments as well. This year, W@TCH officially transitioned to the DEI Program and is currently led by Anisha Abraham, M.D., chief of the Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine.



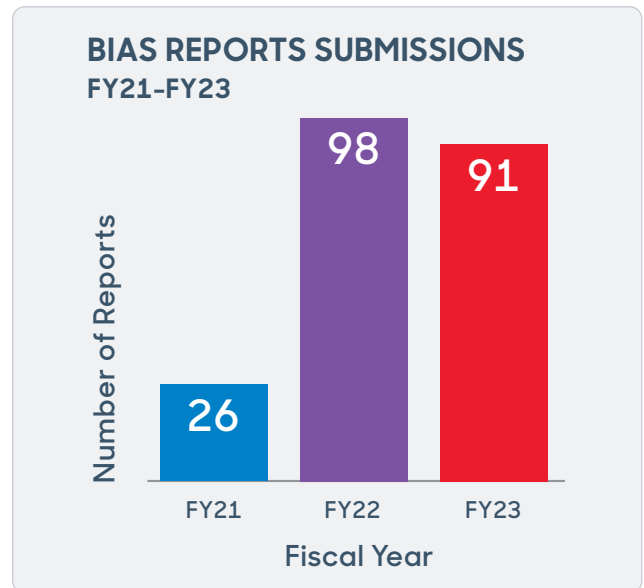
W@TCH celebrated newly promoted female faculty at an annual event with CEO Michelle Riley-Brown, M.H.A., F.A.C.H.E.

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, W@TCH played a key role in communicating the emergent needs of faculty, residents and fellows, helping the organization plan for expansion of emergency childcare options, provider wellness programs and increased transparency within the workforce.

Ongoing bias reporting and review for a more inclusive work environment

The Bias Review Committee was established in July 2020 as a way for employees to contribute to a more inclusive environment, better understand and identify bias and report it. The system was put in place to use validated employee data to implement timely changes, help create and sustain a culture where employees feel free to report bias concerns and to identify trends or cross-cutting themes. Documenting these incidents and routine review of bias incident reports yields concrete, actionable steps that the organization can take to create a more inclusive environment. Sample interventions in response to submitted bias reports include:

- Team or individual sessions with the chief diversity officer
- Anonymous notification and discussion with manager
- One-on-one counseling and feedback
- Training
- External review
- Language services quality improvement project



The DEI Program captures Bias Reporting data to understand the types of reports and determine the best interventions to address them.

Disability:IN names Children’s National a Best Place to Work

Children’s National achieved a high score of 90 on the 2024 Disability Equality Index Survey led by Disability:IN, a 10 percentage point improvement from a score of 80 in 2023. The Disability Equality Index Survey is one of the leading independent, third-party resources for annual benchmarking of corporate disability inclusion policies and programs. Achieving a high score aligns with the organization’s ongoing strategic roadmap for inclusion. The score also secured Children’s National a designation of Disability:IN Best Place to Work. Key to this work, according to Mike Bernardo, M.S., P.M.P.,

F.A.B., director of learning and development at Children’s National, was an intentional effort to bring together myriad departments with a range of responsibilities across the organization to truly reflect the full diversity of roles and responsibilities. Interventions to date included the development of an organization-wide written commitment to diversity and inclusion that specifically mentions disability and greater efforts to incorporate accommodations for people with disabilities to more easily access both internal and external digital content.



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Program Structure

The DEI Program's nine subcommittees form the support structure for diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives at Children's National.

Founded in 2020, the DEI Program includes volunteer staff from Children's National as well as community members and parents.

140+
Participants

Including Children's National Hospital, The HSC Health Care System and family representatives.



Nursing*



Students, residents, and fellows



Curriculum and training



Data and research



Faculty



Patient, family and community engagement



Non-clinical staff



LGBTQ+



Communication and dissemination

* The Nursing Advocacy Council, an arm of the Shared Nursing Leadership Council, is the council committed to advancing nursing DEI.



Subcommittee Updates and Outcomes

Communications and dissemination subcommittee

Diana Troese, chair

The communications and dissemination subcommittee continued planning and executing the DEI Dialogues seminar series. About 270 employees attend these sessions on average. Topics were based on cultural heritage/awareness months and input from other DEI Program members. The subcommittee is currently working to refresh the dialogue process for FY25 in order to continue making meaningful progress toward organizational DEI goals. The subcommittee

also manages the organization's DEI-related communications plan, which includes all staff emails, social media content and employee spotlight stories throughout the year. The goal is to create a safe and respectful work environment, promoting understanding, empathy and collaboration among staff and with patients and families from diverse backgrounds.

Faculty subcommittee

Folasade Ogunlesi, M.D., and Andrew Campbell, M.D., co-chairs

The faculty subcommittee's work was focused on data analysis and stakeholder communication of the Appointment, Promotions & Tenure (APT) faculty survey. The faculty and data and research subcommittees collaborated closely to administer and analyze survey results, which measured the perception of the APT process in terms of transparency, fairness and overall process satisfaction. The survey was sent to 210 faculty members who had been recommended for promotion in the preceding three years. Survey results, which reflected a 59% response rate coupled with meeting discussions, informed the subcommittee's

recommendations to Children's National academic leaders: Provide specific criteria used by the APT committee to demonstrate promotion eligibility, share faculty member's rank-specific academic outcomes (such as number of publications, grants and presentations), modify the submission requirements so the process is less burdensome, develop formal mentorship programs in collaboration with divisions, identify and help mitigate any areas of bias and make consistent efforts to diversify APT committee members in terms of demographics and academic rank.

Data and research subcommittee

Gia Badolato, M.P.H., chair

The data and research subcommittee continues to serve as a resource and provides valuable input to the other DEI subcommittees. During FY24, the data sub-committee collaborated with the DEI faculty committee to develop and analyze a survey focused on the perception of faculty who had recently

participated in the APT process. The survey had a response rate of 59% and identified differences between males and females and their perception that the academic promotion process at Children's National was fair and equitable.

LGBTQ+ subcommittee

Kaushalendra Amatya, Ph.D., and Elianna Bullock, co-chairs

The LGBTQ+ subcommittee achieved significant milestones this year, including maintaining the organization's "Leader" status according to the Human Rights Campaign Health Equality Index survey for the second consecutive reporting cycle. The subcommittee

was honored with the 2024 Excellence in DEI Group Award in recognition of this subcommittee's ongoing commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion within the organization and beyond. This work will continue, strengthen and grow in the years to come.

Non-clinical staff subcommittee

Hilah Zia, M.P.A., chair

Non-clinical staff play a vital role in supporting critical infrastructure and administrative functions to fulfill the organization's mission. Throughout fiscal year 2024, the non-clinical staff subcommittee fostered engagement



The non-clinical staff subcommittee's Speed Networking event drew 60 people from 34 departments.

and facilitated professional development opportunities. The Non-Clinical Mentorship Program welcomed eight new mentee-mentor pairs who embarked on a year-long journey of growth and support. Engagement initiatives for non-clinical staff included events at both the main campus and at satellite offices in Silver Spring, Maryland, to ensure access for employees that work at extended campus locations. A Valentine's Day Speed Networking event brought together more than 60 employees from 34 departments to make meaningful connections. Ninety-six percent of participants provided positive feedback in post-event surveys. Participants appreciated the chance to develop new relationships and build a stronger sense of community within the organization. Another subcommittee event, a hybrid fireside chat about navigating difficult career conversations, facilitated open dialogue and offered staff strategies to address challenging workplace situations.

Training and curriculum subcommittee

Simmy King, D.N.P., M.S., M.B.A., RN-B.C., and Tamara Gayle, M.D., M.Ed., M.P.H., co-chairs

The Training and Curriculum subcommittee was actively involved in embedding the simulation-based I-DREAM program (Interprofessional Debrief on Racism, Equity and Microaggression) into the Power of One training for all new employees. In addition, the subcommittee members compiled data and launched the DEI Education Activities Catalog, which contains DEI-related education opportunities that can be shared with employees seeking them. The subcommittee continues to encourage others to add to

this catalog. The subcommittee also provided input into the development of the SAVE (Simulation Addressing Verbal Escalation) Annual Hospital Curriculum that will be implemented in FY25. This training will use standardized, simulated patients to demonstrate how to address verbal escalation and promote safe de-escalation strategies using an equity-focused lens. Lastly, the subcommittee developed a draft of DEI Core Competencies, which is currently under review by the DEI Program steering committee.

Students, residents and fellows (trainee) subcommittee

Jessica Hippolyte, M.D., M.P.H., and Aisha Barber, M.D., M.Ed., co-chairs

The subcommittee for students, residents and fellows includes 25 members who are medical students, residents, fellows and faculty. In FY24, the subcommittee continued to focus on three main pillars: mentorship, professional development and community engagement. The subcommittee's overall goal this year was building connections through The Underrepresented in Medicine (UIM) Mentorship Lattice. Incoming residents and fellows met with current residents and faculty at a Welcome Barbecue with close to 30 attendees. Incoming trainees commented on the value of meeting other UIM trainees and faculty

before starting clinical rotations. The sub-committee also offered engaging professional development workshops, open to the entire Children's National community. This year's Professional Development Series opened with a Speed Mentoring Session where more than 40 trainees sought mentorship and learned more about careers in pediatric academic medicine. Additional workshops focused on wellness, academic advancement and a special session with Children's National President and CEO Michelle Riley Brown, who shared her journey to leadership and the impact of mentorship on her career.



The trainee subcommittee focused on mentorship, professional development and community engagement this year.

Patient, family and community engagement subcommittee

Darcel Jackson, C.P.X.P., and Desiree de la Torre, M.P.H., M.B.A., co-chairs

The patient, family and community engagement subcommittee had several priorities in FY24, including access to care, equity of care and community engagement. Through ongoing support of the Community Health Advisory Council, the subcommittee successfully helped to elevate community voices from Wards 7 and 8 and Prince George's County that are not currently well-represented on hospital advisory councils and boards. This council has provided valuable input about their experiences with quality and safety at Children's National, and advised on how community challenges, family barriers and cultural traditions

impact the care they received. The subcommittee also played a role in the development of the Youth Leadership Advisory Council, which aims to bring the voices of young people who receive care and support from the organization to the forefront as well. Traditionally, community voices have focused most on the parents and caregivers of patients, and the Youth Leadership Advisory Council will bring the experiences of patients themselves to the table. Finally, the parent, family and community engagement subcommittee also started to work on identifying gaps and opportunities to ensure that the priorities of patients, parents, families and other community members are aligned with and incorporated in the Children's National strategic plan.

Sustainable progress toward equity

Now in its fourth year, the DEI Program at Children’s National continues to champion diversity, equity and inclusion strategies that show promise to be effective, sustainable, data-driven and, where appropriate, replicable. This remarkable momentum continues thanks to the dedication of the DEI Program’s subcommittees and other staff, as well as the wholehearted support of leadership and boards.

It’s important to mark these wins, especially when they occur in spite of external headwinds that have slowed these efforts in other places around the United States.

We hope our successes and our challenges are instructive for others who are on the journey to building DEI culture in their own organizations. Growing stronger together, within our walls and beyond, is the only way to achieve the dream of health equity for all.

Health equity is the attainment of the highest level of health for all people. Achieving health equity requires valuing everyone equally with focused and ongoing societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities, historical and contemporary injustices, and the elimination of health and health care disparities.”
- *Healthy People 2030*



Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.



At Children's National, we stand for diversity, equity and inclusion. We strive to foster, nurture and sustain a culture where everyone feels welcomed and respected at work and we champion these values in our community. Our continued commitment to each other and all the families we serve is central to our mission.





SPECIAL THANKS

We are so grateful to all who dedicate their time, energy and resources to leading, building, funding and growing our culture of equity and inclusion at Children's National. Our work would not have been possible without the unwavering support from our CEO and President, Michelle Riley-Brown and from our Board of Directors.

To learn more about the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Program at Children's National, contact Dr. Cora-Bramble at dcorabra@childrensnational.org.



111 Michigan Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20010

childrensnational.org

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