

Maine Medical Center Family Medicine Residency Statement

Black Lives Matter

6.5.2020

We, providers of Maine Medical Center's Family Medicine Department, release the following statement in response to the recent murders of **Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, and Nina Pop**, and countless other Black Americans.

As doctors and providers, we pledge to "do no harm." In order to remain true to this oath, we must no longer be silently complicit as racism devastates Black lives and livelihoods. We must not only examine the innumerable forms of institutionalized and structural racism in our current system, including our healthcare system, but seek to remove them purposefully and immediately.

Racism is a public health crisis that we must collectively confront. Violence against Black bodies is rooted deep in our medical history, with the Tuskegee Experiment exemplifying the use of Black lives for the benefit of white health. Now, amidst a coronavirus pandemic disproportionately affecting our Black communities, racism continues to infect both our nation and our state's response. In Maine, for example, over one in five people diagnosed with COVID so far has been Black, even though only one in sixty Mainers is Black. As health care providers working to improve the health of ALL we serve, this is unacceptable, and we must do better.

With this statement, we commit to working as a program to identify sources of bias and racism within our own training and work, and hope that our patients, our community, will hold us accountable in these efforts. We seek to better understand the impact of racial bias within medical training, work to promote more diversity in our own training program, commit to identifying and striving to improve racial health disparities locally, and continue to listen to the stories of our most marginalized patients and use our voices to advocate for them and with them as allies. We approach this work with humility, understanding that there will always be more to learn.

We are writing in response to the current crisis, but understand our conversations and efforts must continue every day. We believe our program can, and must, embody this necessary work.

Sincerely,

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