



2022 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Annual Report

Focused on People, Building Trust



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Carle Health: Our Commitment

Carle Health is committed to being an inclusive space for our team members, patients, health plan members and communities. Building a more diverse, equitable and inclusive environment lays the foundation for trusted partnerships and the delivery of high-quality care for everyone we serve.

WHAT ARE WE COMMITTED TO?

- Making Carle a space where diversity is represented, processes are inclusive and decisions are made with equity in mind.
- Creating an inclusive and welcoming healthcare space where all people can work, seek care and receive service with dignity and respect. We know diversity exists in many forms and are committed to building a supportive and compassionate healthcare space for each team member, patient, health plan member and all the communities we serve.
- Doing our part to help combat racism and all forms of bias and discrimination that exist within healthcare.

- Continuing to build organizational practices that support recruitment and retention of a diverse and inclusive workforce, establishment of diversity in leadership roles, mentorship and career growth opportunities for team members, educational initiatives and community-focused care.
- Acknowledging the root causes of health disparities for patients and health plan members and actively pursuing equity in health, care and service.
- Delivering culturally competent care and service to patients and health plan members and working to enhance value and access to care.
- Recognizing the unique set of identities and experiences every team member has – and using this to make Carle a more inclusive place where we link our organization’s mission, vision and values to people’s everyday lives.

WHO IS OUR COMMITMENT TO?

People are at the center of our commitment. Carle Health is committed to an inclusive work environment for all team members. For our patients and health plan members, we know receiving the best care and service in the most culturally responsive way is vital to improving the health of the communities we serve.

WHAT ARE THE ACTIONS WE'RE TAKING?

A commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion must be reflected through actions. At Carle Health, our actions align with our organizational values of excellence, inclusivity, compassion, integrity and accountability.

| EXCELLENCE | INCLUSIVITY | COMPASSION | INTEGRITY | ACCOUNTABILITY |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| Educating ourselves and one another to build a culture of learning and growth. | Listening, caring and acting with awareness. | Practicing empathy and vulnerability. | Leading our teams with a focus on inclusion. | Taking responsibility in our teams, care spaces and communities. |
| Collaborating across our organization and within our communities. | Focusing on respect for, and appreciation of, differences. | Prioritizing human relationships to build trust. | Challenging norms and assumptions in our work, care and service. | Building opportunities for historically and systemically excluded groups to thrive. |

We're committed to this journey. We're taking action, collecting data to measure our progress and making sure we're always listening to your voice along the way. Together, let's make Carle Health the trusted healthcare partner we all deserve.

What does DEI look like at Carle Health?

- Monthly DEI newsletter and DEI Matters video.
- Carle Health Multicultural Celebratory Calendar.
- Twice-monthly DEI Multicultural Forums.
- Carle Inclusion Connection groups.
- Annual required diversity, equity and inclusion education for all team members.
- Ongoing training and learning at the individual, team and organizational level.
- Monthly Inclusive Leadership education for leaders.
- DEI Department Career Advising.
- Internal leadership development and external leadership recruitment.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Steering Committee.
- Health Equity Clinical Guidance Committee.
- And much more.



A Commitment to Inclusive Leadership

At Carle Health, our culture of inclusion continues to be enhanced by our continuing efforts to establish leadership structures that reflect and represent our workforce and the communities we serve. This priority is emphasized through leadership recruitment, development and educational programming. We've strengthened our leadership search processes to build more diverse candidate pools and communicate the Carle Health DEI Commitment to external candidates.

We're also focusing on how we can support and develop emerging leaders within our health system. **The Carle Health Emerging Leaders** program is a nine-month course to equip high-potential team members and providers with skills to be effective Carle Health leaders. We're now including a greater focus on diversity and representation in our selection of emerging leaders.

Additionally, emerging leaders are eligible to continue their professional development after graduation through DEI career advising, additional skill

development resources, and mentoring and coaching programming for underrepresented minority candidates.

In January 2022, all Carle Health leaders attended a live, mandatory two-hour webinar on inclusive leadership. Senior leaders focused on equity, trust and the traits of inclusive leaders, while frontline leaders learned about psychological safety, best practices for leading inclusively and overcoming the negative effects of bias. In response to feedback from those sessions, the DEI and Talent Development departments partnered to begin offering **Inclusive Leadership Forums** – monthly one-hour virtual sessions where leaders connect to learn about and discuss topics such as microaggressions, cultural humility and strategies for difficult DEI conversations.

 **2,500+** hours

Combined total hours of inclusivity education
for Carle Health leaders in 2022.

40%

40% of the emerging leaders in the **2022** cohort came from underrepresented racial backgrounds.

50%

 **10%**

This growth continues with **50%** representation in the **2023** class.

WHAT TEAM MEMBERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

"Our approach to enhancing the diversity of our leadership doesn't just come from external hires. It also comes from within, driven by our commitment to providing our own team members with resources and spaces for learning, growth and development. Our efforts build leadership teams and practices that reflect and serve our diverse workforce in inclusive ways."

- **Lauren Schmid**

Executive Vice President, Chief Human Resources Officer

"Our commitment to inclusive leadership allows us to build trust with many different people. This attracts talent, boosts retention and results in a healthy culture where we achieve more together."

- **Gina Thomas, DNP, MBA**

President, Carle Richland Memorial Hospital

"Carle's inclusive leadership programs help ensure that we build a leadership team that values the broad perspectives and different experiences of our patients and members. As the diversity and perspective of our leadership grows, so does our ability to meet our patients and members where they are."

- **Matthew Kolb, JD, MHA**

Executive Vice President, Chief Operations Officer

"These programs have equipped our leaders and staff with knowledge that has changed our culture in a positive direction. I've appreciated the training emphasizing that it is imperative that we work together as a system to be proactive instead of reactive."

- **Dinita Galvez**

Quality Improvement Manager, Health Alliance

"We want more people to choose healthcare as a career and Carle as their preferred place of employment. By growing inclusive leadership programs and pathways, we can offer employment opportunities with avenues for growth and development to nurture the future leaders of Carle Health."

- **Anna Laible, MBA**

Administrator, Carle Eureka Hospital

"We've listened to our leaders' feedback about areas of focus to grow their skills to build relevant training on topics and matters that are important in supporting inclusive team environments."

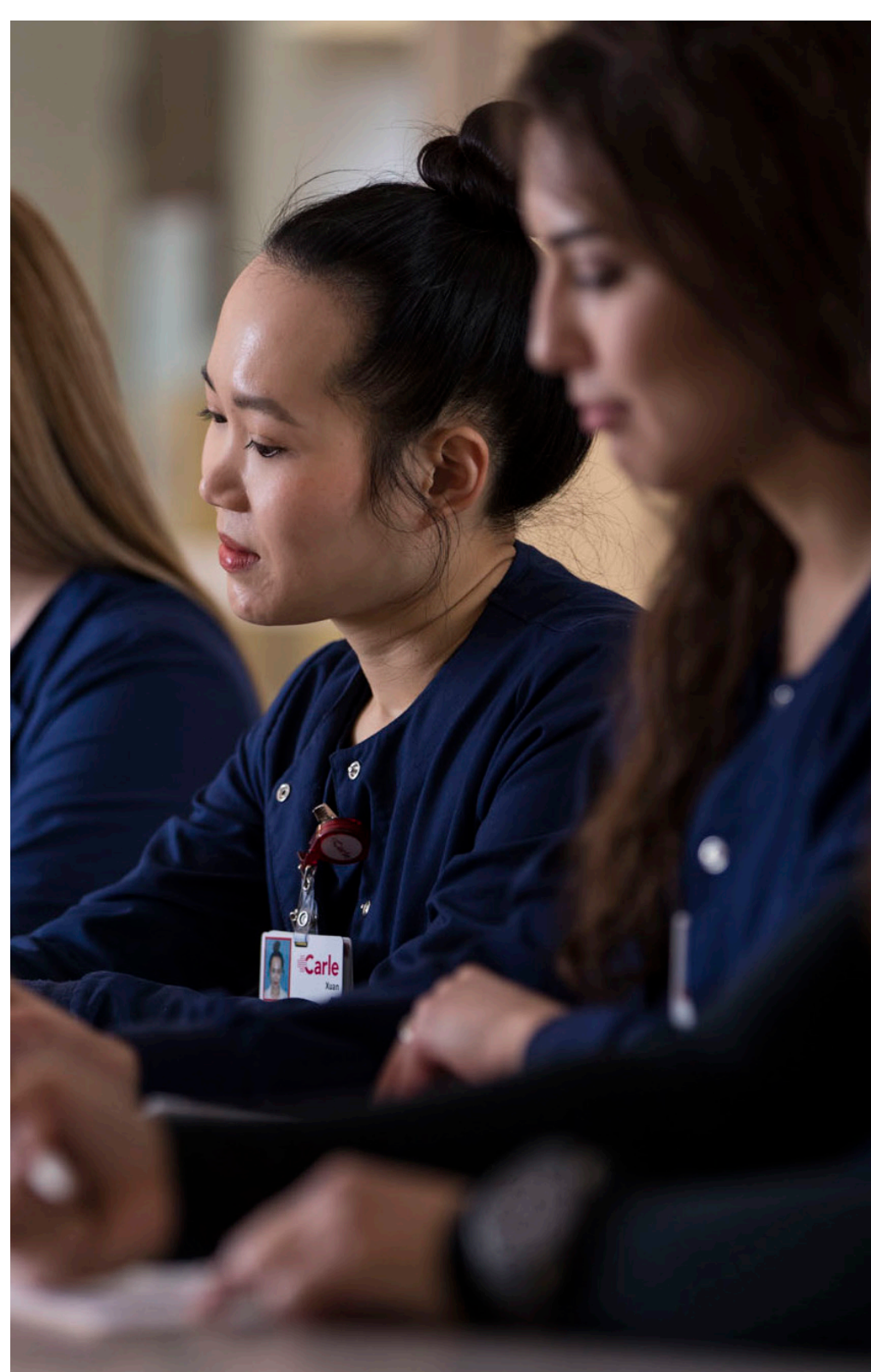
- **Shannon Hacker, MS, ACC**

Executive Director – Talent Development, Carle Health

Strengthening Career Opportunities and Professional Development

Carle Health is committed to recruiting, retaining, promoting and advancing team members who reflect the communities we serve. The DEI department partners with Human Resources in several ways to recruit, welcome and train new members of our teams, and to promote internal professional development programs that help our current team members advance their careers. In 2022, the DEI department hosted career development webinars, supported Workforce Development programming, and coordinated training and coaching with the Center for Talent Development. Leaders across the organization have completed mandatory training on tools for reducing the effects of bias in interviews and hiring – empowering leaders to ensure their hiring processes cultivate diverse, innovative teams.

Additionally, the DEI department offers ongoing, individualized career advising services to assist team members with resume writing, interview preparation, career assessment and exploration, and educational alignment with their professional aspirations. By connecting career advising to DEI efforts, we're engaging with team members from marginalized and underrepresented groups to connect them with resources and support to grow professionally. Together, these efforts enhance the Carle Health strategy to bring in the very best talent, to invest in and develop our staff, and to maintain meaningful professional growth opportunities across the organization.



WHAT TEAM MEMBERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

"The career advising program through DEI allows us to be part of a support network for team members and to help marginalized, minoritized, underrepresented group team members advance their careers in healthcare."

- **Demario Turner, MBA, MPA**

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Specialist, Carle Health

"The greatest impact of the DEI career advising has been on my confidence through the whole hiring process. I have been able to gain and learn how to show confidence during interviews and job offer negotiations through the many articles and materials shared by my advisor."

- **Angelika Wardach**

Cash Management Supervisor, Carle Foundation Hospital

"DEI career advising resources and services have impacted me in my transition from working in Environmental Services to my current role in the Case Management department. Career advising sessions helped me discuss my plans for the future and with job searching, building my resume and preparing for a change in positions."

- **Shayla Jones**

Care Coordination Assistant, Carle Foundation Hospital

"DEI-focused career advising empowers team members to take ownership of their career and lets them know that someone is in their corner to support them along the way. Working with career advising has demystified the advancement and growth process for many team members and allows others to leverage existing experience and education into tangible results."

- **Will Aldridge**

HR Learning and Organizational Development Specialist, Carle Health

"When we have a sense of belonging in an organization that supports different backgrounds and cultures, we're more open to taking advantage of opportunities and investing in ourselves. The DEI department has been a vital support in providing guidance and career advice to the Job Readiness and Learning Program and individuals who've taken advantage of the GED prep training class."

- **Tyisha Jones**

Workforce Development Specialist, Carle Health

Building Racial Diversity in Nursing

Because of the critical role nurses play in caring for and connecting with patients, addressing health disparities, and delivering innovative care, a diverse and representative nursing staff is a priority organizational goal. In seeing a gap between our nursing staff, patient population and nursing-adjacent staff, the DEI department identified an opportunity to build a more representative nursing workforce, particularly through increasing the population of Black nurses within our clinical teams. The Building Racial Diversity in Nursing program is an ongoing effort to increase the presence of Black nurses across Carle Health.

Thanks to a \$10,000 grant from the Women's Legacy Circle and other philanthropic contributions, 11 Carle Health team members were selected in 2022 for awards of up to \$1,500 to support their educational progress. These awards are targeted toward team members who are Black/African American, pursuing a nursing education and using the Carle tuition

assistance programming. Awards provide unrestricted funds so that recipients can address additional barriers to education, such as additional tuition costs and those for books, uniforms, childcare, transportation and other timely needs. The Building Racial Diversity in Nursing fund is an ongoing fund through the Carle Health Center for Philanthropy, and continued fundraising will allow these awards to continue across future years. Visit the webpage for Carle Health Center for Philanthropy (carle.org/giving/make-a-gift) to contribute to the Building Racial Diversity in Nursing Fund.

Additionally, this programming extends beyond financial support and includes career advising resources, networking and professional development support, along with growth in external recruitment efforts to build a more diverse nursing workforce across the system. In summer 2022, Talent Acquisition partnered with the Central Illinois Chapter of the National Black Nursing Association and the Dream Center Peoria to sponsor four high school students from the Carle service area to attend the National Black Nursing Association conference in Chicago, connecting them with nurse professionals from across the country. These ongoing – and growing – efforts reach both current and future Carle Health nurses to inspire and invest in professional growth, world-class care and trusted healthcare partnerships.



11 Carle Health team members
were selected in 2022
for awards of up to \$1,500.

"During my time as a bedside nurse, it was always my pleasure to provide care for the geriatric population, especially other African Americans. Taking care of that specific population gives them a sense of pride that their struggles were not in vain, and we are now getting the opportunities that they have fought so hard for. In addition, with our pediatric patients it gives them hope that one day no matter what their current situation is they also can become nurses."

- **Jacklyn Gerber, RN**

Nursing Supervisor, Carle Foundation Hospital

"This will have an impact on culturally competent care. When minority patients see or are cared for by someone who looks like them and who can relate to their experiences, they are more likely to be more open, transparent and trusting."

- **Tyeonia Jake**

Emergency Department Tech, Carle Foundation Hospital,
and 2022 BRDN Fund Recipient

"Carle's Building Racial Diversity in Nursing initiative and fund have demonstrated promise and hope to our underrepresented team members for a brighter future. We can improve health disparities and social and financial burdens in our communities by ensuring that our nursing workforce represents the diversity of the communities we serve."

- **Tricia Jones**

Director, HR Talent Acquisition

Carle Inclusion Connection Groups

2022 was the first year for a new team member-focused, team member-driven and team member-led program: our Carle Inclusion Connection (CIC) groups. CIC groups create spaces for team members who share similar backgrounds, perspectives and identities to connect. These voluntary groups

exist to engage and support team members through individual personal and career growth. They also benefit the organization through retention, engagement and mentorship efforts, and the CIC groups will enhance the care and service we provide to our communities through volunteering and community outreach. A core goal of establishing these groups is to help advance the Carle Health commitment to creating an inclusive and welcoming healthcare space for all, by bringing together the diverse voices and talents that exist across our system. In 2022, the DEI department coordinated the formation of seven CIC groups:

Carle Multicultural Alliance

This group promotes and celebrates the diverse cultures in our workforce, to create a safe space that fosters inclusive and equitable conversations, and to establish an organizational culture that fosters engagement and belongingness so that staff feel empowered to do their best work while meeting the needs of the diverse communities we serve.

Carle MVP Military and Veteran Professionals

This group builds camaraderie based on shared military experience in order to serve our fellow military/veteran community within Carle Health, and to serve the veterans and their families in the communities we serve.

Carle Pride

This group exists to provide opportunities and education for knowledge and growth related to LGBTQ+ patient care, advancing and supporting healthcare options for the LGBTQ+ community, fostering workplace and personal connections, and advocating for LGBTQ+ groups in the communities we serve.

CAN Carle Accessibility Network

This group creates a space for team members with diverse abilities and disabilities to collaborate in enhancing inclusion and accessibility in our health system for employees, patients and plan members with disabilities.

CREW

Carle Recognizing Every Woman

This group creates a welcoming community for women and allies that creates connections and opportunities to promote the empowerment of women in healthcare.

Black Physicians of Carle

This group was started to provide support to physicians of color through mentorship and retention efforts at Carle Health and to recruit and retain medical students of color at Carle Illinois College of Medicine.

Carle hYPe

Honing Young Professional Excellence

This group offers a setting for young professionals at Carle Health to interact professionally and socially through career development and networking, while connecting to our communities through volunteerism.

Each CIC group meets monthly, and the groups coordinate ongoing networking, education and community-service events, such as monthly networking lunches, participation in Champaign-Urbana Pride Fest, Veterans Day activities and more. These groups receive support and guidance from the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion team and connect quarterly as part of the CIC Leaders Council. The CIC Leaders Council is a group of senior Carle Health leaders dedicated to building ongoing connections with, and support for, the CIC groups. This group includes hospital presidents, executive and senior vice presidents, medical leadership, and other key leaders across Carle Health. In 2022, the CIC groups have established a foundation of connection and collaboration to enact our DEI commitment.

WHAT TEAM MEMBERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT CARLE INCLUSION CONNECTION GROUPS

"The energy, enthusiasm and camaraderie I have witnessed within these teams is inspiring and heartwarming. I see meaningful, authentic relationships being developed across our system that strengthen overall staff engagement."

- **Colleen Kannaday**

President, Carle BroMenn Medical Center | Carle Eureka Hospital,
Member of CIC Leaders Council

"I am impressed with the commitment and progress to date, exposure to diverse viewpoints, and the collegiality built amongst diverse team members. The group members exude a passion to make a difference at Carle Health and we are grateful for their service and contributions."

- **Caleb Miller, MBA**

Senior Vice President, Surgical Services and Ambulatory Care,
Member of CIC Leaders Council

Multicultural Celebratory Calendar

Team members across the system have ongoing learning opportunities through the Carle Health Multicultural Celebratory Calendar. The calendar recognizes several celebratory months – such as Black History Month (February), Women’s History Month (March), LGBTQ+ Pride Month (June) and National Hispanic Heritage Month (September – October) – along with holidays such as Diwali, Lunar New Year, Ramadan and Christmas.

Activities surrounding the calendar are planned by a multidisciplinary group that collaborates to develop and implement monthly programming – to educate, raise awareness and celebrate the diverse cultural heritages of Carle Health team members, patients, plan members and communities. When in a Carle Health facility, you may learn about a multicultural celebration through a quote or fact provided on a digital display, or even through a recipe or menu offering in one of our cafeterias.

Team members, providers and leaders are invited to share their voices and personal perspectives of a recognized observation, celebration or holy day through team member videos and CLICK (intranet) stories. This programming also includes two monthly multicultural forums aligned with the monthly theme, where leaders, providers, and clinical and nonclinical staff come together to learn more about the month’s celebrated group or history. In 2022, forums featured engaging and educational presentations on topics such as:

- The Flying Black Medics of Chicago.
- Historical Women in Healthcare.
- Asian American and Pacific Islander Contributions to Medicine.
- Racial Disparities in Mental Health.
- History of FDA Blood Donation Restrictions on Men Who Have Sex with Men.

Month to month, the multicultural celebratory calendar provides ongoing resources to celebrate and educate about the diverse cultural heritages of our team members, our communities and those we serve.



 **51 total months/days**

representing the diverse backgrounds of our team members were celebrated in 2022.



WHAT TEAM MEMBERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE MULTICULTURAL CELEBRATORY CALENDAR AND FORUMS

"Team members who attend a multicultural forum can expect a place where they can find a sense of belonging; where we can be valued for our uniqueness and at the same time find commonalities that we may otherwise overlook. I have been awed by the authenticity of the conversations during these forums."

- **Sinead Rice Madigan**
CEO, Health Alliance

"Not only do I attend to learn but also to share my culture and experiences with others. In a world where there can be a lot of misunderstanding and hurtful rhetoric about certain groups or countries, it is important to find opportunities to connect with fellow humans."

- **Laura Contreras, MPH**
Senior Research Program Coordinator, Community Health

"When FirstCarolinaCare became a part of the Carle family, I was so excited to see this initiative being woven into the fabric of the organization, and the support provided from the leadership. The multicultural calendar committee works to create a culture where all voices are welcome to contribute and be involved."

- **Erin Heckethorn**
Director of Operations and Program Management, FirstCarolinaCare

"I enjoy attending forums because of the information that is shared, the discussions that take place, and the resounding message that our voices, feelings, and experiences matter. The learning in these forums gives me connection and a deeper sense of purpose within Carle."

- **Airiel Sadler**
Social Worker, Home Care and Hospice Services

"I like attending to hear the stories, learn new ideas and information, as well as talking with those who also attend the forums. I have learned so many things about how cultures can affect how people view their health and how to engage with those who come from a different background from my own."

- **Teresa Wang**
Patient Education Liaison, Carle Health

"The forums provide a safe environment for employees to learn and ask questions about other cultures. I feel like my cultural intelligence has been elevated. I believe attendance and participation in the forums will help those who do provide better service to our patients, providers, co-workers and communities."

- **Sherry Gordon-Harris**
Community Liaison, Health Alliance

"In each forum we see there is richness in having many voices at the table. It expands my perspective and helps me build better professional relationships with others."

- **Paul Payway, DMin, MBA**
Spiritual Care Manager, Carle Foundation Hospital

Racism in Healthcare: Notice, Understand and Act

Building a more diverse, equitable and inclusive healthcare system requires attention to the ways both interpersonal and systemic racism impact individual and community health and contribute to health inequities. To build both understanding and action, Carle Health sponsored an equity challenge in fall 2022, titled Racism in Healthcare: Notice, Understand and Act. This program launched with a virtual keynote presentation from Brittani James, MD, who educated attendees on the ways in which historically rooted structures and processes perpetuate racism in healthcare and contribute to inequitable care.

Next, teams across the organization took part in a 12-week challenge, with weekly readings and team discussions – as well as system-level reflection sessions – to help learners recognize the impacts of systemic racism in healthcare; identify ways racism impacts clinician, patient and plan member experiences; and develop strategies for allyship to build more equitable healthcare. Through participating in this impactful challenge, our system is more knowledgeable and empowered to challenge the effects of racism and provide the most trusting and inclusive care for all those we serve. This learning, awareness and action did not end with the challenge, however – it remains ongoing and will continue throughout 2023.



Brittani James, MD

 400+

Carle Health team members participated in Dr. James' presentation to kick off the equity challenge and many more have viewed the recorded session.



WHAT TEAM MEMBERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE RACISM IN HEALTHCARE CHALLENGE

"For those who have been impacted by racism, and for those who may not have been, it is critically important as we go forward to understand what it is, how it impacts individuals and communities, and how much better we all are when we do. Understanding, not coupled with specific actions, does nothing to change the status quo. We must continue to work together to bring forward specific actions that will propel us forward to the tremendous opportunities that exist in a world in which racism does not exist."

- **Napoleon Knight, MD, MBA**

Executive Vice President, Chief Medical Officer

"To understand racism in healthcare, the daily practices of listening and empathy are key. Action is equally important. For many, the equity challenge is the start of a learning journey, which hopefully also leads to the start of an action journey."

- **Angelia Deweese**

Simulation Specialist; DEI Steering Committee Member

"The 2022 equity challenge allows us to begin challenging ourselves and each other to put forward our best care to patients. The challenge materials and discussion groups allow the opportunity to learn not only from the challenge but each other. To hear experiences and perspectives of others helps us grow as good humans."

- **Heather Hintz**

Director, Behavioral Health

"Dr. James' presentation truly stood out to me. She gracefully explained systemic racism on a high level, and her personal stories of perseverance and challenging systemic racism spoke volumes."

- **Charles Joujoute, MS**

Consumer Sales Manager, Health Alliance; DEI Steering Committee Member

"The challenge has created a level of awareness and helped people understand that racism doesn't have to be overt to recognize that it exists and has negative impacts in healthcare. It has also created an opportunity for dialogue. Racism can't be a taboo topic in workplaces, because if we can't name it and discuss it, we can't fix it."

- **Theresa Green, MS**

Director of Carle Experience; DEI Steering Committee Member

"We all approach our lives, personal and professional, looking through the lenses we have developed over time, based upon our experiences. In doing so, we neglect to consider that others have different lenses and, perhaps, markedly different experiences. To better understand that there are these differences, and that they impact how individuals interact, and to appreciate these differences and not judge them, has been a powerful reminder for me. "

- **LJ Fallon, JD**

Executive Vice President, Chief Legal Officer

Addressing the Impacts of Social Determinants

Carle Health is committed to ensuring our team members and providers understand the impact social determinants of health can have on the patients, members and communities we serve. As we provide the highest quality care and service to patients and plan members, we know that the conditions in which people live, learn, work and play also affect their health risks and outcomes. We need to see and address the impact that factors such as education access and quality, economic stability, social and community contexts, neighborhood and built environment, and healthcare access and quality have on patient experiences and outcomes – only then can we be a truly trusted healthcare partner.

To empower team members to see and understand the social factors that drive health and well-being, Carle Health team members completed an online training module with education on these social determinants of

health, how they affect individual health and well-being, and what we can do at Carle Health to address negative impacts of these social drivers. The session highlighted the importance of empathy and understanding of the barriers patients and plan members may face, whether in transportation to and from care, health literacy, neighborhood and environmental risks, the effects of bias and discrimination, or something else. Additionally, team members learned about ways Carle Health is prioritizing outreach, inclusive practices, trust-building opportunities, innovative treatment strategies and community partnerships to build healthier communities.

 **Over 99%** of team members

system-wide completed the training module in summer 2022.

 **5,000+** shared feedback

on the module and identified ways to address these social factors, illustrating a passion and commitment to serve our patients and communities.



WHAT TEAM MEMBERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH TRAINING

"The SDOH training module expands the excellent care our patients receive by taking into consideration external factors affecting health. All team members have a role in assisting patients or plan members who have challenges with housing, food insecurity and transportation, to name a few. Continued education and screening for the SDOH are great next steps in Carle Health's journey to be the trusted healthcare partner in the communities we serve."

- **Sally Gambacorta, MA, MS**

Community Health Director, Carle BroMenn Medical Center/Carle Eureka Hospital; Member, DEI Steering Committee

"By asking the right questions and listening carefully to responses, we can more effectively engage with, advocate for and identify determinants that may be impacting the outcomes of people we serve. In turn, we're able to connect them to appropriate internal as well as partnering community resources (other healthcare organizations, social service entities, schools, faith communities, municipalities and other cross-sector partners) to optimize their health and well-being."

- **Julianna Sellett, DNP**

Vice President, Carle Community Health

"Being a trusted healthcare partner means seeing and understanding each patient and health plan member's unique situation and needs. By positioning this education as an organizational priority, we've helped each member of our team be more aware of and empathetic toward the factors that influence health and well-being for all who count on us."

- **Dennis Hesch**

Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer

"The ability to collect SDOH information is critical to both understanding the communities we serve, but also to ensure that Carle Health is doing its part to promote equity in healthcare. All of our team members will be an essential part of that data collection, so the education programs in 2022 were the beginnings of a concerted effort to ensure accurate data collection."

- **David Lovinger, MD, FHM**

Associate Chief Medical Officer, Health Informatics

"Our patients have individual needs and trust our comprehensive healthcare teams with their care. This education has provided a foundation of knowledge for every team member to help identify healthcare gaps and continue to improve health experiences and outcomes in our region."

- **Heather Tucker, MS**

Director, Carle East Region Services

Enhancing Inclusion Across Our Care

In a 2021 DEI survey, over 65% of Carle Health providers identified an opportunity to learn more about caring for LGBTQ+ patients. In 2022, we took several steps forward in providing a more welcoming and inclusive care and service environment for people of diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. In January 2022, updates to the electronic medical record system allowed patients to share information about their sexual orientation, gender identity and preferred name, helping care teams interact with patients in more understanding and inclusive ways.

We also hosted a six-month provider education series on gender-inclusive care, featuring provider and patient perspectives to learn more about caring for and communicating with patients in the LGBTQ+ community. Speakers highlighted the importance of inclusive care, barriers to care, communication strategies, and their own experiences in giving and receiving care. The speakers then reconvened for an interactive panel in June.



1,000+ hours

Amount of gender-inclusive care training, collectively, that Carle Health team members and providers received through these sessions.

WHAT TEAM MEMBERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT ENHANCING INCLUSION ACROSS OUR CARE

"We know that the LGBTQ+ community has been underrepresented and underserved in healthcare spaces previously – and it's been exciting to see Carle team members commit to help closing these gaps with valuable feedback from team members and patients about how we can make our processes more inclusive for all. As a health system, I think we have a new awareness of how important it is to create an environment where team members can be their authentic selves, and where patients can receive respectful, holistic care."

- **Elizabeth Angelo, DNP, RN**

President, Carle Foundation Hospital; Chief Nursing Officer

"Every policy we create or revise to be more gender inclusive across our organization empowers people in this community to be authentically themselves. Allowing patients to be their authentic selves and to know others responsible for their care are also seeing them that same way will go a long way in improving healthcare outcomes for the LGBTQ+ community."

- **Ron Hoppe-Hastings, RN**

Nurse, Orthopedics and Sports Medicine, Champaign-Urbana

"For a healthcare system to be inclusive for LGBTQ+ people and communities, we must show our commitment as allies. Many people have felt unseen, misunderstood or unable to be heard for so long. The gender-inclusive care initiatives flip that script and open the door for visibility, inclusion and equity in providing care to our patients."

- **Ryan Millsap, RN**

Nurse, Radiology, Carle Richland Memorial Hospital; DEI Steering Committee Member

"Our efforts and initiatives have opened dialogue and advanced our practice around inclusive care like never before. Increasing access for the LGBTQ+ population was once something we hoped would occur, and is now possible, intentional and visible. We want them to know they can count on us during their most vulnerable times."

- **Anastasia Wilczynski, M.Ext.Ed.**

Education Consultant, Carle Experience

"To me, being an inclusive healthcare system means creating an environment where people from the LGBTQ+ community feel they are welcome. When I saw the new Carle logo being used to represent our gender-inclusive care, it brought me to tears. I felt so seen."

- **Charlie Hawknuff, MSN, APRN**

Director, Clinical Education; DEI Steering Committee Member

Building More Equitable Care for All

In 2022, the **Health Equity Clinical Guidance Committee** convened to meet the Executive Leadership charge to examine and address disparities that affect Carle Health patients, plan members and the communities we serve. With representation from clinical, quality and operational leadership – as well as physician and nursing representatives – this group guides organizational strategy and implementation of work to address health disparities, particularly those associated with race/ethnicity and gender. Key initial priorities include:

- Examining the use of race in clinical practices, and making evidence-based recommendations for clinical best practices to reduce inequitable processes.
- Evaluating and addressing disparities in return-to-emergency-department and readmission data.
- Developing pathways for connecting transgender patients to clinical resources and services.
- Supporting ongoing work in maternal and infant care to close gaps.
- Educating the system on causes of inequities – and building awareness and action across the system.

This group will continue to examine data, align priorities and enact changes that close gaps and build evidence-driven programs and initiatives that address the root causes of disparities.



WHAT TEAM MEMBERS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT BUILDING MORE EQUITABLE CARE FOR ALL

"By focusing on health equity, we are doing our part to help identify and create action plans around disparities impacting the very patients we serve. Education is important because it helps to identify those root causes so we know how to focus our efforts. When we know that inequities are not caused by a person's identity, but rather by the systemic and structural barriers that they face, we can better focus on breaking down those barriers."

- **Lakita Scott, MSN, RN**

Vice President of Quality; Health Equity Clinical Guidance Committee Co-Chair

"The goal is to deliver the best treatment to all members of the community. For too long in healthcare we have not reached all people the same. We need to be aware of this and continue to develop ways to overcome these inequities. We need to know our history in order to be better. We need to understand where there are discrepancies so that we can fix them."

- **Robert Healy, MD, MS**

Associate Chief Medical Officer, Quality, Patient Safety and Experience

"We make better decisions when we're informed. No one person has the perfect answer to solve the issue of health inequity, and as a world-class health system, we need to lead the way. To focus on health equity means that we want all of our patients to live their best life and we want Carle to be the partner they count on."

- **Rajul Gandhi, PharmD, MBA**

Clinical Director, Population Health; Health Equity Clinical Guidance Committee Co-Chair

"Many of the 'differences' that we see between groups are not based on biological or genetic differences, but rather human-made structures and systems. Education about the causes of health inequities will empower all of us to reexamine how health inequities impact the care that we provide to our patients. By addressing the multiple determinants of health, these projects will ultimately help provide patients with the opportunity to reach their full health potential."

- **Apryl Martin, MD**

Pediatric Anesthesiologist, Carle Foundation Hospital

Our Journey, Our Commitment



At Carle Health, we're committed to making diversity, equity and inclusion central to all we do. We can't live our mission without it. Being a place where diversity is valued, equity is a priority and inclusion is what connects us is what will truly make Carle Health the trusted healthcare partner our patients, plan members, communities and team members deserve. That's why I'm so encouraged by the progress our Carle Health team has made this past year – and even more excited about the years to come.

Actions matter. DEI can't just be words on a website – the work must be woven into our everyday practices, and in 2022, we put our commitment into motion in many ways. We've led concrete, action-oriented initiatives on challenging racism in healthcare and offering gender-inclusive care. Our emerging leaders program now includes a greater focus on diversity and representation – training and graduating our most diverse class yet in 2022. Our commitment is to being an inclusive space for our team members, patients, health plan members and communities. Actions like our Building Racial Diversity in Nursing program are helping break down barriers and advance careers; our Carle Inclusion Connection groups are creating new networks of support to uplift and share voices; and much more. Every day, our DEI actions have an impact on those who count on us.

We have a journey ahead of us, with much learning, growth and action to come. We must continue to build trust. To acknowledge, respect and truly welcome every individual. To create care and service structures that directly address equity, accessibility and disparities. It's a journey of ongoing improvement that will never end, as DEI must be a part of our everyday culture – not simply a quarterly goal to check off a list. And I'm proud of where we're at in our journey. Less than two years after creating our DEI department, we've witnessed real, powerful change. I can only imagine what we – together, thousands strong at Carle Health and working with our communities – can do in 2023 and the years to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James C. Leonard MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James C. Leonard, MD
President and CEO
Carle Health

Carle Health Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

The Carle Health Board of Trustees is firmly committed to providing mission-driven and strategic guidance that will continue to build a richly diverse, equitable and inclusive organization serving the needs of our patients, families, team members and the community at large. Our values and behaviors directly support our mission to be your trusted partner in all healthcare decisions.

Carle Health has an engaged and committed leadership team that has made DEI a strong focus across the organization. Team members understand the important role they play in advancing the health needs of all community members.

We are dedicated to deploying long-term strategies that prioritize solutions to reduce bias and decrease health disparities in the communities we serve. We empower our leaders to expand and strengthen our organization where all people are welcome and respected. Our goal is to foster a culture that dispels bias and discrimination and seeks to recruit and retain a diverse and inclusive workforce. We recognize and embrace our ability to positively impact the healthcare disparities that exist in our communities today through our mission, vision and values in ways that respect and understand the unique needs of all those we serve.



Together we will make Carle Health a stronger community partner, a better place to receive care in a manner that respects diversity and inclusivity with the full intent of achieving better health outcomes for all.

