



October 28, 2020

Black Physicians of British Columbia Call to Action: Addressing Anti-Black Racism and Systemic Discrimination in UBC Medicine

To Dr. Dermot Kelleher
Dean, Faculty of Medicine
University of British Columbia

CC:

Dr. Ravi Sidhu - Associate Dean, Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME)

Dr. Cheryl Holmes - Associate Dean, Undergraduate Medical Education (UGME)

Dr. Roger Wong - Executive, Associate Dean, Education

Dr. Maria Hubinette - Assistant Dean, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Dear Dr. Kelleher,

On behalf of the Black Physicians of British Columbia, we would like to start by thanking you for outlining, in your Community Letter of June 12th, 2020, the Faculty's commitment to addressing systemic racism. This acknowledgement and the stated desire of the Faculty to tackle systemic racism is an important first step for any institution to achieve change, and we were encouraged to see your strong commitment. But as you know, this commitment must be followed by tangible action to ensure fundamental reform. As an organization committed to supporting Black physicians and trainees in British Columbia, as well as advocating for systemic change to combat anti-Black racism in UBC Medicine, we would like to work with the Faculty in providing recommendations to improve the quality of education and care Black individuals receive in this province.

Discrimination is an internationally recognized determinant of health. Racial disparities and socioeconomic status are also directly related to health status. In order to provide truly culturally-competent care, UBC's curriculum and medical training must prepare its learners to be competent in identifying and dismantling structural inequality and racial biases to better serve our communities.

Anti-black racism has been pervasive throughout our society and our medical institutions are not exempt from it. We believe there is a unique opportunity to catalyze transformative reform at UBC Faculty of Medicine to address institutional racism by taking concrete steps towards addressing the Black Physicians of British Columbia (BPBC) recommendations outlined below. We are calling on the leaders of the UBC Faculty of Medicine, Undergraduate and PGME Offices, to reform their protocols in response to the international cry for justice illuminated by the Black Lives Matter movement.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive and will continue to benefit from the input of stakeholders from a wide range of experiences.

1. Collection of race based data in medical school admissions and residency matching and annually sharing this information publicly.
2. Establishing a Black Student Application Program along with the creation of a Black Canadian Admissions Committee with Black physicians, trainees, as well as community members involved in MD interviews and the admission process.
3. Dedicating resources to fund mentorship efforts towards Black students at high school and undergraduate levels so that students can be introduced to the medical profession through tours, workshops, and virtual as well as in person events at the medical school.
4. Reviewing the medical school curriculum to ensure racial consciousness and incorporation of the impacts of racism on health; with input from Black community members, Black medical professionals, and experts in critical race theory and anti-racism. All participants involved should be appropriately compensated for their work.
5. Creating a well-funded office of equity and inclusion where there is a dedicated expert in anti-Blackness and anti-racist work to provide support for Black medical students at the undergraduate level, and for Black residents and fellows at the PGME level.
6. Dedicating resources to provide debriefing, mental health resources, and anti-racist expert support to Black staff physicians as they continue to face institutionalized racism.

7. Mandating anti-racist workshop(s) that explicitly addresses anti-Black racism for all clinical and academic supervisors, admissions committees, Office of Student Affairs, and incoming residents and fellows to create a safe environment in the classrooms and on the wards.
8. Increasing the representation of the Black instructors, and clinical supervisors through equitable recruitment and promotion with commitment to diversifying the Dean's Executive Team.
9. Inclusion of Black physicians and trainees as active stakeholders in the Faculty's equity initiatives.

We look forward to working with the leadership at UBC Medicine in implementing meaningful action the Faculty will take against systemic racism.

Sincerely,

Rahel Zewude, MD

President, Black Physicians of BC

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