



GREATER FLINT HEALTH COALITION

RESOLUTION TO DECLARE RACISM A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND COMMITMENT TO FUNCTION AS AN ANTI-RACIST ORGANIZATION

WHEREAS, racism is a public health crisis that requires undeniable attention and commitment in order to create a society and environment that promotes racial equity and justice for all people.

WHEREAS, racism is pervasive and entrenched in the design and function of our society, and is exhibited in many forms (e.g. conscious and unconscious bias or discrimination, among others) and levels of life and society (e.g. individual, social, institutional, systemic, and more).

WHEREAS, racism has been allowed to exist in the United States of America for more than 400 years, beginning with slavery and continuing through the Jim Crow era, the war of drugs, mass incarceration, urban disinvestment, and today with increased incidence of police violence, harassment, and murder as exhibited with the killings of George Floyd, Rayshard Brooks, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Eric Garner, Freddie Gray, and too many other Black lives.

WHEREAS, African Americans experience higher rates of mortality and significant disparities associated with chronic disease (including cancer, diabetes, heart disease, obesity, etc.), as well as disparities in infant mortality, access to care, health coverage, preventive screenings, mental health services, psychological distress, and socioeconomic opportunities and resources critical to good health outcomes, such as housing, employment, education, and income.

WHEREAS, nationally, Black or African-American deaths from COVID-19 are nearly two times greater than would be expected based on their share of the population. In Genesee County, Black or African American residents make up 42% of COVID-19 cases and 46% of COVID-19 associated deaths, despite representing only 20.7% of the county population.

WHEREAS, the Greater Flint Health Coalition (GFHC), established in 1996, is a nonprofit Michigan collective impact organization and partnership with a mission to improve the health status of the residents of Flint and Genesee County and to improve the quality and cost effectiveness of the health care system in the community.

WHEREAS, the Greater Flint Health Coalition Board of Directors is composed of multi-sector leadership from Flint and Genesee County's hospitals, physicians, healthcare providers, health insurers, business, government, educators and schools, organized labor, nonprofits, community-based organizations, and residents.

Board of Directors

Jim Ananich – Chair

Michigan State Senator

Kirk Smith – President & CEO

Greater Flint Health Coalition

Executive Committee

Thomas Svitkovich, Ed.D. – Vice Chair

At-Large Director

Peter Levine – Secretary

Genesee County Medical Society

Chad Grant – Treasurer

McLaren Flint

Jamie Gaskin

United Way of Genesee County

Michael Genord, M.D.

Health Alliance Plan

Directors

Deborah Cherry

Genesee County Treasurer

Brenda Clack

Genesee County Board of Commissioners

Debasish Dutta, Ph.D.

University of Michigan-Flint

Joy Finkenbinder

Ascension Genesys Hospital

Chris Flores

At-Large Director

Melany Gavulic

Hurley Medical Center

Lisa Hagel, Ed.D.

Genesee Intermediate School District

Scott Henry

UAW Region 1-D

Kristina Johnston

Flint & Genesee Chamber of Commerce

Terry Katzur

ELGA Credit Union

John McKellar

Genesee County Health Department

Robert McMahan, Jr., Ph.D.

Kettering University

Sandi Mose

Department of Health and Human Services

Sam Muma

AFL-CIO

DuVarl Murdock

City of Flint

Clarence Pierce

Hamilton Community Health Network

Lawrence Reynolds, M.D.

At-Large Director

Danis Russell

Genesee Health System

Lori Shannon

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan

Steven Shapiro, D.O.

Genesee County Osteopathic Society

Tim Sneller

Michigan State Representative

Aron Sousa, M.D.

Michigan State University

Christine Surdock

Molina Healthcare

Beverly Walker-Griffea, Ph.D.

Mott Community College

John Waters, M.D.

Genesee County Medical Society

Todd Wiseley

Mott Children's Health Center

WHEREAS, Greater Flint Health Coalition has made reducing racial disparities and unequal opportunity for health a long-time priority of the organization. In 1999, the GFHC's REACH (Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health) Task Force was created to assist a broad base of community leaders to understand the complexities of race relations and their impact on health, and to keep front and center the issue of ethnic and racial health disparities. This priority was then incorporated into the GFHC Business Plan as an intentional, umbrella focus on "Racial Disparities and Anti-Racism Activities" to ensure these factors were addressed in all GFHC activities, collaborative and programmatic.

WHEREAS, all Greater Flint Health Coalition convened committees, task forces, workgroups, and collaborative bodies utilize a "Terms of Reference" model to outline each multi-sector collaborative's purpose, outcome goals, measurable outcomes, partners, reporting, and staffing model.

WHEREAS, on October 18, 1999, the Greater Flint Health Coalition Board of Directors approved that the vision and outcome options of REACH (Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health) become part of the operational Terms of Reference of every committee/task force of the GFHC. In doing so, all GFHC committee/task force activities currently have an embedded focus:

- To assist a broad base of community leaders to understand the multifaceted challenges of race relations and its impact on individual community members' health.
- To keep front and center the issue of ethnic and racial disparities in the work of the GFHC.

WHEREAS, from 2000 to 2007, GFHC sponsored a community-based series of 23 Undoing Racism Workshops to examine how race and racism affects racial disparities in health outcomes in Flint and Genesee County. As a component of GFHC's Undoing Racism activities, all GFHC Board members were strongly encouraged to attend an Undoing Racism Workshop and seek ways to make anti-racism activities part of their organizations' diversity training. This commitment to anti-racist action engaged approximately 1,400 participants from healthcare, medical, professional, civic, academic, and community settings through training and education.

WHEREAS, GFHC has operated and/or partnered in numerous initiatives over the prior 22+ years in which activities have sought to overcome and eliminate institutional and systemic racism as a stated focus, including the Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health program, the Friendly Access Infant Mortality Initiative, Closing the Gap, the African American Family Resource Information Center and Network, the Greater Flint Coronavirus Taskforce on Racial Inequities, and more.

WHEREAS, prior to recent incidence of disproportionate infection and death from COVID-19 and widespread protests seeking reform and justice in response to repeated acts of police brutality against Black lives nationwide, the Greater Flint Health Coalition remains actively engaged in community and programmatic efforts to address racial disparities and improve health equity, including efforts that address social determinants of health, social vulnerability, and inequities that result in health disparities.

WHEREAS, we, as multi-sector leaders of healthcare, business, government, education, labor, public health, nonprofit, and community-based organizations and institutions in Flint and Genesee County have a responsibility to promote policies and practices that permanently deconstruct racism from our society.

WHEREAS, this history of focus and dedication to addressing racial disparities and enacting anti-racism activities has not been good enough to alter the course of events.

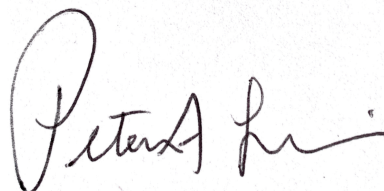
NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Greater Flint Health Coalition Board of Directors declares racism as a public health crisis in Flint and Genesee County.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Greater Flint Health Coalition, its Board of Directors and administrative and programmatic staff, stand in solidarity with all Black and African American residents in Flint, Genesee County, Michigan, and nationwide, denouncing all forms of racism and injustice and demanding reform at all levels of society to permanently eradicate racism.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Greater Flint Health Coalition will adopt a Strategic Business Plan that emphasizes a stated recommitment and overriding focus to ensure the elimination of “Racial Disparities and the advancement of Health Equity and Anti-Racism Activities” are incorporated into all current and future efforts, actions, functions, and initiatives of the GFHC as an entity.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Greater Flint Health Coalition requires all member organizations and community partner institutions representing the Health Care, Insurer, Government, Business, Education, Labor, and At-Large sectors to adopt a stated focus and commitment to anti-racism activities, policies, and practices.

THIS RESOLUTION has been unanimously adopted by the Greater Flint Health Coalition Board of Directors effective June 15, 2020.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Levine". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P".

Peter Levine, Secretary
Board of Directors