



advocacy • education • leadership

## Taking a Stand Against Racism and Inequality

As an organization of more than 18,000 practicing osteopathic family physicians, residents and students throughout the United States, we state our commitment during these unsettling times to address the current and unfortunate reality of systemic and societal racism and inequality. As osteopathic family physicians in communities across our nation, we have seen how these societal and systemic issues have adversely impacted the health of individuals of color. As Americans, we condemn racism and inequalities at all levels within our society and commit to ending disparities, including health disparities, among members of the communities we serve.

The COVID-19 outbreak highlights the systemic inequities in our country's health care system. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) data](#) shows that African American populations are disproportionately hospitalized due to COVID-19, and [data from New York City](#) shows that Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino death rates were substantially higher than that of white or Asian persons. [Other studies](#) have shown that ethnic minorities are less likely to receive preventative care, and despite improvements in the overall health of the American population, ethnic and racial minorities are not receiving the same quality of care in the United States. These same disparities exist in the maternal mortality context with [data](#) showing that African American women have higher rates of pregnancy-related deaths than white women.

As osteopathic family physicians, we have been trained to treat the patient holistically and to look beyond the disease. We pride ourselves on understanding the social determinants of health for our patients and embrace diversity and inclusion in our profession. Our foundational principles are to treat all patients, regardless of their ethnicity or racial background.

As an organization, we have taken positions against racism and inequality. This includes denouncing patient discrimination against physicians on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or national origin. This also includes advocating for the development of core curriculum guidelines to address cultural competency and health care disparities throughout the lifelong continuum of osteopathic medical education. We will continue to build on our principles of inclusion and diversity while also listening to our patients to ensure we are delivering the best possible care for them.

We hope the recent tragedies and ensuing peaceful protests demanding social justice and equality will help lead to societal changes. We will continue to use our position to advocate for meaningful improvements to the lives of minority populations in our country, and in turn, all Americans. Osteopathic family physicians are well positioned to make a meaningful impact on our nation's work towards a better future by addressing the needs of our patients, regardless of race or ethnicity, and continuing to advocate for equality and justice.