



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Report to HSA Members
January 2023



HEALTH SCIENCES ASSOCIATION
The union delivering modern health care

Nú, chexw men wa ha7lh?
(Respectful greeting in Skwxwú7mesh Sníchim).

The HSA EDI team respectfully acknowledges that HSA spans the province colonially known as British Columbia which is home to over 200 diverse nations with over 30 different languages and 60 different dialects. As settlers we acknowledge our responsibilities in our work towards inclusion at HSA to actively respond to the Calls to Action from the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the **National Inquiry to Missing, Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls**, and *In Plain Sight*.**

Happy Lunar New year to those celebrating!

February is Black History month; we have a bulletin that will be sent with actions you can take.

We have also published a [Days of Significance calendar](#). It is a work in progress and will be updated regularly.

Summary of Activities – June 2022 to January 2023

Anti-Racism

We are pleased to share that HSA now has a staff position dedicated to anti-racism initiatives. Simran Ahmed is HSA's Anti-Racism and EDI Lead, and has supported a core group of members from the BIPOC Caucus (interim Racial Justice Working Group) who put together terms of reference for the HSA Racial Justice Committee (RJC), which were approved by the HSA Board of Directors in December 2022. This Committee is intended to advance anti-racism efforts and racial justice within the union. A call for expressions of interest from members to join the Racial Justice Committee closed January 22, and the goal is to form the committee by the beginning of February.

We continue to support the BIPOC Caucus with regular meetings being planned for 2023.

Indigenous Advisory Circle

Indigenuity Consulting Group conducted short interviews with 17 members who self-identify as Indigenous and who expressed interest in getting involved in decolonizing / Indigenizing the union. The members will be invited to meet in early February to form terms of reference and report out on how they wish to work within the union.

Demographic Survey

A demographic survey was sent out to members in June 2022 to learn more about who our members are. While we had some important findings, we were also faced with the issue of low response rate (5.75%) and as such, will be readministering a survey to members in 2023 to get a sense of representation and/or systemic barriers.



If the goal was to increase the love, rather than winning or dominating a constant opponent, I think we could actually imagine liberation from constant oppression. We would suddenly be seeing everything we do, everyone we meet, not through the tactical eyes of war, but through eyes of love. We would see that there's no such thing as a blank canvas, an empty land or a new idea - but everywhere there is complex, ancient, fertile ground full of potential."

Adrienne Maree Brown,
*Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change,
Changing Worlds*

Through this work, though, we did receive a strong interest in forming a Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Working Group, an Indigenous Advisory Circle, and other identity-based groups (for example, members with disabilities, and members who identify as part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community). The Indigenous Advisory Circle is just the start of work we are doing to implement these suggestions.

Please watch your inbox for a follow-up survey coming soon. This survey will not only seek demographic information but also seek to understand experiences of equity and inclusion in your workplaces.

Bargaining

Heather Williams, The Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, participated in HSPBA bargaining over the 9 months of negotiations, reviewing proposals with an equity lens. The joint sessions were all led with land acknowledgements that started off a bit stiff, but grew into very meaningful, heartfelt exchanges in what is normally an adversarial relationship.

As many of you know, there were several proposals that are aimed at addressing Indigenous specific anti-racism such as cultural leaves, expanded definition of family to include Elders, and leaves for Nation governance.

We also were able to table some strong language about access to gender affirming care and ensuring gender-diverse rights are respected in the workplace with thanks to consultation with member Chrissy Taylor, who was involved in the 2022 Core Member Engagement Team.

The pilot project on being able to swap out statutory holidays in exchange for their own cultural or religious days of significance in the Cultural Days of Significance at select sites will begin very soon. Initially there will be a meeting of 3 members from HEABC and three people from HSPBA. The proposal identified that there needs to be someone with decision making power on both sides so that the project can have teeth for moving beyond a pilot. We will update regularly about this important initiative.

Building HSA Staff EDI Capacities

There has been a focus on providing HSA staff opportunities to grow their knowledge and skills. Educational opportunities included San'yas Cultural Safety Training, Transgender Rights, and Communication and Conflict Resolution for Leaders.

We have also been working on implementing an Anti-Racism Recruitment and Hiring Action Plan and proposing changes to the Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy.

The Work Ahead

- Recruitment for new position: EDI Specialist / Organizer that will work on engaging with members who experience marginalization
- Forming of the Racial Justice Committee
- Forming of the Indigenous Advisory Circle
- Demographic and experiential survey on inclusion in the workplace
- Ongoing JEDI education for staff including Fundamentals of Anti-Oppression, Foundations of Equity and Inclusion, Ableism, and Anti-Racism

The Three I's

The process of working towards JEDI goals always involves the three I's.

Individual – You have to be aware of and in critical reflection with yourself, your biases, and the lens with which you view the world. Individual work on building our capacity for engaging in JEDI work also

requires working with emotions and being able to take responsibility for ourselves when things get heated or tough.

Interpersonal – This sphere inquires about how relationships are built, by asking questions like:

What emphasis have you been taught to give relationships in your professional practice?

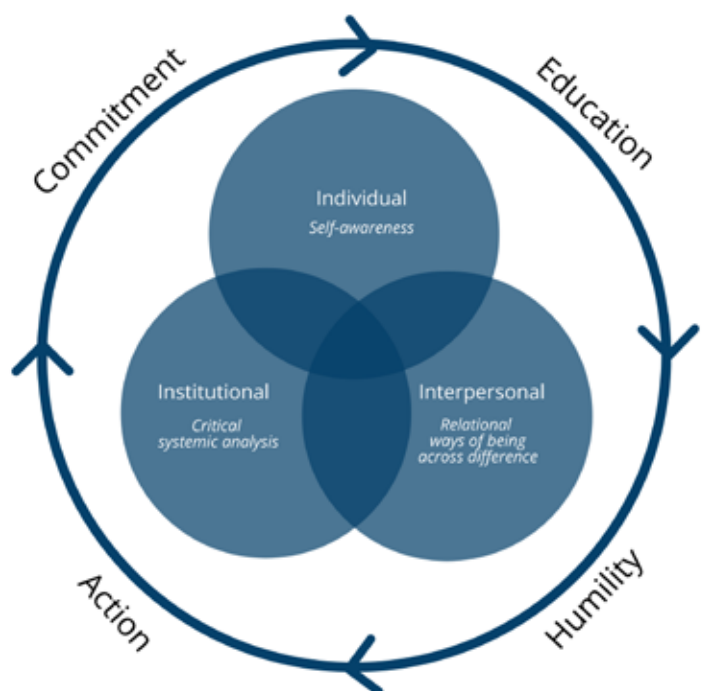
What are the unspoken expectations you have in relationship building? Are you learning about another person through their stories or are you assuming things based on what you think about their identities?

Are you able to move from a place of wanting to create connection or are you motivated to know something about someone? (Think of the question, 'where are you from?' for this example)

Are you listening to understand or are you listening to respond?

Is your inner circle diverse, or does everyone have a lot of similarities? If mostly similar, why do you think that is?

Institutional – Here we look at systemic 'ism' issues like sexism, racism, ableism and the ways phobias like transphobia, Islamophobia, and homophobia are baked into institutions and their practices.



Inequitable treatment is reflected in the diversity of recruitment and retention, who gets a voice at decision making tables, media portrayals of groups of people, who is valued, and which groups are not only undervalued but often criminalized. Systemic and institutional issues can be understood as oppressive. Oppression can be understood as:

Prejudice and Discrimination + Power = Oppression

So often folks experience injustice or have the privilege to learn about injustice and want to rush right into institutional change, but as Yabome Gilpin Jackson reminds, skipping over the step of taking care of our relationships will lead us further into problems.

The outer circle reflects the continual cycle of engagement, we commit to what Justin Wilson calls 'learning to be better relatives', which then means we take up education, learning new ideas, and unlearning patterns of harm that are conditioned in through various systems, so that when we interact on interpersonal levels we can demonstrate humility, an openness and genuine curiosity about each other's stories, and from there we can collectively take up action to make changes to the institutions, structures, and systems that need change.

(Gilpin-Jackson, Y. (2016). Where are you from?" Shifting Identity Interrogation for Interpersonal and Social Transformative Learnings in XII International Transformative Learning Conference, Engaging at the Intersections Proceedings. October 20-October 23, 2016 Tacoma, Washington

Sensoy, O & DiAngelo, R (2014). Is Everyone Really Equal? An introduction to key concepts in social justice education. New York: Teachers College Press

Wilson, J., & Nelson-Moody, A. (2019). Looking Back to the Potlatch as a Guide to Truth, Reconciliation, and Transformative Learning. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 2019(157), 43–57. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tl.20329>

Contact and Resources

Please reach out to us at JEDI@hsabc.org
We have been building some online resources on our website that will be updated regularly: <https://hsabc.org/about/equity-diversity-and-inclusion/edi-resources>

Thank you for all the hard work you are doing in these challenging times. We look forward to connecting in the coming months.