

Health Equity Week is here!

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**HEALTH
EQUITY
WEEK
2019**

March 27, 2019

Welcome to Penn Medicine Health Equity Week!

All week long we are connecting staff on the front lines of healthcare delivery and our community of trainees and learners with resources and tools to increase knowledge and skills to achieve health equity.

Penn Medicine is committed to providing the best patient and family centered care to all patients regardless of their personal characteristics. During this week, we hope to advance our understanding of health and health care disparities and inspire solutions for achieving equitable care.

Continue reading to learn more about what you can do help us achieve this mission.

Responding to Bigotry in the Workplace

What is it?

Bigotry is intolerance toward those who hold different opinions from oneself, often presented as comments in the workplace that are discriminatory or sexist and do not reflect how we aspire to be here at Penn.

Please join us to take the pledge to “Speak Up!” against bigotry. The “[Hear Something, Say Something](#)” campaign was launched by the Penn Medicine Health Equity Task Force in 2018 to ensure that our workplace is inclusive to all.

Why is it important?

Offensive speech in the workplace hinders productivity, undermines employee safety and damages staff and patient experiences.

Whether we work, study, train, advance science, or seek care within Penn Medicine, we all deserve to feel safe, welcome, and included.

Fast facts:

- 30% of workers say they've heard colleagues use sexist, racial or ethnic slurs in the last 12 months.
- 21% of workers say they've overheard age-related and sexual orientation ridicule
- 1 in 10 students report that someone in school has called them a derogatory word related to race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender identity or sexual orientation in the past 6 months.

What you can do

Whether you are a member of the frontline staff, a manager, or an executive, there is a role you can play in setting a respectful and unbiased tone. Consider these actions:

- **Interrupt early.** Workplace culture largely is determined by what is or isn't allowed to occur. If people are lax in responding to bigotry, then bigotry prevails. Speak up early and often in order to build a more inclusive environment.
- **Use or establish policies.** Call upon existing - too often forgotten or ignored - policies to address discriminatory language or behaviors. Work with Human Resources to create new policies and procedures, as needed. Ask for your department to participate in anti-bias training.
- When faced with bigoted "jokes" in the office, **set a "not in my workspace" rule.** Be firm and get others to join in. Allies can be invaluable in helping to curb bigoted remarks and behaviors in the workplace.

When a colleague tells you that you've said or done something that offends or hurts them, try not to be defensive, even if the statement's impact was unintentional. Consider these approaches:

- **Be open to [feedback](#).** Ask clarifying questions, if need be. Be gracious, and consider the moment a learning opportunity.
- **Focus on the work relationship.** Strive to reconnect and ensure that the moment doesn't sidetrack your ongoing ability to work together. "I know this has been awkward for both of us. Is there anything I should do, or we should do, as a next step? I really want us to keep working well together."

- **Change your behavior.** Don't wait for someone to be offended by what you say. Listen closely to the phrases and terms that you use; are some of them "acceptable" only because the targeted group is not present? Bigotry is bigotry no matter who hears it; strive to model respect and inclusion wherever you are.

***Together we can ensure our culture
and climate are inclusive for everyone.***

To learn more:

- [Southern Poverty Law Center: Speak Up! Responding to Everyday Bigotry](#)
- [Teaching Tolerance: A Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center](#)

Celebrate Health Equity All Week Long!

Unable to make one of the in-person events? [Click here](#) to view the events that will be live streamed. Also, connect with your colleagues from across Penn Medicine by following [PennCHEA](#) on Twitter and posting using [#HEW2019](#)!

[Click Here to Learn More and See the Full Schedule of Events](#)