

## BHSB System Pledge to Act

### Fulfilling Our Promise to Improve Health and Health Equity

At BHSB System, we made a promise to improve health and health equity. To fulfill this promise, we must acknowledge that systemic and structural racism<sup>1</sup> exists and that it harms the health and well-being of the communities we serve. We must acknowledge that achieving health equity means tackling racism, which requires remedies based on honest reflection, authentic collaboration and hard work. And, we must acknowledge that addressing racism compels us to think and act in ways that will stretch and challenge us.

#### At BHSB System, we will fulfill our promise to improve health and health equity by eliminating systemic racism in our organization and in the communities we serve. To that end, we pledge to:

- **Foster an internal culture that is diverse and inclusive**, and improves the health of our team members, patients, health plan members and communities. We will achieve this by increasing our cultural competency, supplier and workforce diversity, community engagement, equity of care and community investments.
- **Increase team member knowledge, skills and capacity** to identify and address the impacts of racism on health and health equity. We will do this through unconscious bias and anti-racism training at all levels of the organization, including physicians, leadership and governing boards.
- **Conduct rigorous analyses** of our organizational policies, practices and cultural norms to uncover and address any disparate impacts on the health of team members, patients, health plan members and communities. We will also analyze health outcome data that is disaggregated by race and ethnicity to ensure our internal policies, practices and norms are equitable. And, we will ensure that strategic priorities and tactics are regularly and systematically evaluated for their impacts on the health of team members, patients, health plan members and communities, and address any impacts on health equity.
- **Acknowledge that health equity requires a fair and just distribution of social and economic resources (i.e., the social determinants of health), and advocate for equity-advancing public policy and legislation** to ensure that those resources, such as housing, education, food, transportation, employment, public safety, health care and health insurance, create environments that promote good health for all.
- **Listen deeply, act on what is heard and authentically engage communities** who have been harmed by racism; acknowledge the harm selflessly and without guilt or judgment; serve as allies, advocates and partners to root out and mitigate the effects of racism; and use equitable decision-making processes to ensure our communities have a voice in the creation and implementation of strategies to eliminate health inequities.

#### Our path forward

Improving health equity will require investments ranging from financial, human, technological and other resources. It will require a long-term and sustained commitment to eliminating systemic racism. It will require an accountability system with clear performance metrics to ensure progress toward our goals. And it will require that we live our values by exhibiting compassion through deep caring; authentic collaboration with existing and new partners; curiosity and courage as we navigate new, unfamiliar and, at times, uncomfortable territory; and clarity in our purpose, intent and impact. With this pledge, we will achieve our promise to improve health and health equity; our mission to improve health, instill humanity and inspire hope; and our vision of a future where health is simple, affordable, equitable and exceptional.

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<sup>1</sup> **Systemic racism** and **structural racism** are often used interchangeably, but they are somewhat different. **Systemic racism** refers to racism that is embodied in, endemic to and/or riddled through entire systems, such as our political, legal, economic, health care, school and criminal justice systems. **Structural racism** emphasizes the structures or scaffolding that is hardwired into and upholds the systems, such as laws, policies, institutional practices and entrenched norms. In this document, when we refer to racism, we are referring to both systemic and structural forms of racism.