

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Report to HSA members
August 2023



HEALTH SCIENCES ASSOCIATION
The union delivering modern health care

Weyt-kp xwexwéytep (**Hello, Everyone in Secwepemctsín**)

We respectfully acknowledge that your union, the Health Sciences Association (HSA), spans the province colonially known as British Columbia, which is home to over 200 diverse Indigenous and Métis nations with over 30 different languages and 60 different dialects. We acknowledge that there needs to be a reckoning with the Truth of the ongoing harms of colonialism that are baked into the structures and systems that we are living in. The work of justice, equity, and inclusion cannot be done in good ways without ongoing and committed actions to decolonize.

The Canadian labour movement stands in solidarity with the call from the families, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Assembly of First Nations, and organizers for a search of the Prairie Green landfill for the remains of Morgan Harris and Mercedes Myran, and a search of the Brady Road landfill for remains of other Indigenous women. Inaction fuels the national crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and Two-Spirit people.

Pride weekend in the Lower Mainland is upon us and we hope that those who participate have a safe experience. With the rise of anti-trans and anti-2SLGBTQIA+ hate, we join with allies making an effort to stand in solidarity and support with members of these communities.

The Vancouver Pride Parade is coming up on August 6th and HSA President Kane Tse, EDI Specialist Chrissy Taylor, and Director of EDI Heather Williams will be participating along with HSA members in the BC Federation of Labour's Multi Union Pride parade entry.



Summary of Activities: January 2023 – July 2023

Anti-Racism

Racial Justice Committee

HSA's Racial Justice Committee was formed in February 2023 with the mandate to advance racial justice by addressing systemic and all forms of racism, and incorporating the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within HSA and our membership. To learn more about the Committee and view their terms of reference, please visit: <https://hsabc.org/about/committees/racial-justice-committee>

The Committee has met twice (March and June) and identified multiple areas within the union on which to focus anti-racism work. The committee will develop details for an annual work plan at their next meeting in August. The HSA Anti-Racism lead provides staff support to this Committee.

Members of the Racial Justice Committee will also be attending the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) Anti-Racism Conference in Ottawa this October to represent HSABC and share with and learn from union members from across the country.

Indigenous Circle

In April, five Indigenous members of the union met to form HSA's Indigenous Circle. They drafted Guiding Principles, which will be reviewed by the union's Constitutional and Organization Policy Committee. The draft principles are guided by the following purpose statement:

“Through the guiding principles of relationality and reciprocity, create safe, inclusive, and equitable workplaces and union for Indigenous Peoples.”

In late July, the Indigenous Circle held two virtual Indigenous Gatherings to widen participation.

Please watch for a call of Expressions of Interest later this summer for Indigenous members to join the Circle.

BIPOC Caucus

Members who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) continue to caucus and share their issues, network, and build solidarity. Two virtual BIPOC caucus meetings have been held so far in 2023 (January and May) and one in-person meeting was held at our annual Convention in April. The next BIPOC caucus meeting is scheduled for August.

Diversity Caucuses

This year at Convention, HSA provided space for members from equity denied groups to gather in a caucus environment. The caucuses met again in June and July, and will have their next meetings in September/October. Caucuses are spaces where members can connect, build community, and share knowledge with other members of similar lived experience.

The caucuses that currently exist are:

- Gender Diverse Members
- Members with Disabilities
- 2SLGBTQIA+ Members
- Indigenous Members
- BIPOC Members

If you are interested in joining any of the caucuses, please email JEDI@hsabc.org to get on the mailing list(s).

Demographic Survey

A demographic and experiences of inclusion survey was sent out to members in May 2023 to learn more about who our members are and about your experiences of inclusion in the workplace. We are pleased to have had 2,142 responses which meets the threshold for being representative of the membership. Analysis is underway and reports will be shared at the union's Regional Meetings this fall.

Building HSA Staff EDI Capacities

There is an ongoing focus on providing HSA staff opportunities to grow their justice, equity, and inclusion knowledge and skills. Educational opportunities for staff this year include:

- San'yas Cultural Safety and Anti-Racism Training
- Fundamentals of Oppression
- Understanding Ableism
- Anti-Racism
- Trauma Informed Practices

HSPBA JEDI and ISAR Updates

As a response to the calls from *In Plain Sight* two new Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) with respect to addressing Indigenous Specific Anti-Racism (ISAR) were negotiated into the public sector collective agreements. As the lead union for the HSPBA, HSA has communicated we are ready to do the work, but the employer, HEABC, has yet to set any dates to begin the work. This work will be focused on addressing cultural leaves, an expanded definition of family to include Elders, recruitment and retention of Indigenous workers, and leaves for Nation governance.

The Days of Cultural or Religious Significance Pilot Project Working Group has been struck and met twice, with meetings set monthly. Both sides of the table are eager to get this work piloted in 2024 and are looking over logistics at rolling out such a pilot. Sites have not yet been selected but will be soon. Representatives from HSPBA are HSA's Norah Miner and Heather Williams, and Rhiannon Bray from the Professional Employees' Association (PEA).

The MOA on Gender Diversity and Inclusion is being followed up on regularly. All HSPBA worksites are expected to have signage about diverse genders being welcome in these spaces. **If you are aware of any HSPBA worksites that do not have signage, please alert your union steward.**

The Work Ahead

- Ongoing support of the Racial Justice Committee, BIPOC Caucus, Indigenous Circle, 2SLGBTQIA+ Caucus, Members with Disabilities Caucus, and Gender Diversity Caucus
- Participation in the provincial Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Indigenous Specific Anti-Racism Committees on behalf of HSPBA
- Development of in-house programming on foundations of equity for Stewards
- Planning for an HSA Equity Summit event in 2024
- EDI Specialist site visits to connect with stewards and members to support EDI work

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.**

**"The moment we choose to love we begin to
move against domination, against oppression.
The moment we choose to love we begin to
move towards freedom, to act in ways that
liberate ourselves and others."**

– bell hooks

Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations, 1994



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