

# Achieving Inclusion Excellence in Academic Medicine

## Foundational Principles of Inclusion Excellence

In an organization that has achieved inclusion excellence:

**1. There is demonstrated commitment to diversity.**

- *Diversity is clearly visible and present throughout the organization and valued by all departmental units and at all levels of responsibility.*
- *The workforce reflects the demographics of the community (ies) that the organization is a part of and serves.*
- *There is an understanding that diversity is about human differences which are welcomed, valued and leveraged.*
- *The benefits of structural and cognitive diversity are recognized, valued and embraced.*

**2. Intersectionality and authenticity are recognized, valued, and embraced.**

- *All employees and learners are viewed holistically - that is, there is an appreciation that all employees and learners have multiple identities that extend beyond the organization. The intersection of these multiple identities is encouraged, celebrated, and valued.*
- *Authenticity is valued. Employees and learners feel safe and are free to express their identities and behave truthfully in the learning and workplace environment.*

**3. Employees and learners are part of the fundamental fabric of the organizational community.**

- *A culture of civility and respect for all employees and learners is promoted and sustained at all levels regardless of position stature within the organization.*
- *All employees and learners feel a true sense of belonging through a culture of interconnectedness. There is a high level of engagement.*
- *There is an organizational commitment to ensure a no tolerance policy against all forms of discrimination within the system.*
- *Mission, values, operations, and services reflect the contributions and interests of the wide diversity of cultural and social identity groups.*

**4. Talent optimization is practiced, and differences are recognized, leveraged and rewarded.**

- *Talent optimization is recognized, valued and embraced – that is, the traditional and non-traditional skills, aptitudes, educational experiences, bases of knowledge, personal potential and life experiences of each employee and learner.*
- *The building capacity, infrastructure and governance to optimize, utilize and leverage these diverse talents and skills has been instilled.*
- *Processes to recognize, acknowledge and reward the diverse contributions and achievements of employees and learners at all levels have been established.*

**5. There is equitable access to opportunity.**

- *Policies and practices are in place concerning equality and employee rights, welfare, working conditions, and fair recruitment, hiring and retention practices.*

- *Opportunities for all employees to provide input to organizational policies and practices are the norm.*
  - *Investment in the personal and professional growth of all the employees and learners is the cultural norm.*
  - *Equitable access to opportunities are provided to all employees and learners. The organizational culture is one that is committed to and prioritizes continuous, collaborative, and cross-organizational learning.*
  - *Effective adaptations in the workplace to eliminate barriers to work performance and workplace participation for employees with physical, developmental and mental disabilities are in place. These are monitored and evaluated with regularity to inform policies and practices.*
- 6. Transparent, effective communication and information sharing are the norm.**
- *Communication and information flow from all directions, in all directions and across all levels of responsibility.*
  - *All employees and learners are encouraged to engage with one another through intergroup dialogue to talk about controversial issues with honesty, sensitivity, civility and respect.*
  - *Collaborative conflict resolution processes are valued and utilized that in turn empower people at all levels and across all departments without the fear of retaliation.*
  - *The organization invests in the education and training of all staff to achieve the skills necessary to work collaboratively to solve problems, resolve interpersonal conflicts and achieve mutual resolution.*
- 7. There is demonstrated alignment with organizational mission, values, and a culture of inclusion.**
- *The existence of an explicit and implicit organizational “culture” of inclusion is acknowledged, valued, and practiced, and is in alignment with the core mission of the organization.*
  - *There is an imperative to achieve equity across all departmental units that drives the organization to continuously seek and apply innovative practices to support and sustain the organization’s values and culture of inclusion.*
- 8. There is demonstrated commitment to community engagement.**
- *The organizational community functions collectively as a responsible citizen neighbor by forging constructive alliances with the local communities it is a part of and serves to expand access and promote understanding to overcome prejudice and biases.*
  - *The organizational community understands and values the social contract that it has with the local communities it serves, and holds itself socially accountable to them.*
- 9. Shared accountability and responsibility are the expectation.**
- *All employees and learners are held accountable and responsible for diversity and inclusion efforts, and are expected to uphold organizational values and achieve clear organizational goals and objectives in a mutually respectful work environment.*
  - *All employees are expected to reflect these same values with patients, customers and clients, vendors, suppliers, partners and subcontractors.*
  - *Diversity related data is collected and climate assessments are routinely performed to monitor progress and inform decision-making.*

Adapted with permission and modified from “The Netter Principles: A Framework for Building Organizational Inclusion”, the Workplace Diversity Network, 2000; revised 06/05/2017 by David Acosta, Laura Castillo-Page and Norma Poll-Hunter.