

The Anti-Black Racism Plan Advisory Committee Interim Terms of Reference

Background

The Middlesex-London Health Unit's (MLHU) 3-year Health Equity Capacity Building Plan approved in 2017 included a focus on diversity, inclusion, and anti-Black racism. With unexpected delays resulting in implementation plans not being completed within the 3-year timeframe, ongoing and sustained commitment to capacity building efforts is being confirmed.

In response to the declaration of racism as a public health crisis by the MLHU in June 2020, and a call to action from black community groups such as London's Black Lives Matter, MLHU contracted a consultancy group for the development of the MLHU's [Anti-Black Racism Plan](#) (ABRP). The ABRP identified forty-five recommendations for public health action within the MLHU. Specifically, these recommendations are geared towards addressing and eliminating anti-Black racism. The plan points to a) critical need to actively engage with the Black community as a way to reduce existing health inequities, b) to include an active and ongoing presence of Black representatives to advise on actioning the plan, and c) to enhance the organization's accountability* to the Black community. Consequently, the MLHU will leverage an Anti-Black Racism Plan Advisory Committee as one of its mechanisms to actively engage with the Middlesex-London Black community.

Purpose

The Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee will function as an advisory body to the MLHU's Health Equity and Reconciliation Team (HEART) to:

- Increase opportunities for dialogue and relationship building between the MLHU and the diverse Black community
- Create a safe space for reflection, knowledge sharing and capacity building
- Increase organizational accountability* to the community for the implementation of MLHU's ABRP
- Provide guidance in the prioritization, planning, implementation, and evaluation of MLHU's ABRP, including congruence with other local anti-Black racism plans
- Enhance the ability to achieve meaningful engagement with the Black community

Proposed Group Values

The advisory committee will be guided by the following values

- Honesty and transparency
- Equity, diversity and inclusion
- Respect
- Humility
- Partnership and collaboration
- Solution-focused
- Strengths based

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Membership

The Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee will be composed of the following members:

- 10-12 community representatives
- 1-2 HEART members
- Manager of HEART
- Program Assistant
- Ad hoc guests/members as required

Term of Office

2 years with staggered replacement, members may repeat term.

Chair/co-Chair

One member of the HEART will assume the position of chair. If the chair is unable to attend a meeting(s), another member of the HEART will chair in their place.

Responsibilities of the Chair:

- Create a positive environment (e.g., open and close meetings in a good way, model and encourage respectful dialogue, etc.)
- Ensure opportunities for all voices to be heard
- Ensure clarity of recommendations, decisions, and areas of action
- Act as key contact and MLHU liaison for Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee members
- Plan meeting agendas, in consultation with committee members as needed
- Maintain an up-to-date list of committee members
- Facilitate meetings in an effective manner
- Follow-up as appropriate on identified action items

Responsibilities of Administrative Support:

- Request agenda items from all members one week prior to sending out agenda
- Prepare and distribute the agenda and previous meeting minutes one week prior to the meeting
- Facilitate the scheduling of meetings and support required preparatory activities
- Take minutes of committee meetings
- Distribute minutes to committee members within one week of meeting

Responsibilities of the Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee Members:

All committee members are expected to participate equitably in committee work.

- Attend scheduled Advisory Taskforce meetings. If an absence is unavoidable, inform and/or submit input to the Chair prior to the meeting
- Review committee materials in advance of meetings
- Serve as community representatives, bringing insights from the diverse Black community to the table
- Be open and receptive to the perspectives of others
- Share insights, feedback and perspectives frankly and respectfully
- Commit to working collaboratively towards the goal of enhancing the health and wellbeing of the diverse Black community in London and Middlesex

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- Identify issues and concerns, and be solution-focused
- Follow up on any action items as needed
- Share information from meetings with the community

Meeting Frequency, Duration and Location:

Frequency: Meetings will be scheduled monthly initially and at the call of the Chair. When established, committee will meet as needed to support planning and implementation of activities. Scheduled meetings which are not needed will be cancelled. It is expected that there will be a minimum of 5- 6 meetings each year.

Length: Regular meetings will be scheduled for two hours, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Committee.

Location: Meetings will be held virtually until in-person meetings can be held (discussion). In-person meetings will be held in easily accessible community locations.

Decision Making:

This is not a decision-making body but an advisory group. Group consensus is preferable, but not mandatory when advising and/or making recommendations to the Middlesex-London Health Unit. If a definitive or specific response is required and consensus cannot be reached, a vote will be taken.

Accountability and Reporting:

The Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee provides advice and support on the ABRP strategy, which is overseen by the manager of the HEART who reports to the Chief Nursing Officer (CNO). The CNO will regularly update the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Board of Health, forward issues for consultation and/or approval to SLT as needed, and forward resource requirements of the advisory committee to SLT for consideration and approval, as needed. The HEART will provide a progress report on the implementation of the Anti-Black Racism Plan to the larger community.

Confidentiality:

Members will respect the confidentiality of the advisory committee and agree not to disclose information or views expressed by individuals during meetings. However, the committee will adhere to the principles of transparency and free exchange of committee information with the Black community.

Conflict of Interest:

Within the principles of openness and fairness, members will be asked to declare any perceived or potential conflict of interest prior to engaging in discussion. Declarations of conflicts do not necessarily preclude a person from participating in discussion and will be handled as a group on a case by case basis.

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Review of the Terms of Reference:

Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Anti-Black Racism Advisory Committee annually and approved by the Chief Nursing Officer (OCNO) and the membership of this committee.

Definition

***Accountability** refers to the obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions (Merriam-Webster Dictionary <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/accountability>). MLHU accepts responsibility for actioning its Anti-Black Racism Plan within the context of the organization's mandate, scope of influence, and its various funding, program, and legislative requirements.

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