



MRHA Condemns Racism and Discrimination Against Black Americans

Missouri Rural Health Association (MRHA) stands in solidarity with communities of color to oppose systemic and structural racism, silent-complicit racism, and all other forms of racism that demean, exclude, and marginalize black Americans and other racial minorities.

We recognize that COVID-19 has exposed historical and rampant health inequities as black Americans are dying at a rate that is 2.4 percent higher than whites, and 2.2 percent higher than Asians and Latinxs. (The COVID-19 Tracking Project)

We understand that historical challenges like low wage jobs, chronic stress, housing, discrimination, and other social determinants of health lead to comorbidity and multiple comorbidity factors that have disproportionately affected black Americans, and other people of color.

Our mission is to [safeguard] and improve the health of rural Missourians through partnerships, and by providing leadership on rural issues through advocacy, communication, and education. Aligned with this mission is our desire to be an ever-present voice in this movement to stand against racist policies, practices, biases, and undertone that perpetuate the status quo. For we know that silence is complicity.

We also know that peeling off the tattered layers of health bias and health inequity in our health care systems is a messy process that requires introspection, vulnerability, honesty, and transparency. If we are to be intentional about changing the status quo, we must also be intentional about how to create an equitable health care system that fosters parity and inclusion, regardless of race, in our rural communities.

We stand with organizations, like the National Rural Health Association, to take an active, ongoing stance against racism in all its forms. We stand with communities of color to help find solutions to confront social determinants of health that lead to poor health outcomes. Racism is our most pervasive public health issue and MRHA will not quietly look the other way. We welcome opportunities to work with communities of color to make long, overdue change.