To carry out the medical center’s ambitious goals for anti-racism, nine dedicated action groups of multidisciplinary faculty and staff — both clinical and nonclinical — meet regularly to ensure that these goals are achieved.

Scientific evidence shows that significant disparities in health and in health care are based on socioeconomic factors. These factors — the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age — are known as “social determinants of health.” But these determinants aren’t just based on where someone lives and works. Racism plays a significant role in social determinants of health, as it is often the underlying foundation that breeds inequity in education, housing and income, among others.

At The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, we are moving with purpose and design to tackle health inequities and structural forms of racism in our patient care, our educational and workforce practices, our research and our communities.

Lasting change cannot begin without concerted effort. With our expansive size, collective of impassioned leaders and an ability to mobilize ideas into action, few institutions are as uniquely positioned as Ohio State to make rapid and significant strides to advance initiatives that impact the health of the communities we serve at the Ohio State Wexner Medical Center, at The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center – Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute and in Ohio State’s health science colleges.

This work is important and we view it as an imperative. This 2022 Health Equity and Anti-Racism Report highlights a small sample of the initiatives we have underway. Throughout this report, look for the QR codes that will take you to our Ohio State Health & Discovery website, where you can read about each program in more detail and also find additional initiatives underway. We invite you to join us in our pursuit of true health equity.

Changing the narrative for health inequity and racism
Partnering for justice in health and health care
2022 Health Equity and Anti-Racism report

Reducing disparities for Black men and women
Driven by the new and changing trends in Black men experiencing disproportionately high rates of harm from a host of researchers from across The Ohio State University partnered with the African-American Male Wellness Alliance and other organizations to carry out "Black Impact 100." Bolstered by this program's success, similar efforts are expanding to Black women and similarly see higher rates of chronic disease than their white counterparts.

Fully integrating equity, anti-racism efforts into education and practice
With new advanced competency courses, curriculum revisions and expanded interactions with diverse patient populations, The Ohio State University College of Medicine students in our MD program are learning to better understand and care for their patients. Ohio State is giving students the support and resources they need to be successful and innovative as they provide unbiased, high-quality care.

Narrowing gaps in health outcomes
The Ohio State Wexner Medical Center is dedicated to reducing disparities in health outcomes by educating patients, building trust and making health care more accessible.

Building a stronger foundation of cultural competency through training
As employee demand for diversity information grows, the Ohio State Wexner Medical Center’s Sciences Diversity Council has provided more and more training module about diversity, equity and inclusion. In the past year, we offered enhanced options along two tracks: "anti-racism and cultural awareness," and "equity and inclusion." To further encourage deeper learning, the council introduced a new Certificate of Excellence recognition program for employees who complete at least six sessions.

Reducing anti-racist health care system
In summer 2020, the Ohio State Wexner Medical Center developed its Anti-Racism Action Plan (ARAP), designed to build a foundation for systemic change and carry out advancements in equity through dedicated action plan workgroups. In its second year, progress includes:

- An Anti-Racism Community Advisory Board of central Ohioans from myriad racial, ethnic, socioeconomic and geographic backgrounds, tasked with providing feedback for equity and anti-racism efforts.
- A Buckeye Diversity Internship giving five diverse, undergraduate students the opportunity to participate in high-level hospital operations projects.
- Hiring initiatives aimed at underrepresented populations, and new artificial intelligence software that can correct unconscious gender-based language and postings.

Making care at home even easier
As part of an effort already underway to increase availability of virtual health visits, the Ohio State Wexner Medical Center offered telehealth appointments between July 2019 and March 2020. Since March 2020, that number has increased dramatically to about 700,000 telehealth visits.

In the past year, we have also given patients a new health care option, allowing them to arrange for a health care provider to come to their home to deliver urgent care services and COVID-19 testing through DispatchHealth. These programs allow patients to avoid the hurdles of transportation, parking costs and time off work — and when they can be seen for urgent health needs in their homes, that reduces preventable emergency department costs and hospital admissions.

New chief health equity officer joins Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center
Chyke Doubeni, MD, MPH, comes from Ohio State from Mayo Clinic. Read about Dr. Douben and his plans to advance health equity and anti-racism efforts at Ohio State.