

PH/HA Statement: Racism is a Public Health Crisis

June 4, 2020

Racism and law enforcement violence present destructive impacts on individuals, communities, and public health. The effects of the systemic racism built into our country, compounded by law enforcement violence, enact daily harms and death on Black people and all people of color, as well as other underrepresented and underserved communities. The brutal murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade, and Ahmaud Arbery are yet another graphic representation of the horrors which are daily inflicted upon Blacks and other people of color in our communities, and which were built on more than 500 years of systems and structures that created—and still perpetuate—racism and oppression. It is time for this injustice to end.

The Public Health/Health Administration Caucus of the Medical Library Association stands with the [American Public Health Association](#), the [Medical Library Association](#), the [African American Medical Library Alliance Caucus](#), the [Black Caucus of the American Library Association](#), and other library and health care organizations in condemning violence and racism towards black people and all people of color.

We draw upon the [African American Medical Librarians Alliance \(AAMLA\) Caucus](#) and [Latinx Caucus](#) statements in saying that PH/HA is committed to:

- Using our voices to enact change in the profession, in the Association, and in our communities
- Listening to and validating Black, African American, Afro-Latinx library colleagues' experiences
- Reading and promoting information that supports anti-racism in our profession, in health care, and in our communities.

Racism is a public health crisis, and is a root cause of the shameful health disparities in the United States. In the past few months of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen how this legacy has directly contributed to reduced access to testing, treatment, and care, and to increased mortality among communities of color. In our twin roles as public health and information professionals, it is our duty to confront the immorality of the status quo and work to dismantle it.

We are grateful to members of our community who lead this anti-racism work, and we look to follow their example by engaging more fully in this ongoing fight for justice.

Recommended Resources

[Anti-Racism Resources for all ages](#)

Dr. Nicole A. Cooke, The University of South Carolina

[Antiracism: A Starter Booklist](#)

By Library Journal

[An Antiracist Reading List](#)

By Ibram X. Kendi

[Black Lives Matter: Antiracism and Health](#)

By Harvard Countway Library

[Medicine and Race: An Annotated Bibliography](#)

By Brown University's Alpert Medical School

[Race & Racism in Medicine](#)

By NYU Health Sciences Library

[The Race Card Project](#)

[Racism and Public Health](#)

By American Public Health Association