




# RACISM IN NURSING - Making a Difference

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**“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.” — Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail”**

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# OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lecture, participants should be able to:

- 1. Able to define and understand the impact of racism in nursing
- 2. Be a culture changer
- 3. Understand how to be an ally



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# Racism Defined and the Impact by ANA

- **Racism:** Assaults on the human spirit in the form of actions, biases, prejudices, and an ideology of superiority based on race that persistently cause moral suffering and physical harm of individuals and perpetuate systemic injustices and inequities. (National Commission to Address Racism in Nursing, 2021)
- Racism according to the ANA is a public health crisis that impacts health – physical, mental and spiritual. ANA
  - Within the profession there has been a failure to be antiracist
  - 63% of nurses state that they have faced racism in the workplace (66% peer, 63% patient and 60% manager)
  - Acknowledges that as an organization and profession racism has been maintained through pass actions and omissions.



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[illegible]

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Interviews - Reckoning with Racism in Nursing

Negative Impact Themes –

- Mistrust
- Feeling alone/isolated
- Always having to be on guard
- Advocating for self over and over
- Lack of concern from leaders and administrators
- Feeling Broken
- No advocacy from peers, charge nurses, instructors or leaders
- Lack of understanding of the impact of being treated differently by peers and patients
- Judged
- Criticized

**TOGETHER**

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# Reckoning with Racism in Nursing

Themes what is needed -

- Understanding that all experiences are not the same
- A listening ear –
- An effort to diversify staff and leaders
- Training on Unconscious Bias
- Willingness to ask questions and learn
- Effort to ensure that all are included
- An ally – utilizing speak up
- An understanding of bias and how that impacts interactions



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# At Home – Allina Health

What We've Learned From Our Colleagues




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## Racism in Nursing – Closer To Home

Negative Impact Themes –

- Passed over for training and promotions
- Feeling of being unheard
- Feeling that they do not belong/isolation
- Feeling as an outcast
- Mistrust
- Keep head down
- Overlooked and passed over
- Never given the benefit of the “unknown”


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## Racism in Nursing – Closer To Home

Themes what is needed -


- Visible efforts to diversify nursing –
  - Need to see efforts that diversifying nursing is seen as vital
  - Charge Nurses and ACNMs – need to feel as if they will be supported and heard if have to counsel someone not of color
  - Frontline leaders – that are diverse and that understands and accepts cultural differences
- Understanding of our own Unconscious Bias
- A declaration from senior leaders – executives and down
- A sense of safety




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## Impacting Culture to Shift the Narrative


- Organizational leadership commitment is key to fulfilling an anti-racist mission
- Racism must be seen as preventable harm and addressed in the same way as other preventable harm
- All Employee Commitment
- Allies
- Stop the line
- Foster foundational values that support a zero-tolerance for racism



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## Commission Addressing Racism in Nursing




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## National Commission to Address Racism in Nursing Report

- “Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) touches every part of a healthcare organization, acknowledges the value of many voices, and hold the wellbeing of nurses as central to a positive clinical environment.”
- Healthcare workplaces must have an inclusive environment and offer spaces for courageous conversation to discuss racism and the impact of unconscious bias all of this is necessary for success.
- Colleagues and hospital administration cannot ignore, dismiss or explain away racist behaviors
- “It is a core nursing responsibility to protect the humanity, dignity and human rights of all patients and colleagues...”



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## Racism in Nursing - ANA

Combatting racism in nursing needs action at every level. On January 25, 2021, leading nursing organizations launched The National Commission to Address Racism in Nursing. The Commission is committed to providing resources for people at every level.

**Here's what you can do as an individual:**

1. **Understand what racism is**  
Words matter, and so does context alignment. The Commission drew upon the existing definitions and added to them to create a holistic definition that speaks to multiple aspects of racism.
2. **Discover how pervasive racism is in nursing**  
On January 25, 2022, the Commission released the results from a survey that showed racism is a substantial problem within the profession.
3. **Hear directly from other nurses**  
The Commission held listening sessions to hear directly from nurses of color. These conversations informed policies and practices to address systemic racism.
4. **Share your story**  
Capturing all perspectives and insights – the good and the bad – is key to forge change in the nursing profession.
5. **Learn how you can make a difference everyday**  
This infographic shares 10 ways every nurse can be an antiracist.



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# Supporting Your Colleagues

## Top Ten Ways to be an Antiracist in Nursing

**1**

**Become story catchers**

Be intentional when hearing about other people's experiences. To hear is to learn and understand, which leads to empathy with the person.

**2**

**Be genuine**

Do what you say you will do. Keep your word -- if you do not have trust, you cannot be an ally.

**3**

**Manage me**

Resist "emotional hijacking," where generalizations cause you to act out of previous fear and pain, thus letting emotions take control of your reasoning.

**4**

**Maximize curiosity. Minimize certainty.**

Ask yourself, "Why am I thinking this about this person?" "Where did this originate from?" and "Do I know what I think I know to be true?"

**5**

**Distribute power**

Give voice to, and support with concrete action, those without power. Minimize power plays in promotion, hiring, and patient assignments.

**6**

**Preserve the dignity of others**

See the humanity in others. Are you viewing colleagues as a deficit to your team rather than an asset and why?

**7**

**Stop labeling others**

See people as people. Eliminate ideas about superiority, inferiority, and where to place people on a hierarchy.

**8**

**Expose unwritten rules**

Examine your systems. Bias cannot be avoided so tweak your systems to overcome it. Look to make adjustments based on what is going on in the world.

**9**

**Support authenticity**

Allow each person to be their authentic selves. Accept them with their differences. Don't force people to lose their uniqueness.

**10**

**Manage perception**

Consider how your decision-making will impact or affect those not part of the decision process. Don't get caught up in your own ideas. The member only knows impact of what was done.

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Panel Discussion

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