



Advanced Practitioner
Society for Hematology
and Oncology

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Prioritization: A Guide to Developing Educational Materials with a DEI Lens

Background

This is meant to be a guide to help promote an inclusive and respectful way of incorporating DEI into every oncology discussion. This guide will support writers and presenters in fostering diversity and inclusion in academic pursuits.

Health Inequities in Oncology

Unfortunately, due to social, environmental, and economic disadvantages, there are certain groups in the United States that have a disproportionate burden of cancer. Cancer inequities (defined as differences in health that are avoidable, systematic, measurable, and unjust) are differences in cancer measures such as:

- Incidence
- Prevalence
- Mortality
- Survival
- Morbidity
- Survivorship
- Financial burden of cancer or related health conditions
- Screening rates
- Stage at diagnosis

There are a variety of groups that may experience cancer inequities - these groups include people defined by race/ethnicity, disability, gender identity, geographic



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location, income, education, age, sexual orientation, national origin, and/or other characteristics (NCI - "Defining Cancer Disparities").

Health services research shows that inequities are also evident in the health care system itself—through bias, prejudice, and stereotyping on the part of healthcare providers, racial bias in the tools used to make clinical decisions, and through policies and systems that limit access to quality treatment.

We have the ability to make health equity a reality - to advocate for communities to have the conditions, resources, opportunities and power to achieve optimal health, and to know that health is a human right. For this to occur, advanced practitioners, who first and foremost care for patients and their medical needs, must develop a critical consciousness of the root causes and structural drivers of health inequities in their communities.

When discussing these important concepts, it is essential to utilize DEI language and concepts. For a guide to language, narrative, and concepts, please refer to the [AMA guide to advancing health equity](#).

Additionally, for more resources on diversity, equity, and inclusion, please see our [DEI Toolkit](#) on the APSHO website.

Content-Focused Guidance Sections

Emerging Therapeutic Approaches

Consider addressing:

- Differences in incidence and mortality in minority populations
- Clinical trial design (under- or over-representation of certain populations)
- Possibility of financial toxicity
- Whether to care can be an issue (ex. CAR-T)
- Address complexities in treatment (Will health literacy impact outcomes? How should patients be educated?)

When presenting a patient case:



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- Avoid promoting bias, stigmas, stereotypes, or microaggressions
- Evaluate whether race is relevant to the patient case. If not, consider removing, especially if using to define a risk factor

[New AMA policies recognize race as a social, not biological, construct](#) Press Release

Diagnosis and Management of Oncologic Diseases/Disease State

Cancer is a disease that can affect anyone but does not affect people equally. When preparing your work on a cancer diagnosis, treatment, or disease management, it is important to critically think about the factors that influence cancer diagnosis and outcomes.

Some factors to consider when working on your article/talk/presentation:

- Evaluate and call attention to the populations utilized in research studies. Are they reflective of the population as whole, or predominantly a certain sex, age, ethnicity? How does this affect the takeaway points?
- If you're preparing a case study, consider cultural context, have awareness of social determinants, and be inclusive of different patient examples.
- Where were studies conducted? Consider who would have had (or not had) access to participate.
- Have structural and social determinants of health been considered with regards to the diagnosis, management, or treatment?
- Discuss barriers to obtain discussed treatments, workup, diagnosis, etc.
- Promote the use of language that respects and affirms identities and experiences of individuals (see resources).
- Emphasize the significance of representing diverse perspectives in presenting information.
- Assess and address unconscious bias that may influence writing and presentations.



Meeting Reports

Meeting reports need forethought to properly cover and present a summary that has taken DEI into consideration. A meeting report has two distinct steps: first, attending the meeting. Slides or summaries are not always available after the fact. The second part is writing the report. The writer must be a careful observer of not only the primary topic, but also if DEI was considered. For example, the topic could be biomarkers in non-small cell lung cancer. The DEI angle could be EGFR mutations in Asian, women, non-smokers with non-small cell lung cancer. It would be appropriate to present the DEI considerations discussed at the meeting as part of the report, but equally appropriate to critique if DEI was not particularly considered or addressed or done so improperly.

Professional Development/Role of the AP

Promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in professional development for oncology advanced practitioners (APs) is crucial for creating an inclusive and equitable healthcare environment. Please consider this a guide for integrating DEI into current practices:

- Assess and address any bias; encourage self-reflection.
- Identify any barriers that may exist for individuals' professional development and commit to working to eliminate those you can.
- Use equity-centered language (see resources).
- Ensure that professional development events, conferences, and panels consist of diverse range of speakers/experts.
- Seek out and invite speakers from diverse backgrounds to participate in professional development activities.
- Ensure an inclusive learning environment. Participants should feel safe, respected, and able to freely express themselves.
- Encourage participation in professional development activities from oncology APPs with diverse backgrounds.
- Integrate culturally sensitive approaches to professional development activities considering factors such as beliefs, traditions, and identity.
- Utilize and encourage mentorship that connects oncology APs from all backgrounds and promote it as opportunity for professional development.
- Collaborate with organizations and individuals that are focused on DEI to share ideas and best practices.



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Clinical Practice Considerations

Clinical practice considerations presentations/papers must include key health equity concept considerations. Essentially, presenting considerations for practice or presenting ways the primary topic affects a population, i.e., how breast cancer affects patients. Are black women afflicted less or more than their white counterparts? Perhaps the consideration is that there is no difference between populations. Perhaps the presentation can discuss if there is a lack of data to describe how the primary topic affects a particular population. To continue with the same example, there might be a lack of data on how male breast cancer patients respond to a particular treatment.