

ANTI-RACISM, ACCESS, & EQUITY POLICY

Statement of Principle:

Epilepsy Toronto recognizes that the City of Toronto is composed of a vast and rich diversity of communities. Accordingly, while upholding the Ontario Human Rights Code (the "Code"), Epilepsy Toronto is committed to ensuring that its mission and operations are inclusive and accessible to all. Under the Code every person has a right to equal treatment regardless of "race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status, disability, record of employment offenses, and income."

Definitions:

Multiculturalism: The Government of Canada formally recognizes cultural diversity, equal status for all cultures, and the freedom to share one's cultural heritage and participate fully and equally in society.

Racism: An ideology that bestows power and privilege - on the basis of skin colour - to the dominant mainstream community. Underlying racism, is the belief that one group of people is inferior or superior to other groups. Racism can permeate norms, values, ideas, beliefs, attitudes, emotions, behaviour, systems, structures, institutions, laws, policies and practices.

Anti-Racism: An approach that confronts racism in all its forms.

ET POLICY

- Staff, volunteers, and members of the Board must reflect Toronto's cultural and ethno-racial diversity and be provided appropriate training and education in anti-racism;
- Programs and services must be sensitive to cultural and ethno-racial diversity;
- Communications must present a positive and balanced portrayal of racial and cultural diversity;

- The organization must practise and promote zero tolerance of discriminatory or racist behaviour and, wherever possible, eliminate systemic barriers to full participation and promote positive race relations and attitudinal change.

Multicultural/Anti-racism Organizational Development (MAROD) Director

The Association endeavors to appoint a MAROD Coordinator to the Executive Committee of the Board, responsible for ensuring organizational compliance with, and commitment to, anti-racism, access, & equity – as outlined in this policy and in the annual anti-racism, access, & equity plans of the Association.

Anti-racism, Access, & Equity / MAROD Committee

The Anti-racism, Access, & Equity / MAROD Committee will be a standing committee of the Association, comprised of the MAROD Director of the Board, Executive Director, and several of the Association's clients and staff. The committee assumes responsibility for:

- Monitoring staff, consumer and volunteer diversity.
- Cultivating a community of the agency (i.e. members, supporters, & volunteers) that is reflective of diversity in the community at large.
- Reviewing Association policies and procedures to ensure consistency with Epilepsy Toronto's multicultural and anti-racist philosophy.
- Facilitating outreach and service provision to persons with epilepsy in ethno-racial and minority communities.
- Building staff resources and expertise toward the delivery of culturally sensitive services, and recommending and conducting appropriate training and education for staff, volunteers, board and clients.
- Monitoring diversity in the Toronto epilepsy community and establishing short and long range anti-racism, access, & equity action plans.

The Board of Directors (Governance)

- The Board of Directors must ensure that its composition reflects the racial, cultural and linguistic diversity of the community that it serves and will direct recruitment efforts accordingly
- The Board of Directors must take a leadership role in upholding the principles contained in the policy and remaining informed on issues as they relate to anti-racism/harassment

Staff (Employment), Volunteers and Students

- Epilepsy Toronto will work towards ensuring that its staff is reflective of racial, ethnic, cultural, gender and linguistic diversity in Toronto.
- Advertisements for employment opportunities will include postings at community agencies and health centres serving diverse neighborhoods.
- Employment opportunities will be advertised internally, within the agency, as well, in an effort to promote diversity at all levels of the organization.
- Hiring decisions will be made by individuals or groups who possess a thorough knowledge and understanding of anti-racism, access, & equity, and all qualified individuals will have equal access to employment.
- Staff will be provided with training in anti-racism, access, & equity.
- The Association will endeavour to proactively recruit volunteers and students from diverse racial, cultural and linguistic communities through multicultural media and other channels of communication.
- The granting of volunteer and student placements will be free of discrimination and bias of any kind.

Training & Education

- All staff and volunteers are expected to familiarize themselves with, and abide by, the Anti-racism, Access, & Equity and Anti-harassment policies of the agency.
- Multicultural and anti-racism training and education workshops / literature will be incorporated into annual Board, staff and volunteer development.

Programs and Services

- All services and programs will be developed and implemented without discrimination and prejudice and with best efforts to accommodate the racial, cultural, linguistic, and gender specific needs of consumers.
- The Association will, as a matter of course, consult with ethno-racial community leaders to identify and mitigate potential service barriers.
- All service users shall be made aware of the Association Anti-racism, Access, & Equity and Anti-harrassment policies and procedures during intake or, subsequently, via membership correspondence.

Communication

- Annual efforts must be made at proactive outreach to diverse communities, with culturally sensitive and accessible communications
- Agency publications must be reflective and inclusive of diversity.
- Wherever possible, efforts will be made to ensure that the physical environment and decor of the agency is inviting to persons of diverse communities.

MAROD Budget

- The Association must allocate resources, within its annual operating budget, toward MAROD objectives (i.e. training, outreach, translation, etc).

Approved by the Board: September 10, 1992

Revised/Ammended: November 17, 1998; July 13, 1999

Reviewed/Ammended: September 2004