QHS EDIIA Statements

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement
Queen’s University is situated on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Territory. To acknowledge this traditional territory is to recognize its longer history, one predating the establishment of the earliest European colonies. It is also to acknowledge this territory’s significance for the Indigenous peoples who lived, and continue to live, upon it – people whose practices and spiritualities were tied to the land and continue to develop in relationship to the territory and its other inhabitants today.

The Kingston Indigenous community continues to reflect the area’s Anishnaabek and Haudenosaunee roots. There is also a significant Métis community and there are First Peoples from other Nations across Turtle Island present here today.

QHS Statements of Policy and Commitment

QHS Anti-Discrimination Statement
Queen’s Health Sciences has a long-standing history of implementing discriminatory and oppressive policies including the expulsion of women from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, Kingston, in 1883, and the ban of Black medical learners in 1918. While Queen’s Health Sciences (QHS) has issued public apologies to address some of these historical wrongdoings, we still have much work ahead to appropriately address and redress the many forms of institutional racism, discrimination, and oppression that not only existed historically, but continue to permeate our classrooms, offices, meeting rooms, research labs, and clinics.

To openly embrace decolonization and anti-oppression in all forms, we must first confront our own systemic patterns of injustice and profound privilege in QHS. A cultural shift towards a more just, equitable, and inclusive QHS will require us to acknowledge and tackle our own histories of oppression and sit in that discomfort. It will necessitate a process of self-reflection, unlearning and learning, listening to and valuing diverse voices among learners, staff, and faculty and a deep-seated commitment to change. We must be a leading example of the positive change our communities and the world deserve.

QHS disavows any form of oppression and discrimination, and stands against dehumanizing acts here at Queen’s, within the Kingston area, across Canada and around the world. We stand in solidarity with Indigenous and Black communities who continue to confront a systemic cycle of brutality and trauma. We recognize the need to dismantle institutional practices and policies that sustain and fuel acts of racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, xenophobia and other forms of marginalization and oppression.
QHS Inclusion Statement
QHS is committed to fostering excellence and innovation in education, research, and clinical services by integrating equitable, inclusive, and just policies and practices that empower learners, staff, and faculty with diverse lived experiences to thrive at Queens University. We strive to create a sense of belonging amongst all individuals embodying an intersectionality of perspectives, backgrounds, and identities (including, but not limited to any aspect of a person’s physical appearance, ethnic or cultural background, sexual orientation, gender identity, nation of origin, language, socio-economic status, disability status, immigration status, religion and creed, age, or family status, amongst others). Our responsibility is to serve diverse communities and society with humility, compassion, and empathy by educating health care professionals, conducting equitable and inclusive research, and practicing clinical care grounded in cultural safety and justice. We are responsible for building a more just, equitable, and inclusive healthcare system that dismantles barriers and builds bridges.

Through the collective development of the QHS EDIIA Action Plan, we strive to undergo a cultural transformation that promotes inclusive leadership and accountability by building and implementing equitable, inclusive, and reconciliatory practices.

Statement on Social Accountability
QHS is accountable to its learners, faculty, staff, and alumni. We are also accountable to the Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox, and Addington community and more broadly, to the national and global community where QHS can play a role in improving health and health equity. QHS has an obligation to take action to respond to the education and health needs of our communities in an equitable and inclusive manner. It is the responsibility of QHS to develop education, research, and clinical activities that prioritize “health for all” and which support health equity, accessible health care and population health. QHS is also accountable to the many commitments our University and Faculty have already made such as those to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action and the Scarborough Charter as well as to human rights declarations and to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Our current and future health professionals, scientists, educators, and communicators must advocate for community members and patients disenfranchised by power structures and social conditions negatively impacting their health. We commit to these multiple layers of social accountability and to regularly assessing and enhancing our social accountability mandate.
Definitions of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Indigeneity, and Accessibility

Equity
Equity – guarantee of fair treatment, access, and opportunity. Goes beyond formal equality; differential treatment according to need may be required. Redressing unbalanced conditions is needed to achieve equality of opportunity for all groups.

QHS is committed to ensuring the fair and respectful treatment of all learners, staff, and faculty by eliminating unfair biases, stereotypes and/or barriers that limit someone’s full participation in educational, research and clinical activities. In addition, QHS strives to create opportunities for learners, staff, and faculty who have been historically and systemically marginalized and underrepresented to access power and improved academic and growth opportunities.

Diversity
Diversity is any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. It means respect for and appreciation of differences in ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, ability, sexual orientation, faith, socio-economic status, and class. But it also includes differences in life experiences, learning and working styles and personality types that can be engaged to achieve excellence.

QHS is committed to diversifying the presence and participation of learners, staff, and faculty with different perspectives, backgrounds, and identities. We recognize that people hold many intersecting aspects of identity and we value a diverse community that includes (but is not limited to) people who identify as Black, Indigenous, Person of Colour, members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, persons living with a disability, and those from diverse backgrounds with respect to ethnicity, immigration status, religion and creed, language, age, or family status, amongst others. We celebrate the diversity of our learners, staff, and faculty in QHS and strive to ensure that representation in QHS reflects that of the greater Canadian society.

Inclusion
Inclusion is the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity, where each person is valued and provided with the opportunity to participate fully in creating a successful and thriving community. It means creating value from the distinctive skills, experiences, and perspectives of all members of our community.

QHS is committed to creating an environment and culture where our learners, staff, and faculty can fully participate and flourish, build a sense of belonging, and feel welcomed and respected. QHS appreciates and embraces the diversity of perspectives, backgrounds, and identities of our learners, staff, and faculty by supporting their full participation in QHS.
Indigeneity
Indigeneity describes the state of being Indigenous or related to Indigenousness. Indigenous Peoples recognize their own Indigeneity, Indigenousness, and identity. Indigenous relates to territory, culture, community, and traditions.

QHS is committed to supporting Indigenous learners, staff, and faculty connection to land colonized by settlers and supporting a process of confirming Indigenous citizenship that no longer relies solely on self-identification. QHS will comply with the findings and recommendations of the Queen’s University Indigenous Identity Project. QHS will contribute to acts of decolonization and will support the Indigenization of the institution.

Accessibility
Accessibility is about giving equal access to everyone, including members of our communities who live with disabilities or whose environments disable them. Without being able to access the facilities and services found in the community, persons living with disabilities will never be fully included. In most societies, there are innumerable obstacles and barriers that hinder persons with disabilities. These include such things as stairs, lack of information in accessible formats such as Braille and sign language, and community services provided in a form or language which people are not able to understand.

QHS is committed to designing and building barrier-free information, activities, and environments for all learners, staff, and faculty, including those who may identify as having a disability.