# Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion (DEA&I)
# Advisory Group Charter

## OUR COMMITMENT

Our Augusta Health core values guide us to create and sustain a culture of care and compassion for our patients, each other, our partners, and neighbors in the communities we serve. To reflect our values, we commit to valuing diversity, equity, access, and inclusion for all. This commitment translates into meaningful action that positively impacts the workplace culture and the experiences of all team members and patients.

We believe that a diverse and inclusive work environment for team members and providing culturally sensitive care for our patients are essential to fulfill the Augusta Health mission to **strengthen the health and well-being of all people in our communities**.

We are guided by these principles:

- **Diversity** is how we are the same and how we are different. This includes the unique characteristics that define who we are as individuals, including diversity in race, ethnicity, age, gender expression, gender identity and sexual orientation, religious beliefs, life experiences, language, education, physical ability, and political beliefs.
- **Equity** ensures fair and just opportunities for patients and coworkers. It refers to actively working to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented full participation across differences in culture and circumstance.
- **Access** provides spaces and opportunities for all team members to form connections regardless of their background and experiences, so they feel like they belong and are supported to thrive. Access ensures opportunity and advancement for all team members in every stage of education and career development.
- **Inclusion** is openly welcoming and respecting what makes each of us unique. As an organization, it takes deliberate actions to make team members feel valued for their contributions, respected for their work, and in turn, experience a sense of belongingness and accomplishment. Our diverse Augusta Health healthcare community is our strength, and inclusion improves our interactions and experiences.

## SUMMARY OF PURPOSE

In today's healthcare environment, establishing diverse, equity-centered, accessible, and inclusive (DEA&I) practices are imperative. It can improve the team member experiences, quality of care and service to our patients, and overall organizational performance. It also positively impacts team member retention, talent recruitment and innovation.

To sustain and enhance our culture of compassion, excellence, and teamwork, we have established a **Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion (DEA&I) Advisory Group** to recognize and address the value of our diverse workforce and workplace. The DEA&I group is a task force of diverse Augusta Health leaders and team members who are responsible for helping bring about the cultural changes within the organization. By creating a group with this focus, Augusta Health can intentionally move toward being more diverse, equity-centered, accessible, and inclusive.

## OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the DEA&I advisory group will vary depending on the needs and priorities of the organization. However, here are some common objectives to achieve:

**Develop and Implement DEA&I Strategies:** Collaborate with leadership to develop, implement, and monitor DEA&I strategies and initiatives that align with the organization's goals and values. This may include reviewing existing policies, practices, and programs to identify areas for improvement and recommending changes to promote diversity, equity, access and inclusion.

**Provide Guidance and Expertise:** Serve as a resource and provide guidance to leadership, managers, and team members on DEA&I-related matters. Offer expertise, best practices, and evidence-based recommendations to promote a more inclusive and equitable work environment and address systemic barriers and disparities. This would include learning and development opportunities that are effective and accessible.

**Advocate for Change:** Advocate for systemic changes within the organization to promote DEA&I. This may involve raising awareness about DEA&I issues, challenging biases and stereotypes, and advocating for policies and practices that advance equal opportunities for all team members.

**Promote Accountability and Transparency:** Hold leadership accountable for advancing DEA&I goals and objectives by monitoring progress, evaluating outcomes, and providing feedback. Advocate for transparency in decision-making processes and communication about DEA&I efforts to ensure accountability and build trust among leaders and team members.
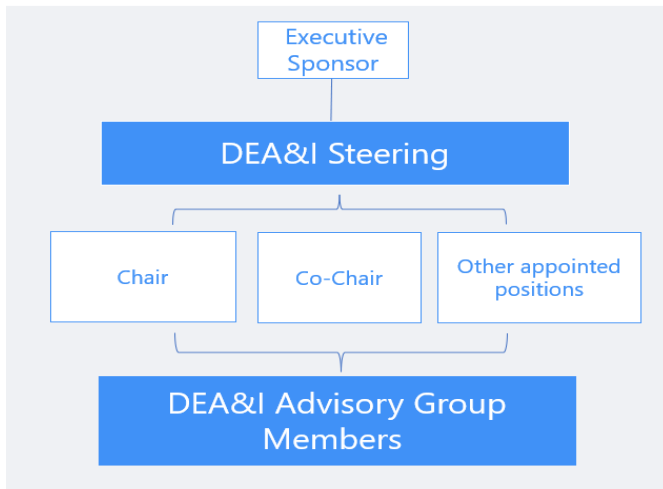
**Address Bias and Discrimination:** Address unconscious bias, stereotypes, discrimination, and harassment within the organization. Develop strategies and resources to educate team members, raise awareness about DEA&I issues, and create a culture of respect, dignity, and inclusion. Provide support and resources for team members who experience bias or discrimination.

**Measure and Report Progress**: Establish metrics, benchmarks, and evaluation criteria to measure progress toward DEA&I goals and objectives. Collect data on diversity representation, inclusion indicators, team member satisfaction, and other relevant metrics to track progress over time. Report findings to leadership and stakeholders to inform decision-making and continuous improvement efforts.

**Build Partnerships and Community Engagement:** Build partnerships with external organizations, community groups, and stakeholders to leverage resources, share best practices, and advance DEA&I goals beyond the organization.

By pursuing these objectives, the DEA&I advisory group can play a vital role in driving meaningful change and promoting a more diverse, equitable, accessible, and inclusive work environment for all team members.

## DEA&I ADVISORY GROUP STRUCTURE



## MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

| Member Role | Term | Responsibilities |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Executive Sponsor | 3 years | Provides oversight and approval for strategy and budget; champions initiatives at senior and executive leadership and board levels to maximize visibility, participation, and goal accomplishment. |
| Chair | 1-2 years | Responsible for executing strategy and goals on an annual basis. Coordinates tactical logistics, programming, communicates metrics and overall progress, monitors initiatives and ensures alignment with mission and vision. Creates agendas and facilitates meetings. |
| Co-Chair | 1-2 years | Responsible for executing strategy and goals in absence of the chair and alignment with the Charter objectives and annual goals. Collects meeting minutes and maintains advisory group documents. |
| Other Appointed Positions | TBD | Provides support along with Steering members. Roles may vary and be ad hoc based on initiatives or projects underway. |
| Steering Members | 1-2 years | DEA&I Steering members represent different functional units/departments, demographics, tenure within the organization, and varying degrees of diversity, inclusion, and health equity knowledge. Provide support for development, decisions, and implementation of the advisory group strategies. |
| Members | 2 years | Members represent a cross section of units, departments, demographics, and tenure with Augusta Health. Having some knowledge of DEA&I, members support the implementation of initiatives based on the goals and recommend new initiatives. Members include Steering members and various sub-committees. |

## MEETING GUIDELINES

**Cadence:** DEA&I Advisory Group members are to regularly attend bi-monthly meetings.

**Accessibility:** Meetings include both in-person and virtual options to obtain maximum member participation

**Expectations:** Meeting notes are recorded and available to all members to accommodate individuals who is unable to attend

## COMMUNICATIONS

**Internal:** Use internal communication channels to share updates, successes, and to recruit members. (Pulse/Investing in Us, etc.)

**External:** Post advisory group and DEA&I focus on Augusta Health Career site; and other social media like LinkedIn.

**Recruitment:** Promote on website for candidates to see and during New Hire Orientation to create awareness and recruit members.