

June 5, 2020

Dear Community,

The Ingham Community Health Centers Board of Directors wants to be crystal clear: we condemn white supremacy, racial bias and racial inequities in all their forms. As a federally qualified health center (FQHC), we serve over 25,000 Ingham County residents every year.

The murder of George Floyd was not, and is not, an isolated incident of police brutality -- nor is it the only symptom of racial inequities in America. Our country was founded on racial inequity principals and our systems built to enshrine, protect and further white supremacy.

Ingham Community Health Centers is keenly aware of the racial disparities in healthcare and health access in our communities. From higher infant and maternal mortality rates for women of color, to significantly higher burdens of heart disease, diabetes and HIV among Black community members.

In addition, we recognize that racial inequity and structural racism take a toll on the mental health of Black, Brown and other vulnerable populations in our community. We are committed to addressing this stress and offer mental health support and assistance through our programming at our health centers.

We have committed to address these burdens aggressively, but more must be done. For years, our policy development and reviews have been conducted through a racial equity and social justice lens.

Despite our actions, we recognize that we can do better in rooting out systemic racial inequities.

We are encouraged the Ingham County Board of Commissioners will be taking up a resolution declaring racism a public health crisis. We agree and believe this action is an important first step. It cannot and will not be a last step.

The Board of Directors will be discussing specific policy recommendations in our June meeting to assist in undermining and eliminating the impact of white supremacy and racial inequities in our work. These policy discussions will focus on implementation of systemic change: from how we conduct our business as a community board to how we engage more clients and our employees in discussions on policy issues.

We invite you to join us during the meeting on June 30 at 5:30 p.m. The public will have three minutes per person to speak to the board before our business, and an additional three minutes to address the board following the meeting. The meeting may be held either in person or via Zoom, depending on the state of the COVID-19 pandemic. To find out how to attend and participate, check our website: <http://hd.ingham.org/DepartmentalDirectory/CommunityHealthCenters/AboutUs/BoardofDirectors.aspx>

Your voice, your health and your ideas are not only valued, but necessary.

Ingham Community Health Centers Board of Directors