

Want to Develop Diversity? Call in the Experts



Inequalities persist in the workplace. In a healthcare setting, such disparities reduce access to care, keep minority workers in poverty, and reinforce the cycle of oppression. Industry experts think that [HR policy reforms can set some of these wrongs to right.](#)

Acknowledge Wage Inequality

According to a JAMA Internal Medicine study, female physicians earn, on average, 8 percent less than their male counterparts. That might not sound like much, but it comes out to about \$20,000 less in annual earnings. One possible explanation for the disparity: Women are less inclined toward negotiation or feel they have less negotiating power when it comes to salary setting. However, study authors say that discrimination, whether intentional or otherwise, plays a role.

"I think that [overt discrimination] is less common than subjective-type discrimination, but it's hard to comment how often that actually happens. We don't have any data on it," says lead author Anupam B. Jena, MD.

See Also: [Survival Plan Needed to Cope With Leadership Change](#)

Address LGBT Concerns

More than half of LGBT workers hide their sexual orientation in the workplace, and 90 percent of the transgender population has experienced harassment or mistreatment on the job. These data were gathered by Catalyst, a non-profit organisation that specialises in accelerating progress for women through workplace inclusion.

Solving many of these societally ingrained disparities won't be easy. As providers of care, however, it's should be core to a healthcare organisation's mission to remove inequalities and eliminate disparities. To achieve this, enforcing tough anti-harassment rules in the workplace may be necessary.

Bring in Diversity Specialists

Organisations that are fully committed to the principles of a diverse workforce and have the means to do so are employing the services of chief diversity officers.

A CDO's primary role is to make sure workers can bring their whole selves to work, according to Deborah L. Plummer, PhD, vice chancellor and CDO at [University of Massachusetts Medical School](#) and UMass Memorial Healthcare.

"Then, we are able to come together and work in diverse teams, and are able to solve challenges with our collective wisdom," Plummer
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explained.

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