

Advancing Equity in Peel Region

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DEAR Delegation by Sharon Douglas & Seema Taneja

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Advancing Equity

- It is a Legal responsibility: The Canadian Human Rights Act, The Charter of Rights & Freedoms, The Federal Employment Equity Act, OHRC
- It is a moral responsibility / it is the “Right Thing to Do”
- Increased innovation
- Better decision-making
- Increased employee engagement, productivity and commitment
- Increased access and inclusion in the community

Advancing Equity

- It is time for ACTION –we must face those who have been ‘othered,’ marginalized and oppressed and have been failed by a system that was not designed for the current diversities and realities in Peel
- It is time to move beyond the guilt, shame, discomfort, inertia and patronizing voices that say this process takes time – it is not about a personal attack, it is about creating a fair and equitable playing field
- It is time for **Principled Action** – it is time to eliminate the current systems that unfairly advantage dominant groups i.e. those who hold the power and have the privilege
- It is about the ‘disconnect’ between training/DEI policies, procedures, practices and the reality on the ground – the so what?
- It is time to collect and share DATA

Why Collect Equity Based Data

- The reason for collecting equity-based data is to understand who our clients and residents are, so we can provide and plan for programs and services to meet their individual needs.
- Collecting demographic data is fundamental for eliminating inequities and finding opportunities to improve access and quality of life for community residents.
- Data collected is analyzed to detect any differences in outcomes experienced by clients/residents based on demographic variables like race, language, sexual orientation, gender and income. This enables the creation of culturally relevant services and supports.
- Solutions are put in place and the data is then used to see if the solutions reduce inequities.
- Population level survey data has helped identify many forms of inequities in health, housing, employment, education, yet the lack of standardized and routinely collected socio-demographic data hinders our ability to assess organizational performance and identify improvements for reducing the identified inequities.

Equity Data In Peel – A Few Examples

- 2016 Census data indicates that Peel has the highest proportion of visible minorities across the GTA at 57%
- 2018 PDSB Student Census / 2016 PDSB Workforce Census indicate:
- 87% of the student population is racialized whereas ONLY 26% of the workforce identifies with a racialized community
- 27% of participating students (grades 7-12) indicated that they were either 2SLGBTQ+ or multiple sexual orientations with 5% of board staff identifying as 2SLGBTQ+

Disaggregated data gives us the ability to take appropriate and effective actions that can bridge the gap in representation, create targeted interventions for equity seeking groups, create culturally relevant services, guide us to which community organizations to collaborate with, develop specific strategies that resonate with our diverse communities etc.

Advancing Equity in Peel

Many Peel-based reports dating back to 2016, recommended the need for disaggregated data so targeted interventions and supports could be provided to equity-seeking groups. This data, if collected and made available, could have supported the creation of targeted interventions and prevention programs that could help to safeguard our communities from crisis-driven programs.

Advancing Equity through Data

- Current and local Employment/Unemployment by Sector and Race
- Current and local Poverty data by Race and Age
- Graduation rates by Race & an examination of the Discipline gap (suspensions and expulsions) rates by race, gender and age
- A review of Recruitment and Hiring practices in institutions such as education, justice, municipal government, and CAS
- Current and local health data by race, age, gender, income

Without equitable interventions, there will continue to be a disproportionate impact on Peel's equity seeking groups. With our growing diversity, we should be able to answer how life outcomes differ in Peel based on gender, income, sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, language, age, disability etc. There are many possible effective interventions, but only with an understanding of the disparities can they best be selected, implemented and evaluated.

Advancing Equity

- To gain benefits of diversity, equity and inclusion, serious investments in organizational transformation is required. A commitment to an intentional and deliberate focus is mandatory for change to happen.
- Policies, procedures and practices **MUST** be reviewed through an Integrated Anti-Racism Lens.
- Those tasked with the responsibility of leading this work must be given the support and authority to make change happen.
- Milestone markers built in for accountability, transparency and consequences; we have the opportunity to be proactive and responsive.
- The **SYSTEM** must be re-built on the principles of social justice, equity and equitable outcomes - **Community for Life**

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