



## **Statement from LeadingAge New York: A Commitment to Change**

LeadingAge New York stands in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement. Many members of our direct care workforce and the patients and residents we serve are people of color. Members of our long-term care community and their families are struggling every day with systemic racism, including the painful indignities of discrimination and threats of violence.

LeadingAge New York is outraged by the murder of George Floyd on May 25<sup>th</sup>. The senseless deaths of Mr. Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and too many others, as well as the racially charged threat against Christian Cooper in Central Park, reflect the deeply ingrained racial prejudice and systemic racism that still exists today throughout our state and our country.

Minnesota officials must ensure that justice is served in the prosecution of the officers charged with Mr. Floyd's murder, and our local, state and federal leaders must act now to eradicate racism from our criminal justice systems. At the same time, we all must work to acknowledge and rectify the pervasive and systemic racism that exists in our lives, our work and our local communities. As health care providers, we must strive to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in health care access, delivery and outcomes.

Our association and its provider members are committed to doing our part to address the racism that has led to deep inequality, distrust, hatred and violence. Last year, recognizing that the racial and ethnic diversity of our direct care staff is not reflected in our executive teams, we created a Diversity Committee with a mission to increase the ethnic and racial diversity in leadership positions in long-term care. Our charge is to identify barriers and solutions and develop best practices, education and resources to help providers to be intentional in developing more diversity in leadership. This includes the development of effective career ladders that help the diverse pool of direct caregivers to attain higher-level positions and higher pay.

The incidents of the past weeks have moved us to redouble our efforts. LeadingAge New York is committed to fighting racism, injustice and inequality by equipping our members with the space, tools and resources needed to promote a diverse and inclusive culture. To this end, we are asking our Diversity Committee to re-focus its mission and strengthen its efforts in this new context and consider what we can do to make society, including our own long-term care community, more just.

*Founded in 1961, LeadingAge New York represents not-for-profit, mission-driven and public continuing care providers, including nursing homes, senior housing, adult care facilities, continuing care retirement communities, assisted living and community service providers. Leading Age New York's more than 600 members employ 150,000 professionals serving more than 500,000 New Yorkers annually.*