

Resolution
**Affirming the Colorado Nurses Association's Commitment to Diversity, Equity,
Inclusion and Justice**

Background:

Colorado Nurses Association's (CNA) Board of Directors has agreed that, in consultation with Colorado Council of Black Nurses, Inc and National Association of Hispanic Nurses, Denver Chapter, CNA would benefit from having a position statement outlining the organization's dedication to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (keeping in mind that the alternatives are conformity, inequity, exclusion, and injustice).

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in the Resolution reflect the official position of the Colorado Nurses Association. However, the views expressed by collaborating individuals are their own and do not necessarily represent the views or positions of their respective affiliated organizations or institutions.

Authors (listed alphabetically by surname):

Margie Ball Cook, PhD, MPH, RN, NP
Margaret Bishop, MSN, RN
Ramona C. Logue, MSN, APRN, PMHNP-BC
Mark Longshore, PhD, RN
Ruby Martinez, PhD, RN
Mavis Mesi-Goresko DNP, MSN, RN
Theresa Nino, MSN, RN
Rita Norelli, FNP-C, MSN, RN
Kenneth Oja, PhD, RN
Kathy Prue-Owens, PhD, RN
Rosanna Dondi Reyes, MPA, RN
Mary Satre, MSN, MBA, RN
Beverly Wasserman MSN, RN

Definitions:

Diversity- Diversity is the human qualities that make each person unique and differentiates us from others. It includes race, age, gender, gender identity, language, religion/beliefs, nationality, experiences, culture, skills, sexual orientation, thinking styles, ethnicity, physical abilities, education, and job choice (to name a few). We recognize that while diversity encompasses many dimensions, race remains a central and persistent axis of inequity that must be explicitly addressed.

Equity/Equality- Equity considers the specific needs of persons or groups in order for them to be successful. It includes fair access to opportunity and allocates resources to benefit all involved. Equality is very different in that it ensures that everyone gets the same treatment, no matter the need.

Inclusion- Inclusion is the practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunity and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those with physical or intellectual disabilities, and members of underrepresented groups. The goal is for everyone to feel included in the group/community.

Justice- Justice is the process of dismantling systems and structures of historical and current oppression that create inequality and replacing them with proactive systems that promote fairness in policies, institutional practices, cultural messages and social norms for people of all identities and cultures. We acknowledge that systemic and interpersonal bias remain major contributors to inequality in healthcare and nursing. These must be named and addressed directly.

WHEREAS, we believe health and wellbeing of body, mind, and spirit are basic human rights that should be afforded to all persons without equivocation, and

WHEREAS, diversity is not solely about race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, socioeconomic status, education level, or one of many other “identities,” but rather about all of these combined attributes as they impact how people live their lives, and

WHEREAS, the American Nurses Association joins the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), the American Organization for Nursing Leadership (AONL), the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN), and the National League for Nursing (NLN) in support of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) in nursing (ANA, 2024), and

WHEREAS, in 2025, DEIJ programs in educational, corporate, and governmental entities are under threat at many levels from both public and private organizations, and

WHEREAS, knowledge of social determinants of health (SDOH), including concepts like colonialism and historical trauma can improve the patient-nurse relationship, leading to improved health for our patients and communities, and

WHEREAS, the profession of nursing recognizes that basic needs such as housing, food, safety, and meaningful relationships contribute to the ability to make choices that lead to positive health outcomes and wellbeing, and

WHEREAS, health and wellbeing are intrinsically tied to the cleanliness of the environment (water, air, soil, atmosphere), and

WHEREAS, lived experiences among a diverse workforce increase awareness and reduce health disparities, and

WHEREAS, a more diverse nursing workforce provides culturally congruent care to the people nurses serve, and

WHEREAS, more than 40% of the U.S. population identifies as a person of color, while only 19% of the nursing workforce similarly identifies and only 9% are male (AACN, 2023). A focus on DEIJ helps recruit and retain a diverse workforce reflective of the community it serves, and

WHEREAS, there is a need to increase the diversity of nurse educators to reflect the students entering these programs, and we recognize that specific communities—Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, and others—face distinct and compounding barriers to representation and advancement, and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge the psychological strain that underrepresented nurses may carry in navigating systemic inequities, microaggressions, and cultural biases in the workplace, now be it

RESOLVED, that Colorado Nurses Association actively advocates for access to healthcare so all people can enjoy their highest attainable standard of health conducive to living a life in dignity, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the inclusion of concepts related to the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) and their impact on health outcomes shall be integrated into all nursing curricula and recognized as a matter of best practice in nursing education and clinical application (Sumpter et al., 2022), and be it further

RESOLVED, that nurses will study culture and its influence on healthcare behaviors, equity in healthcare and social determinants of health, environmental impact on health, and means of creating a more inclusive work environment, and be it further

RESOLVED, that nurses will self-reflect on their own biases and question assumptions that arise during care, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the nursing profession affirms our ongoing responsibility to recognize and address the historical and present-day inequities within the nursing profession, and commit to actively reforming language and practices, informed by education, evidence, and sustained outreach, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the nursing profession must advocate to reduce the health impact of changes in the environment, and be it further

RESOLVED, that job descriptions should be thoughtfully crafted to consider the diverse perspectives and lived experiences of all potential applicants. Broad, inclusive language helps ensure that opportunities are accessible to candidates from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, and be it further

RESOLVED, that CNA will form partnerships with underrepresented nurses with the purpose of building relationships to collaboratively accelerate DEIJ goals, and be it further

RESOLVED, CNA will continue to monitor and provide testimony on legislative and other policy matters impacting diversity, equity, inclusion, justice and belonging.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Colorado Nurses Association (CNA) affirms that discrimination, exclusion, and injustice have no place in nursing. We are committed to actively dismantling these forces within our profession, healthcare systems, and policies. We further affirm that racial justice and cultural safety must be prioritized in creating an inclusive and equitable future for all nurses and the communities we serve.

References

- American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). (2023, April). Enhancing Diversity in the Nursing Workforce. <https://www.aacnnursing.org/news-data/fact-sheets/enhancing-diversity-in-the-nursing-workforce>
- American Nurses Association (ANA). (2024, July 19). The Imperative Need for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) in Nursing
<https://www.nursingworld.org/news/news-releases/2024/the-imperative-need-for-diversityequity-inclusion-and-belonging-deib-in-nursing/>
- Sumpter, D., Blodgett, N., Beard, K., & Howard, V. (2022). Transforming nursing education in response to the Future of Nursing 2020-2030 report. *Nursing outlook*, 70, S20–S31.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.outlook.2022.02.007>

Approved by Membership October 11, 2025