

Come together, right now: Why diversity matters



We don't have an aging health care system as much as we have an outdated collection of silos where excellent work is done, but rarely

connected or scaled.

In my previous President's Comment [*BCMJ* 2018;60:389], I reviewed the challenges we face in improving health care. We need solutions that are innovative, fair, and inclusive. That is why we need diversity—now.

Aside from the intrinsic benefits derived from including others, there is evidence that diversity is our best chance of achieving needed health care reform. Studies have shown that diverse teams are more creative,¹⁻⁴ achieve better results,⁵⁻⁷ act more ethically,⁸ and promote more social responsibility.⁹⁻¹⁰

Slowly, through medical school admissions and licensing processes, we as a profession are better reflecting society. Working toward diversity intentionally ensures that our leadership will as well. This is about more than gender, ethnicity, demographics, abilities, health, family situation, and sexual orientation—this is about experiences and attitudes. This is about respecting those who think differently because they have lived through different times, places, and experiences. This is about trying to move barriers so that we include everyone who wants to participate.

Like health care itself, diversity is complex and evolving. Learning from the initiatives of other organizations, Doctors of BC will soon embark on consultation to support greater diversity in our governance structures,

including committees, the Representative Assembly, and the Board.

How do we make this happen? We can't find solutions unless we understand the problems. Our consultation will focus on understanding the barriers that are keeping us from being diverse and inclusive within our leadership structures.

We have many challenges ahead and to meet them we need every voice, every idea, and every person.

Improving diversity will only be successful if everyone feels a sense of belonging and is part of the process. Watch for information about these consultations in newsletters, on the Doctors of BC website, and through social media.

This will be neither easy nor comfortable, but it is worthy. We must look at ourselves and each other without judgment, united in our common vision of a medical association where all members feel safe to be themselves, choose to participate how they want, and know they belong.

We have many challenges ahead and to meet them we need every voice, every idea, and every person. If "diversity is an action, inclusivity is a culture, and belonging is a feeling,"¹¹ then Doctors of BC is committed to model our motto and show that we are Better. Together.

—Eric Cadesky, MDCM, CCFP, FCFP
Doctors of BC President

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