VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

THE DEI JOURNEY

Presented to: NAVREF
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Date: September 12, 2022
VHA operates the nation’s largest integrated health care system and is one of the largest health care employers in the world.

371,000+ Total VHA Employees

100,000+ Veteran Employees

232,000+ Clinical Employees

Four Statutory Missions:
- Care Delivery
- Education
- Research
- Emergency Response
Organized by geographic region - 18 Veteran Integrated Service Networks (VISNs)

1,303 VA Healthcare Facilities including:
- 171 VA Medical Centers (VAMCs)
- 1,125 VA Outpatient Sites

318 Vet Centers (Readjustment Counseling)
136 Community Living Centers (Nursing Homes)
116 Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Programs
51 Mobile Clinics – each connected to a medical centers
**Mission:** To create and sustain a diverse, inclusive, and safe work environment where all employees can perform at their maximum potential to achieve excellence.

**Vision:** To be the premier health care service provider in the Nation and foster an inclusive and equitable culture where our Employees, Veterans, and Their Families are treated with dignity and respect.
GOAL 1: Build and retain a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workforce

- Provide corporate cultural direction/data practices and systems related to attracting, retaining, and promoting a diverse workforce.

- Enhance awareness of a variety of cultural, generational, ethnic, and other differences to increase understanding, create empathy, and build trust.

- Educate and train the workforce on diversity, equity, and inclusion to enhance collaboration, innovation, and engagement.
GOAL 2: Strengthen internal and external partnerships

• Leverage the DEI Committees and councils to advance the national efforts for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programs, services, and initiatives designed to enhance the recruitment and successful retention of employees from diverse and under-represented groups.

• Work collaboratively with stakeholders in the development of recruiting and marketing materials to promote employment opportunities and attract top talent.

• Establish and maintain relationships with educational institutions and government, and non-government agencies to stay abreast of leading-edge DEI Strategies.
GOAL 3: Assess diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts to enhance productivity throughout the organization

- Gather and analyze data from various surveys/reports to determine where to focus diversity, equity and inclusion efforts and monitor progress.

- Provide data analytics to gain an understanding of underrepresented populations in order to focus efforts and resources on essential areas.

- Identify strategies to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion; and eliminate barriers and discriminatory behaviors within workforce functions.
Diversity is...

The practice of including the many communities, identities, races, ethnicities, backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and beliefs of the American people, including underserved communities.

Executive Order 14035 of June 25, 2021 (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce)
Three Aspects of Diversity

- **Functional**
  - Policies, programs, initiatives to sustain diversity

- **Ethical**
  - Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect

- **Practical**
  - Anyone can bring something valuable to the table
Assessing the Team Environment

➢ How engaged is my team?
  • Do I really know?
➢ What percentage of my team members are disengaged?
➢ Who is sitting on the bench waiting to be engaged?

Same boat, different engagement. Some drive it, some jump off it.
Equity is...

The consistent and systematic fair, just and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities, that have been denied such treatment.

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Some Components of Positive Relationships

- **Communication:** listen to understand, not to respond, judge or correct
- **Respect:** other perspectives
- **Trust:** build and sustain
- **Honesty:** be transparent
- **Flexibility:** things change, we all make mistakes, several ways to solve issues
The recognition, appreciation, and use of the talents and skills of employees of all backgrounds.

Executive Order 14035 of June 25, 2021 (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce)
Inclusive Habits

Use the Five Inclusive Habits!
(F.O.C.S.E.)

Fair
Exhibit a disposition that is free of favoritism and bias; impartiality

Open
Be free of a closed mind and be receptive to new ideas, viewpoints, and people

Cooperative
Work or act together willingly for the common purpose or benefit

Supportive
Constructively help others

Empowering
Help others contribute to their full potential

Inclusive Intelligence training explores how individual behaviors, repeated over time, form the habits that help create an inclusive environment.

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
T.R.I.P.

• Talent and Teamwork
• Recruitment and Retention
• Innovation and Ideas
• Performance and Productivity
Servant Leaders

• Understand their employees
• Find their individual motivator(s)
• Work on:
  ✓ Improving morale
  ✓ Improving attitude
  ✓ Enhancing results
• Empower their team
You Can Expect to See...

What’s Next
Transition

Compliance → To → Commitment
Achieve Excellence

➢ Develop...
  ➢ Educate...
  ➢ Train...
  ➢ Practice...
  ➢ Change...
  ➢ Sustain...
Development and Education

Training

- Developing Emotional Intelligence
- Navigating Change
- Reframing Conflict
- Leading and Working Across Generations
- Psychological Safety

Training

- Equipping the New Leader
- Unconscious Bias
- Inclusive Intelligence
- Understanding Systemic Racism
- Employee Engagement
Retention

Programs

- Cultural Observances
- Employee Resource Groups
- Speaker Series/DEI Seminars
- Building Your Personal Brand
- Cross-Cultural Mentorship
Recruitment and Outreach Efforts

Outreach

- Engagements
- Partnerships
- Listening Sessions
- Alumni Ambassador
- Communications
The survey took a comprehensive look at participants’ responses to key metrics and evaluated effective/success of Inclusive Intelligence. For instance, participants were identified by occupational categories and the percentage of responses were used to illustrate engagement by VA administrations. In addition, diverse levels of overall satisfaction were evaluated, such as learning activities, knowledge of inclusion principals, continuing education and best practices.
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The survey took a comprehensive look at participants’ responses to key metrics and evaluated effective/success of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit. For instance, participants were identified by occupational categories and the percentage of responses were used to illustrate engagement by VA administrations. In addition, diverse levels of overall satisfaction were evaluated, such as learning activities, knowledge of inclusion principals, continuing education and best practices.
ODEI Inclusivity Campaign

Veterans Health Administration • Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

INCLUSIVITY CAMPAIGN

F.O.C.S.E on the T.R.I.P because ICARE

Launching April 4, 2022
Moving Forward
Questions to Consider

➢ Why do we have this Social Unrest?
➢ How can we overcome it? What steps do we take?
➢ How can I identify and manage my own unconscious bias?
➢ How can I be a more inclusive leader or team member?
➢ How can I engage others more effectively?
➢ How do I have a difficult conversation?
➢ How can I create empathy/build trust?
➢ If your organization was a vehicle, what part would you be?
things to keep in mind…

➢ If you do not intentionally, deliberately, and proactively include, you will unintentionally exclude.

➢ Who can you afford to exclude from your team?

“We Are Better Together”