

Focused on People, Building Trust

CARLE HEALTH 2024

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Annual Report



Everything we do at Carle Health is to meet our Mission of being the trusted healthcare partner for all who count on us.

That Mission, and the diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) actions that support it, ensure we're focused on being a healthcare system where all people can find the best possible care and service. Trust is built when we acknowledge, respect and welcome *diversity* in the identities and backgrounds of our team members, patients and health plan members. Attention to *equity* is necessary to ensure excellent, highly accessible world-class care and service. And those who count on us build trust in Carle Health when they know they are heard, valued, welcomed and *included* as their authentic selves. Put more simply, DEI at Carle Health is how we meet our Mission every single day.

Across many projects and priorities, DEI work at Carle Health centers on four action areas:



Building a workforce that represents and reflects the communities we serve.



Creating positive team member experiences through inclusive recruitment, retention and advancement opportunities.



Enhancing the patient and plan member experience for members of marginalized groups.



Closing gaps to create equitable healthcare outcomes in the

Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion at Carle Health is a shared one. It takes every single team member and leader to learn more and do better. From our systemwide DEI Steering and Health Equity Clinical Guidance Committees, to regional and department-level DEI task forces, to the Carle Inclusion Connection groups, team members across Carle Health work each day to enact that commitment to inclusive healthcare for all.

I'm excited to share with you the 2024 DEI Annual Report for the Carle Health system. In the pages that follow, you'll find summaries of our actions and accomplishments over the past year, and you'll see the ways each DEI priority is part of how our team members, leaders and organization live our Values and meet our Mission. As we look ahead to 2025, this report also helps us identify where ongoing work will help us continue to be a trusted healthcare partner for every person who counts on us for their care.



Amy L. Delaney, PhD
Director | Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Carle Health

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Carle Health: Our Commitment

Carle Health is committed to being an inclusive space for our team members, patients, health plan members and communities. Building a more diverse, equitable and inclusive environment lays the foundation for trusted partnerships and the delivery of high-quality care for everyone we serve.

- WHAT ARE WE COMMITTED TO? —

- Making Carle Health a space where diversity is represented, processes are inclusive and decisions are made with equity in mind.
- Creating an inclusive and welcoming healthcare space where all people
 can work, seek care and receive service with dignity and respect. We know
 diversity exists in many forms and are committed to building a supportive and
 compassionate healthcare space for each team member, patient, health plan
 member and all the communities we serve.
- Doing our part to help combat racism and all forms of bias and discrimination that exist within healthcare.

- Continuing to build organizational practices that support recruitment and retention of a diverse and inclusive workforce, establishment of diversity in leadership roles, mentorship and career growth opportunities for team members, educational initiatives, and community-focused care.
- Acknowledging the root causes of health disparities for patients and health plan members and actively pursuing equity in health, care and service.
- Delivering culturally competent care and service to patients and health plan members and working to enhance value and access to care.
- Recognizing the unique set of identities and experiences every team member has – and using this to make Carle Health a more inclusive place where we link our organization's Mission, Vision and Values to people's everyday lives.

- WHO IS OUR COMMITMENT TO? -

People are at the center of our commitment. Carle Health is committed to an inclusive work environment for all team members. For our patients and health plan members, we know receiving the best care and service in the most culturally responsive way is vital to improving the health of the communities we serve.

– WHAT ARE THE ACTIONS WE'RE TAKING? –

A commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion must be reflected through actions. At Carle Health, our actions align with our organizational Values of Excellence, Inclusivity, Compassion, Integrity and Accountability.

EXCELLENCE	ACCOUNTABILITY	INCLUSIVITY	COMPASSION	INTEGRITY
Educating ourselves and one another to build a culture of learning and growth.	Taking responsibility in our teams, care spaces and communities.	Listening, caring and acting with awareness.	Practicing empathy and vulnerability.	Leading our teams with a focus on inclusion.
Collaborating across our organization and within our communities.	Building opportunities for historically and systemically excluded groups to thrive.	Focusing on respect for, and appreciation of, differences.	Prioritizing human relationships to build trust.	Challenging norms and assumptions in our work, care and service.

We're committed to this journey. We're taking action, collecting data to measure our progress and making sure we're always listening to your voice along the way. Together, let's make Carle Health the trusted healthcare partner we all deserve.

Watch <u>this video</u> to learn more about our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion:



At Carle Health, DEI is EXCELLENCE.



CARLE HEALTH NURSES AS CHANGE-MAKERS

In 2024, Carle Health was selected as one of only 10 nationwide recipients of a \$20,000 grant from the American Nurses Association's National Commission to Address Racism in Nursing. The **Nurses as Change-Makers Project** is led by an interdisciplinary team and focuses on improving patient outcomes through an ongoing education series on recognizing the effects of racism in healthcare and the anti-racist practices nurses can use to promote more equitable care.



The August kickoff event featured keynote speaker Reneè Roberts-Turner, DHA, MSN, Magnet® program director and Children's National Hospital's executive director of Nursing Excellence, Child, and Family Services. Dr. Roberts-Turner shared the historical context of racism within nursing, offered practical tools to advocate for racial equity, encouraged continuous educational development, and discussed

the importance of nurses connecting and supporting each other to address racism in healthcare. Following this event, nurse leaders have received 20 weeks of resources, including videos, infographics, articles and podcasts, on topics such as the history of racism in medicine and nursing, implications of racism in healthcare, challenging biases, actions of allyship, and practicing culture humility. Nursing leaders are charged with their own learning and sharing resources and action items with those in their nursing divisions. Nursing teams across the system are spending time discussing their reactions to the materials and identifying actions to apply their growing knowledge of anti-racist practices in nursing to their own practices.

Through this program, Carle Health nurses from every corner of the system have committed to learning together by being brave, curious and vulnerable to create true and lasting change. This project will culminate in early 2025 with the documentary film "Everybody's Work" and clinical team action planning for continued learning, growth and action as change-makers.



\$20,000 Grant

Carle Health is **one of only 10 organizations** nationwide chosen for the \$20,000 Commission to Address Racism in Nursing grant.



Over 250 nurse leaders have participated in the kickoff event and weekly learning activities.



EXCELLENCE IN INCLUSIVE CARE

In May 2024, all eight Carle Health hospitals were recognized by the Human Rights Campaign's Healthcare Equality Index (HEI). The HEI is a biannual evaluation of hospitals and healthcare systems on best practices for LGBTQ+ inclusive healthcare. This survey focuses on nondiscrimination policies and staff training, patient services and support, employee benefits and policies, as well as patient and community engagement. Similar to other marginalized groups, the LGBTQ+ community has a long history of being mistreated and discriminated against within institutionalized spaces, including healthcare settings, and may experience barriers to quality, patient-centered care. By participating in the HEI, Carle Health has been able to codify past efforts in this space while outlining additional best practices for being a welcoming and affirming place for LGBTQ+ patients, plan members and team members.

As a part of our participation in the HEI since 2023, team members, leaders and providers have completed over 1,500 hours of inclusion

training specific to how we communicate with, respect, care for and serve members of the LGBTQ+ community. The survey also recognized the work of leaders across several departments to ensure inclusive policy language and Carle Health efforts to be present at local Pride and community events geared toward the LGBTQ+ community. Notably, Carle Health received full credit on the HEI survey section focused on employee benefits and policies, making our organization stand out as an inclusive workplace.

Participation in the HEI underscores the Carle Health commitment to individual and inclusive approaches to patient care and distinguishes our hospitals as safe and affirming places to give and receive care. And the Carle Health commitment to being the very best in all we do means the work is ongoing, as an interdisciplinary team across the system regularly connects to review areas of opportunity and ensure continued progress and work toward additional designation in the 2026 HEI.

1,500+ Hours

of education on LGBTQ+ inclusive healthcare completed by team members, leaders and providers.



At Carle Health, DEI is ACCOUNTABILITY.



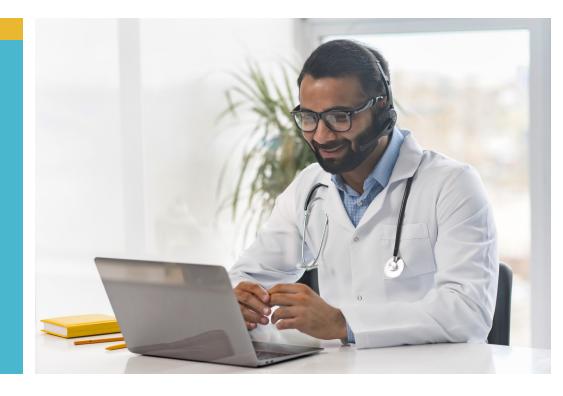
A COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP

Every month, Carle Health leaders from every region and role attend a virtual **Inclusive Leadership Forum** to learn about and discuss topics related to diversity, equity and inclusion in healthcare leadership. In these live, interactive sessions, leaders discuss topics such as identifying barriers to inclusion, recognizing and challenging bias, meeting the needs of a diverse workforce, and cultural humility in healthcare. When a Carle Health leader joins an inclusive leadership forum, they work together with leadership peers to learn about the problems DEI work seeks to solve, discuss barriers and best practices, and identify actions of inclusive leadership.

Inclusive leadership forums help leaders take ownership of the organizational commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in healthcare. As leaders become more aware of the harms done by bias and exclusion in healthcare, they can identify and enact solutions to serve their teams and the patients and members they serve. Leaders across the system have identified the forums as impactful for hardwiring DEI action into the everyday and for exploring diverse perspectives and experiences. Each Carle Health leader is accountable for attending four inclusive leadership forums each year.

4,000+ Hours:

Combined Total Leader Participation in 2024 Inclusive Leadership Forums





LEARNING MORE TO DO BETTER

The Carle Health Value of Accountability informs actions to equip every team member to represent Carle Health professionally through words and actions that are free from bias. Education and training on ways to challenge implicit and explicit biases in healthcare are an important part of creating a culture to actively address concerns and to recognize and disrupt instances of bias.

Every newly hired team member at Carle Health completes an online education module on Disrupting Bias in Healthcare, which introduces them to the Carle Health commitment to inclusive healthcare and the tools each person has for recognizing and challenging cognitive biases in ourselves and others. Teams across the system also participate in Bias Time Out training, where learners build skills in pausing to identify potential sources of bias in interactions and decision-making and practice conversational tools for speaking up to challenge those biases. In 2024, hiring leaders and Human Resources professionals also participated in additional education on Eliminating Bias in Hiring. Newly hired and promoted leaders engage in a course on Fostering an Inclusive Culture to build their skills in leading diverse teams to meet the expectations of an equitable and inclusive workplace. And in the 2024 suite of annual compliance and safety training, every single Carle Health team member completed a module focused on Inclusive Care and Service at Carle Health, which highlighted tools for challenging bias, ways to recognize barriers to inclusion for members of minoritized and marginalized groups, and the Carle Health commitment to meeting each patient's unique needs through inclusive care and service.

By extending educational opportunities beyond basic required implicit bias training, Carle Health team members have access to ongoing opportunities to tackle bias in every facet of their work.



At Carle Health, DEI is INCLUSIVITY.



INCLUSIVE HAIR CARE FOR ALL -

For hospitalized patients, proper hair care is not only essential for hygiene but also critical for maintaining mental well-being. While the biological structure of all hair types remains the same, distinct characteristics exist between straight, wavy, curly and coily hair. Therefore, products and hygiene-care needs for the different hair types should be individualized per patient. Yet in many inpatient settings, the products and knowledge base for caring for textured hair are not always available, which can harm the patient experience and even cause damage or hair loss. At Carle Health, we recognize that it's essential to address the often-overlooked aspect of hair care as part of personal hygiene and whole-person care for all who count on us.

Carle Health has focused in 2023 and 2024 on ensuring inclusive hair care for every patient. The project focused on education around hair discrimination and the effects on social and economic well-being, as well as on healthcare experiences and outcomes. The project also involved the Strategic Sourcing team to ensure appropriate product availability in inpatient settings across the Carle Health system. Additionally, with the support of the Clinical Education department, direct patient care staff were trained in basic hair care for diverse hair types. Together, having the right knowledge, skills and products, Carle Health clinical staff are prepared to provide inclusive and welcoming care for all hair types and textures.



Over 2,800 Carle Health nurses completed an education module on caring for diverse hair types and textures.















CARLE INCLUSION CONNECTION GROUPS

Carle Inclusion Connection Groups

Carle Health team members across the system join Carle Inclusion

Connection (CIC) groups to find dedicated spaces of support and connection with others with similar backgrounds, interests and identities.

CIC groups promote professional networking and growth, as team members share experiences, learn and grow together, and collaborate to influence the inclusive healthcare culture at Carle Health. Groups gather regularly virtually and in person, share professional development resources, and coordinate service projects. By connecting with a group, team members can build skills, participate in social events, influence organizational projects and priorities, volunteer and give back to the communities we serve, connect and network across regions and roles, and mentor and be mentored. In 2024, each CIC group connected with executive sponsors – senior leaders who work closely with each group to offer ongoing support for, and increased visibility of, group goals and activities.

CIC groups provide a place for team members to feel welcomed, valued, included and connected. Team members can share those feelings and experiences when they interact with patients, plan members, family members and visitors by helping them find inclusive healthcare at Carle Health. A shining example of the Carle Health Value of Inclusivity, CIC groups create welcoming and supportive environments of respect that bring together the knowledge, skills, experiences and ideas of a diverse workforce.















2024 CIC Group Highlights

Black Physicians of Carle

The **Black Physicians of Carle** facilitated a Black History Month forum to educate team members across the system on Black History Makers in Healthcare.

CAN Carle Accessibility Network

The **Carle Accessibility Network** hosted an interactive panel with perspectives on disability and accessibility in the healthcare workplace, connecting voices from CAN members and HR leadership.

Carle hYPe Honing Young Professional Excellence

Carle hYPe hosted several professional development events, including webinars on using OneNote, Investing 101 and collaborating across generational diversity in the workplace.

Carle Multicultural Alliance

The **Carle Multicultural Alliance** held several multicultural educational events in 2024, including an interactive forum focused on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy, and represented Carle Health at local Juneteenth celebrations.

Carle MVP Military and Veteran Professionals

Carle MVP supported flag-raising ceremonies at several Carle Health locations in honor of Veterans Day and also hosted a November DEI Multicultural Forum focused on veterans in the workplace and their legacy of loyalty and service.

Carle Pride

Carle Pride represented Carle Health at several LGBTQ+ Pride events across Carle Health service areas, including walking in the Champaign-Urbana Pride Fest parade, sharing candy and messages of welcome and inclusive healthcare for all.

CREW Carle Recognizing Every Woman

CREW hosted a Women's History Month panel, focused on the experiences of women in medicine, where learners heard diverse perspectives from Carle Health physicians from multiple areas of the health system.

At Carle Health, DEI is COMPASSION.



UNDERSTANDING AND MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITIES

Compassion starts with understanding and empathizing with the perspectives and experiences of others, and at Carle Health, understanding and meeting the healthcare needs of our communities is central to our Mission of being the trusted healthcare partner. Across our system, actions are underway to better see and understand the diverse communities we serve and to support resources that help each person achieve their best health. To build and grow these connections, Carle Health is proud to sponsor and partner with several local events and celebrations where we can meet and connect with community members who count on Carle Health for their care. In 2024, Carle Health had a presence at several local Juneteenth, Pride and disability-resource events across our service areas.

In our clinical spaces, Carle Health patients have opportunities to ensure their electronic medical record accurately represents their demographic and personal identities. Patients can update their racial and ethnic identity and language preferences and will also find inclusive options for sharing information about sexual orientation and gender identity. Patients are also screened for information about social drivers of health – the conditions in the places where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship and age, which can affect their opportunities for health and quality of life. By documenting social drivers of health, we can better understand each person's individual needs and also serve as a connection to needed resources to improve their well-being.



Across our system, actions are underway to better see and understand the diverse communities we serve and to support resources that help each person achieve their best health.



Community Health Initiatives (CHI) at Carle Health focus on working closely with community partners and community members to build a culture of community health. In 2024, CHI programs connected community health workers with patients in Vermilion County to address their social-drivers-of-health needs and connect them with community healthcare services.

Healthy Beginnings and Family Foundations continued to provide nurse-

home-visiting programs in Champaign County for at-risk pregnant and postpartum families. In the Champaign-Urbana and Bloomington-Normal service areas, the **Mobile Health Clinic** provides full-service affordable medical care right in the communities where people live and work, and in Greater Peoria, the **Hult Center for Healthy Living** provides health education and wellness services to people of all ages.



PRACTICING CULTURAL HUMILITY

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion MULTICULTURAL FORUMS



In 2024, team members from diverse roles, locations and backgrounds joined monthly **DEI Multicultural Forums**, where guest speakers and panelists educated on observations, celebrations and holidays of the **Carle Health Multicultural Calendar**. Team members and leaders from various cultural and religious backgrounds came together, fostering ongoing discussions about the significance of cultural humility and the delivery of individualized healthcare.

Many forums were led by members of Carle Inclusion Connection groups, as they facilitated panel discussions, hosted interactive trivia events and even guided virtual tours centered around diversity, equity and inclusion in healthcare.

Across each forum, participants built their ability to provide culturally humble and inclusive healthcare through compassion. Learners built skills for communicating effectively across diverse contexts, making meaningful connections, and understanding causes and consequences of disparities in healthcare. By focusing on compassion and empathy for the lived experiences of others through learning about diverse cultural histories, traditions, viewpoints, practices and health concerns, Carle Health team members built their skills in self-reflection and cultural humility. These multicultural forums also serve to build human connections among team members through shared learning experiences.

2024 DEI MULTICULTURAL FORUM TOPICS		
January	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	
February	Black History Month	
March	Women's History Month	
April	Celebrate Diversity Month	
May	Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month	
June	LGBTQ+ Pride Month	
July	National Minority Mental Health Month	
August	Generational Diversity in the Workplace	
September	National Hispanic Heritage Month	
October	National Disability Employment Awareness Month	
November	Veterans Day	
December	Religious and Cultural Diversity in Healthcare	

2024 Multicultural Forum Speakers



At Carle Health, DEI is INTEGRITY.



- ELEVATING EQUITY-

Work happening through the **Health Equity Clinical Guidance Committee** is identifying and disrupting sources of bias and inequity in healthcare. Interdisciplinary teams from across the system are driving actions to: improve collection of patient-identity data such as race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation and gender identity; enhance screening for social determinants of health and provide connections to needed resources; align with best practices for LGBTQ+ patient-centered care; and more.

In 2024, the Race in Medicine subcommittee worked to educate on and make changes in race-based interpretations of pulmonary function tests. These tests use spirometry to diagnose and monitor lung diseases but have

included harmful "correction factors" that, in some cases, delay diagnosis or treatment for patients labeled as Black or Asian. Following recommendations by the American Thoracic Society and the American College of Chest Physicians, Carle Health has moved to race-neutral approaches to PFT interpretations, creating a more equitable and patient-centered process and doing the right thing for our patients.

Since 2023, Carle Health has hosted a monthly **Health Equity Grand Rounds** continuing education event. Each month, an expert speaker or panel educates learners on sources of health disparities and skills for eliminating bias and advocating for equitable patient care.

U 2,000+ Hours

of equity education were delivered via this series, with learners building skills in topics such as:

Health Literacy and Language Access

Trauma Informed Care

Disparities in LGBTQ+ Populations

Skin Assessment in Patients with Dark Skin Tone

Breast Cancer Disparities.



Visit Carle Health CME Tracker

for information about upcoming sessions of Health Equity Grand Rounds.



Since 2021, Carle Health has dedicated resources and attention to building a more diverse and representative nursing workforce. Thanks to support from Carle Health Center for Philanthropy, the **Building Racial Diversity in Nursing (BRDN) program** started 2024 with over \$450,000 in funds to support education awards for team members from racial and ethnic groups underrepresented in nursing who are pursuing a nursing career. BRDN education awards are used for tuition, books, child care and transportation costs, and other needs to promote educational progress and professional growth.

25 team members

were selected in 2024 for awards of \$1,000 to \$2,500 to pursue their career in nursing.





This year, 25 deserving recipients were selected for one-time awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$2,500. These team members represent the Carle Health service areas in Greater Peoria, Bloomington-Normal and Champaign-Urbana, and are currently working in various nursing-adjacent roles within the organization. The awardees are pursuing degrees such as Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) and Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN). Notably, some of the recipients are nearing the completion of their programs and are on track to become Carle Health nurses by 2025.

This program is a reflection of the Carle Health commitment to building a diverse and inclusive workforce, acknowledging the significant contributions of every team member, and fostering an environment where opportunities for growth and advancement are accessible to all. By investing in a diverse healthcare workforce, Carle Health will continue to lead in access to equitable care and actions to close healthcare disparities. Through support for team members from minoritized and marginalized racial and ethnic groups, Carle Health is not only speaking up for equity but also taking meaningful action to create lasting change, ensuring that the workforce better reflects the communities it serves.



TO GIVE:

Visit the webpage for Carle Health Center for Philanthropy (carle.org/giving/make-a-gift) to contribute to the Building Racial Diversity in Nursing Fund.

TO LEARN MORE:

Contact **DEI@carle.com** to learn more about available resources and supports through the BRDN Fund.

Staying the Course – and Building Momentum



At Carle Health, we know the most important work takes time, effort and constant focus. It means staying the course – and building momentum – as we remain true to the commitments that matter most. Top among these is our focus on diversity, equity and inclusion. We keep DEI at the center of everything we do because it truly matters. To our patients. Their families. Our doctors and team members. Our communities. For everyone who counts on us, our Mission to be their trusted healthcare partner cannot be separated from our work to become a more diverse, equitable and inclusive organization.

We're building greater diversity in our workforce so our teams better represent the communities we serve. When our patients and plan members see themselves reflected in our teams, it strengthens trust. Our focus on inclusion means that they – and our team members – experience Carle Health as a place where all feel welcomed, valued and connected. And by prioritizing equity, we're making sure we improve care for all.

We're proud of the milestones we reached in 2024. All eight of our hospitals earned Healthcare Equality Index designation, and Carle Foundation Hospital was one of only two in Illinois named to U.S. News & World Report's best regional hospitals for equitable access. We were awarded a highly competitive American Nurses Association grant to advance anti-racism. Hundreds of our leaders gathered for monthly DEI forums and our Carle Inclusion Connection groups brought together team members systemwide to share perspectives and generate change.

In recent years, we've defined our commitments, taken action and made key progress. But we must stay the course and continue building momentum. So many people count on us, and we must be there for each and every one of them. In this ongoing work, I'm so proud of everything our teams have done – and even more excited for the years to come.

James C. Leonard, MD

President and CEO

Carle Health

Carle Health Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

The Carle Health Board of Trustees is firmly committed to providing Mission-driven and strategic guidance that will continue to build a richly diverse, equitable and inclusive organization serving the needs of our patients, families, team members and the community at large. Our values and behaviors directly support our Mission to be your trusted partner in all healthcare decisions.

Carle Health has an engaged and committed leadership team that has made DEI a strong focus across the organization. Team members understand the important role they play in advancing the health needs of all community members.

We are dedicated to deploying long-term strategies that prioritize solutions to reduce bias and decrease health disparities in the communities we serve. We empower our leaders to expand and strengthen our organization where all people are welcome and respected. Our goal is to foster a culture that dispels bias and discrimination and seeks to recruit and retain a diverse and inclusive workforce. We recognize and embrace our ability to positively impact the healthcare disparities that exist in our communities today through our Mission, Vision and Values in ways that respect and understand the unique needs of all those we serve.



Together we will make Carle Health a stronger community partner, a better place to receive respectful care and achieve better health outcomes for all.



carre.org

Carle Health complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-217-383-2543. UWAGA: Jeżeli mówisz po polsku, możesz skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej. Zadzwoń pod numer 1-217-326-0340.