



MIDWIFERY CARE  
NORTH DON RIVER VALLEY

<b>Name of Policy:</b>	Anti-Racism
<b>Author(s):</b>	Wendy Wong with review by Kristy Ng, Mariana Tseitlin and Krista Fairles
<b>Date of Approval:</b>	April 6, 2023
<b>Date for Future Review:</b>	Annual in January

## Background

Midwifery Care North Don River Valley (MCNDRV) acknowledges that racism is a declared public health crisis that directly impacts our clients as well as members of our practice, including midwives, students, staff, and their families. Racism is the belief that a certain race is inherently superior; it includes prejudice or discrimination based on race. Systemic racism upholds structures and systems designed to be advantageous only to some groups and at the expense of marginalized groups. Racism, including anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism and white supremacy exist and persist, even among well-intentioned people, and extend to the structures in which we work and provide care.

Anti-racism is acknowledging the pervasive existence of systemic racism and actively confronting and dismantling unequal power dynamics between groups and the very structures that sustain them. Recognizing that there is both explicit and implicit bias at the center of racism is essential to the development of this anti-racism policy.

Systemic racism can lead to significant health disparities and adverse health outcomes. Systemic racism can manifest in policies and practices that disproportionately advantage some groups while disadvantaging others. Midwifery Care North Don River Valley acknowledge that regardless of individual racial or ethnic identity, and regardless of good intentions or anti-racist beliefs, all clinicians and staff are capable of speaking and acting in a racially discriminatory or harmful manner that may negatively impact clients, colleagues or students. Race is a social construct and has profound social, economic and personal effects on racialized people and that racial categories often intersect with other aspects of identity (gender, sexuality, age, disability, citizenship or immigration status, language, religion, socio-economic status etc.) to create layered and increasingly difficult to navigate forms of discrimination.

Midwifery Care North Don River Valley endeavors, in a continuous and ongoing manner, to actively work to undo racist practices, policies and behaviours in the systems we work within, which may impact care and interpersonal and interprofessional interactions.

The purpose of this policy is to inform the values and actions of Midwifery Care North Don River Valley in the spirit of racial justice, reproductive justice and member (staff/student/client) equity in the learning, care-provision and work environment. This can include settings such as the client's home, the clinic, the hospital and MCNDRV social media accounts.

## Procedures

All midwives, staff and students at MCNDRV will actively work to eliminate racism, including anti-Indigenous and anti-Black racism, in the provision of care and in all interactions with clients, colleagues and students.

Midwifery Care North Don River Valley commits to:

- Setting the expectation that all new Midwives, Staff, and Students take the time to read the Midwifery Care North Don River Valley Anti-Racism Policy, AOM's Human Rights Policy, as well as the Anti-Violence and Anti-Harassment Policy upon joining the practice. These documents will be distributed with the onboarding package and signed acknowledgment will be kept. (Appendix 1)
- Engaging in ongoing decolonized, anti-racism and anti-white supremacy education and training, as well as education to identify privilege, intersectionality, and white privilege.
  - Two standing practice agenda items related to Anti-Racism
    - Q8 weeks we will engage as a group in a learning activity (resources and discussion questions emailed ~2w in advance, 20mins held on agenda to discuss as a group). Each Midwife in the practice must engage in learning yearly and facilitate a discussion or report back. This can be either formal or informal learning activities, focusing on any aspect of anti-racism/anti-oppression that the Midwife identifies as a personal learning need.
    - Standing weekly practice meeting agenda item for individual RMs to share ideas for Anti-Racist actions/projects or resources to share.
- Committing to ongoing learning to understand and support Indigenous sovereignty.
- Seeking opportunities for respectful community engagement (community-based research, outreach activities, partnerships with programs that focus service for racialized groups).
- Commitment to financial contributions<sup>1</sup> to community organizations (such as the Black Midwifery Student Fund or Indigenous Community Support Fund) in service of anti-racism and anti-Indigenous on an annual basis, and/or as need is expressed. (See Appendix 2)
- Encourage engagement in advocacy related to the development of policies in our hospital and professional organizations and at the local, provincial and national level that seek to decolonize systems and structures that perpetuate systemic racism. Midwives, staff and students who undertake this work will be supported to the extent

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<sup>1</sup> In line with relevant practice financial policies or, in the absence of such policies, at the discretion of practice partners.

possible without compromising client safety or professional standards. Support may be in the form of call coverage, access to PD funding or other means requested.

- Engaging in culturally sensitive advocacy, where appropriate, on behalf of individual colleagues or clients who may be experiencing negative impacts of navigating systems that impose racism or result in discrimination.
- Review all practice documents and resources with an equity lens in order to ensure that language is inclusive, respectful and centers Indigenous, Black and racialized perspectives. (Appendix 3) Including:
  - Intake forms
  - Teaching resources
  - Administrative and clinical protocols
- Displaying and seeking out imagery that includes racial and ethnic diversity and is reflective of the communities served by MCNDRV.
- Working with administrative and frontline staff and including them whenever possible in any anti-racism training to ensure positive interactions for racialized clients outside clinical settings at MCNDRV.
- Working to identify and remove barriers to care in our intake processes, with a goal of a client group that is representative of the demographics of our community
- Humbly accepting feedback from clients and colleagues by actively eliciting feedback on client(s) quality of care evaluation forms and colleagues via performance evaluation experiences surrounding racism and discrimination.
- Providing safe spaces for IBPOC midwives, staff, and people impacted by racism to be heard and listened to by their colleagues or caregivers. Safe spaces must also include room for people impacted by racism to leave or abstain from conversations as needed.
- Assessing hiring processes and standards for racial bias and prioritizing hiring of racialized and multilingual midwives and staff whenever possible.
- Maintaining open communication and visible postings with Midwifery Care North Don River Valley's clients and community about our Anti-racism policy, intents and commitments which would include our website/social media/clinic space.

## References

Ontario Human Rights Code: Policy and guidelines on racism and racial discrimination. June 2005. <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-and-guidelines-racism-and-racial-discrimination>

Anti-Black racism declared a public health crisis in Mississauga <https://www.insauga.com/anti-Black-racism-declared-a-crisis-in-mississauga>

Association of Ontario Midwives: Guidelines for Decolonized and Racially Equitable Meetings <https://www.ontariomidwives.ca/sites/default/files/AGM/2020/Guidelines%20for%20Racially%20Equitable%20Meetings.pdf>