



POLICY: RECONCILIATION AND EQUITY POLICY		Policy #:
Section: Administration	Effective Date: July 2023	
Reviewed By: Equity Diversity and Inclusivity Task Group	Approved By: Board of Directors	
Revisal Date: -	Pages: 1 - 3	

PURPOSE

- The purpose of this policy is to provide a roadmap for the organization's day-to-day operations, to ensure compliance with the principles of reconciliation and equity for decision-making at every organization levels, and such principles being embedded in the internal work processes and implemented in all client service delivery.
- The purpose is to drive improved strategic priority and service outcomes by adopting the policy to create equity, diversity, inclusivity, and reconciliation by closing the gaps and building relationships with the Indigenous, racialized and immigrant groups which have experienced vast differences in health, education, employment, and standards of living compared to their counterparts and non-Indigenous communities.

POLICY

- This policy is in keeping with Carefirst's commitment to provide equitable access and quality care and services to its patients/clients and the communities it serves, its commitment to respect the right of patients/clients and their authorized decision makers to be informed about Reconciliation and Equity Policy which guides situations and relationships encountered by the patients/clients, staff, students, volunteers, and the public.
- This policy aligns with the spirit of Ontario's *Apology Act 2009*. The *Act* facilitates timely apologies, which are an important step in the healing process, a potential springboard to discussions to settle disputes, and which promote humane and civil personal relationships.
 - Carefirst is committed to reduce inequities. The organization's Annual Operation Plan, should include highlights on the key actions and priorities required to achieve these objectives, and that the organization be held accountable to the clients, funders, and communities on delivering equitable access and improved services outcomes for all peoples/clients served.

SCOPE AND APPLICATION

A. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity

- Advancing health equity for communities in Ontario requires strategic and sustained efforts. Carefirst shall establish Indigenous reconciliation and equity roadmaps and viable action plan to demonstrate progress against those strategies.
- Carefirst shall meet the funders' expectation, e.g. Ontario Health and United Way's, requirements to provide polices and work plans to inform the process, targets and to report on progress building capacity and knowledge across the staff executive team (s), staffs and volunteers throughout the organization by providing Indigenous cultural safety and awareness courses as well as EDI related education.
- Carefirst is funded by the Ontario Health as a recognized Health Service Providers (HS) that the organization is required to provide a health equity plan. To do so, Carefirst shall ensure that our EDI work plan is in alignment with the following priorities and directions:
 - Adopt the provincial and regional priorities on Indigenous Health Equity and Coordination and Equity, Inclusion, Diversity, Anti-Racism framework;
 - Build an organizational culture that is focused on equity, inclusion, diversity, and anti-racism, and to contribute to better outcomes for patients, families, and providers within the health system. In order to achieve better outcomes for all, our framework shall highlight the need to explicitly identify and address the impacts of anti-Indigenous and anti-racism as part of our commitment.
 - Uphold the priority in reducing disparities in services related to access, experiences, and outcomes.
 - Promote respect, trust, honesty, and transparency between the organizations and the patient/client and family
 - Support our clients/people by ensuring the staff teams are diverse, inclusive, and the teams are fulfilled in their work; and are building sustainability by embedding equity, inclusion, diversity, and anti-racism in everything they do, with stable funding over the long-term.
- Carefirst shall enhance staffs, volunteers, and clients/patients' knowledge and provide education on matters of Indigenous history in Canada, reconciliation and EDI; to increase understanding and awareness of reconciliation and equity through education/continuous learning. The organization shall continue capacity-building through knowledge transfer, education, and training about reconciliation and equity within Carefirst and will demonstrate that at minimum, executive level staff have completed relevant equity, inclusion, diversity, and anti-racism education.
- Partner, where appropriate, to advance Indigenous health; reflecting our communities in all decision-making bodies and advisory committees

B. Reconciliation

- Carefirst recognizes that many Indigenous, racialized and immigrant groups experience vast differences in health, education, employment, and standards of living compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts. Reconciliation is about creating equity and equality, closing this gap and building relationships to do this.
- Reconciliation is an ongoing process through which Indigenous peoples and the Crown and Governments work cooperatively to establish and maintain a mutually respectful framework for living together, with a view to fostering strong, healthy, and sustainable Indigenous nations within a strong Canada.

- For reconciliation with the Indigenous communities, there are many opportunities and initiatives where Carefirst can learn more, get involved, and provide our support. Basically, it is an important first step in our personal reconciliation journey and the creation of a better Canada for all of us.

The Role of Carefirst

Carefirst strongly believes that it is essential to integrate reconciliation into its own work. Accordingly, Carefirst its staffs and volunteers will:

1. Demonstrate awareness, respect, and support for Indigenous communities, cultural protocols and practices, local knowledge and decision-making systems, and self-determination.
2. Identify challenges to and opportunities for relationship-building and reconciliation and adapt the Association's methods of engagement accordingly.
3. Understand the historical lack of Indigenous participation in the public policy process and development, the legacy of residential schools, and the intergenerational impacts these have had on people and communities.
4. Practice with cultural humility through active listening, learning, and understanding to prevent, confront and eliminate biases in Carefirst's own policies, practices, and programs.
5. Support Indigenous calls for changes in public health legislation, regulation and practice to be more respectful of the rights and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples.
6. Respect and work together with Indigenous partners to clearly identify the expected and intended outcomes of activities.

References:

1. Canadian Public Health Association: Policy Statement: Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (<https://www.cpha.ca/policy-statement-indigenous-relations-and-reconciliation>)
2. Ontario Health; Guidance Document for Service Accountability Agreement Local Obligations prepared by Provincial Equity and Indigenous Health , May 2023
3. United Way of Toronto: [Board-Statement-on-Reconciliation-and-Equity.pdf](#) (unitedwaygt.org)