



**May 30, 2023**

**Re: Deputation in Support of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism – Year Four Update**

Dear Members of the Economic and Community Development Committee,

Sherbourne Health strongly supports the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit in the ongoing implementation of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism. We ask that Committee Members support the unanimous adoption of the Toronto Action Plan Year Four Update.

Sherbourne Health's Supporting Our Youth Programs work to support the health and well-being of all queer and trans spectrum youth aged 29 years old and under through one-on-one supports, groups, and programs. Our experiences supporting Black queer youth tells us we need more long-term systemic interventions to address the root causes of anti-Black racism. Increased support through sustainable funding for Black organizations is critical toward finding solutions and impactful change.

Throughout COVID-19, Black communities were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic extending far beyond health outcomes and affecting vital social, economic and wellbeing indicators for Black children, youth, seniors and families. Impacts can be seen across indicators such as housing and employment with the unemployment rate among Black Canadians at 12%, about 70% higher than the rest of the population (8%). Moreover, 36% of Black households who rent had twice the eviction filing rates compared to census tracts with 2% Black households, even after controlling for poverty and other important factors.

The impact on the mental health of Black youth is compounded, with Black youth experiencing poor access to primary healthcare (51% of Black-African, and 35% of Black-Caribbean having access to a family physician, as compared to 62% of white youth).

Black youth in Ontario are overrepresented within the child welfare system; despite accounting for 7% of Canada's youth population, they represent almost 14% of the child welfare service population.

The ongoing leadership of the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit, the Partnership and Accountability Circle, and its partners will provide a comprehensive, community-informed approach to realize meaningful change to address the immediate and long-term challenges experienced by Black communities. Anti-Black racism and its ongoing manifestations are one of the top challenges facing our communities, so we encourage the City to continue to take these critical steps to respond to the long standing demands for sustainable funding, capacity building supports, and addressing challenges such as food insecurity, housing and gentrification, and community health and well-being. These challenges preceded the pandemic and will continue well after without the City of Toronto's targeted action, intervention and support of local Black community leadership and increased action to address anti-Black racism in the City of Toronto.

The Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism emphasizes that systems change is what we need now as the City of Toronto moves to recover and rebuild beyond the pandemic. Short-term solutions are not enough to address the intergenerational impacts of anti-Black racism. We are in full support with the continued investment in the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism and look forward to a seeing the positive and necessary impacts it will continue to bring. Thank you to the members of the Economic and Community Development Committee for considering our comments today.

Sincerely,



Hazelle Palmer  
President and CEO  
Sherbourne Health