

2022-2023 Diversity Strategic Plan Report



Center/Department/Institute	Neurology		
Document Author(s):	Andrew Spector, M.D.		
Completion Date:	7/14/2022		
D&I Leader Name(s):	Andrew Spector, M.D.		
D&I Leader Title(s):	Vice Chair of Inclusion, Diversity, and Empowerment		
Inclusion Council Member(s) FY2022-2023: Please type all ACTIVE member names	<input type="checkbox"/> None currently identified or N/A	Name(s): William Alexander Andrew Spector, MD	E-mail Address(es): William.alexander@duke.edu Andrew.spector@duke.edu

A. Introduction

NOTE: Use this section to give a brief overview of your Center/Department/Institute's current vision, strategies, and/or approaches to diversity & inclusion.

The underlying approach to D&I in the Department of Neurology is to correct systemic and historic impediments to inclusion. We believe that making institutional changes will be more effective and persistent than attempting to change individuals' beliefs or behaviors but should still benefit all members of the Department. Our approach to institutional change has two other advantages. First, it places the burden of making systemic change on the entire department (or D&I committee) rather than the disadvantaged group. Women in neurology, for example, have historically had a difficult time finding mentors. Assigning mentors to all junior faculty by default (a systems rather than personal approach) is a more effective and less burdensome approach for female faculty than telling female faculty that they can improve their chances at promotion by identifying more mentors (an approach that has been advocated in the past). Assigning mentors to all faculty might differentially help women who historically have had a more difficult time finding mentorship, but the policy helps both women and men in need of mentorship. Likewise, our D&I educational programming is predominantly held in department-wide venues rather than targeted just to residents or to teaching faculty because all members of our department should benefit from these experiences.

B. Summary of Prior Year's Activities

During 2021-2022, we identified "community" as our theme for the year. We emphasized projects that would bring our community together after COVID kept us apart. We included both our Duke departmental community and the community at large in Durham. We hosted social events for the department, sponsored a Habitat for Humanity house, and began discussions to build more bridges between our department and NCCU. We held a series of focus groups to learn more about what would make the environment for our staff members more inclusive. We continued our Diversity and Inclusion Grand Rounds education series, and a concerted effort was made last year to invite a diverse set of speakers. The Vice Chair of Inclusion, Diversity, and Empowerment sends monthly email updates about DEI themed events along with DEI teaching points. The Neurology Diversity and Inclusion Committee crossed the 50-member mark, indicating strong engagement in DEI work by members of the department. The Committee is composed of staff, trainees, administrators, and faculty and includes the department chair and chief administrator, demonstrating departmental commitment to DEI work. We continued to offer teleshadowing for students who are traditionally

2022-2023 Diversity Strategic Plan Report



underrepresented in neurology. Substantial progress was made on our grant-funded research to examine health care disparities within our department.

C. Plans for Addressing Priority Issues

The theme for the 2022-2023 year will be “empowerment.” We have several projects in the work that fit this theme as well as new projects for this year.

Short-term goals:

- Update and publish Staff Handbook to maintain departmental transparency and enhance access to information that will help with career trajectory
- Develop APP subspecialty certification and recognition program
- Continue D&I educational lecture series at Neurology Grand Rounds (3 lectures per year).
- Institute NCCU guest lecture program for Grand Rounds

Mid-term goals:

- Develop health disparities scorecard from collected data
- Create partnerships with NCCU, including a neurological careers day for undergrads to learn more about careers in neurology and neuroscience, work on resume writing, and practice interview skills.
- Establish community lecture series to improve neurological health literacy

Long-term goals:

- Develop metrics that demonstrate improvement in key priorities
- Successfully recruit URM faculty members
- Publish Health Disparities Scorecard

D. Conclusion

Duke Neurology leadership has been highly supportive of all D&I efforts. Three aspects of this support have been especially crucial to our success. First, departmental leadership has implemented the suggestions for best practice for inclusive leadership. Second, the department provides protected time, a budget, and a vice chair level position for the D&I officer, a rare combination among academic neurology departments. Finally, both our Department Chair, Richard O’Brien, and our Chief Departmental Administrator, JT Solomon, have invested their time and energy into our D&I efforts. Dr. O’Brien discusses topics relevant to D&I efforts in Departmental meetings, was a vocal proponent of our D&I census, and has attended all of our grand rounds lectures on D&I subjects. Mr. Solomon regularly attends our D&I Committee meetings and has approved several budget requests to expand the scope of our work.

In addition to our support from leadership, our D&I Committee has also been crucial to our success. This committee is the largest of its kind that has been identified nationally, with 50+ members, including members of various genders, ages, races, and positions within our Department (APPs, faculty, residents, fellows, postdoctoral associates and more).

2022-2023 Diversity Strategic Plan Report



All members of the Department are encouraged to attend and our committee meetings, but participation is never required to avoid a tax on those who volunteer for this work. This widespread support shows that the commitment to inclusive excellence is widespread in the department and also allows for more inclusive perspectives as we plan our future efforts. The implications of this commitment should be demonstrable in future surveys and recruitment efforts.