

36th National Black Nurses Day on Capitol Hill
Black Nurses: A Call for Transformative Health Equity Globally

Dismantling Structural Racism in Nursing

The National Black Nurses Association (NBNA) serves as a national nursing body to influence legislation and policies that support comprehensive efforts to dismantle racism in nursing. The NBNA calls for establishing laws and regulations to ensure the nursing profession takes responsibility for promoting and safeguarding the health of all people. Racism in nursing directly contributes to disparities in nursing practice, healthcare delivery, and education, resulting in unnecessary additional healthcare costs of \$35 billion and \$10 billion in lost productivity due to illness. NBNA urges the 118th Congress to endorse legislation that fully addresses the urgent need to recognize racism as a public health crisis and acknowledge it as a significant ongoing threat to America's nursing workforce and the global population.

Background

- **56%** of nurses say racism in the workplace has negatively impacted their professional well-being.³
- **64%** of nurses who have challenged racism said their efforts resulted in no change.³
- **75%** of nurses have witnessed racism in the workplace.³
- **92%** of Black nurses have personally experienced racism in the workplace.³
- **70%** of Black nurses experienced racist acts from nursing leaders, **68%** from patients, and **55%** from colleagues.³
- Due to the nursing shortage, Black nurses are recruited to the United Kingdom and European countries and given subordinate positions.¹
- The United States grapples with observable structural racism that is ingrained within its governmental, business, and social systems.²

Recommendations to Legislators

NBNA calls on 118th Congress to:

- **Support the passage of S.1317/H.R. 2904- Anti-Racism in Public Health Act of 2023.**⁴
- **Support legislation** that will provide and support public health research and investment into understanding and eliminating structural racism.⁶
- **Support nursing organizations** and nursing education programs on teaching norm-critical thinking and discourse where perspectives of social skills, social justice, and health equality are a priority.²
- **Create a National Center for Anti-Racism** at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention to declare racism as a public health crisis.⁴
- **Support nursing education programs** that require nursing faculty to be educated on developing anti-racist curricula that seek to eliminate implicit bias.⁵
- **Provide resources** to implement a global nursing community surveillance system; enable standardized measurement of nursing education programs to ensure they meet anti-racism benchmark targets.⁵

References

1. Ahlberg, Beth M., et al. "Invisibility of Racism in the Global Neoliberal Era: Implications for Researching Racism in Healthcare." *Frontiers in Sociology*, vol. 4, 2019.
2. Andre-Castillo, I., Tenegelin, E., Arvekle, S. H., and Dahlborg, E. (2023). "When nursing education becomes political: Norm-critical perspectives in a campus-based clinical learning environment." *Nursing Inquiry*, e12597. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nin.12597>
3. American Nurses Association. (2022). *Survey shows substantial racism in nursing*. <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/workforce/clinical-practice-material/national-commission-to-address-racism-in-nursing/survey-shows-substantial-racism-in-nursing/> American Nurses Association.
4. Eldahshoury, Mae. "Pressley, Warren, Lee Re-Introduce Anti-Racism in Public Health Act." *Ayanna Pressley*, 3 May 2023, pressley.house.gov/2023/04/26/pressley-warren-lee-re-introduce-anti-racism-in-public-health-act/
5. Iheduru-Anderson, Kechinyere C., and Monika M. Wahi. "Proposal for a Global Agenda to Eliminate Racism in Nursing and Nursing Education." *Civil Society and Social Responsibility in Higher Education: International Perspectives on Curriculum and Teaching Development*, 2020, pp. 17-43.
6. Kimani, Rachel W. "Racism, colonialism and the implications for nursing scholarship: A discussion paper." *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, vol. 79, no. 5, 2023, pp. 1745-1753.
7. Robinson-Lane, Sheria G., and Rushika V. Patel. "The imperative to address institutional racism in nursing practice." *Nursing Outlook*, vol. 70, no. 5, 2022, pp. 691-693.
8. What Racism Costs Us All | <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2020/09/the-economic-cost-of-racism>