



**Community**  
Health Network

# Diversity Equity & Inclusion Strategic Plan

Building a Strong Foundation for a Healthier  
and More Equitable Indiana Community

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2023-2027

FALL 2022  
[eCommunity.com](https://www.eCommunity.com)

# Our Commitment

---

At Community Health Network, our mission calls on us to enhance health and well-being across the communities we serve. We cannot truly fulfill that mission without a strong embrace of diversity, an unwavering commitment to racial and health equity, and an organizational promise of inclusion. Indeed, we believe that a holistic view of well-being must include an emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

We are pleased to present to our communities the DEI Strategic Plan for Community Health Network. This document is a blueprint for 2023 through 2027, outlining Community's intention to focus more strongly and meticulously on DEI than ever before. It also is a concrete commitment and ongoing reminder that DEI is foundational to the success of our mission—so vital that our organizational values specifically identify Diversity and Inclusion.

We approach DEI with these three commitments in mind:

- Community is one of the largest employers in all geographic areas we serve—as such, it is our responsibility to create equitable opportunities and a workforce that reflects the diversity of the neighbors we serve.
- As a major provider of healthcare services, we are mindful that the communities we serve face health disparities—we are committed to achieving equitable access and outcomes.
- As our Community name implies, we are a partner and leader in our communities, with a responsibility to set positive examples and create strong influences—DEI is at the forefront of that community leadership.

Our DEI Strategic Plan details how we will approach all three of these areas with a stronger-than-ever focus on diversity, equity and inclusion. This is not a new path for Community Health Network, but we know there is much more work to do and much more progress to make. We can assure you that our organization is committing more resources and energy to DEI than we ever have before.

We are grateful for your support in our efforts. We are excited to move forward with our DEI Strategic Plan, as we continue to enhance health and well-being across all parts of our communities.

**Bryan Mills**

President and CEO  
Community Health Network



# Executive Summary

---

Community Health Network and its leadership have long been committed to promoting diversity, and our efforts through the years have earned multiple local and national recognitions. Even so, over the last three years, our organization has significantly deepened its commitment in the area of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), both inside and outside the organization. We have undertaken wide-ranging DEI initiatives, made major financial investments, and enhanced our DEI team. We convened committees such as Racial and Social Equity Committee (RASE); added Inclusion and Diversity to our PRIIDE values; facilitated affinity groups; conducted research, dialogues, and listening sessions; set up task forces to tackle specific challenges; and launched screenings and other community outreach. We engaged outside expertise for organizational assessments, research, and, finally, guidance towards creating this document, our inaugural five-year Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan.

This document outlines a five-year vision for how Community will significantly raise the bar on our DEI commitment, create institutional change, and build accountability. The specific goals and tactics in this strategic plan were developed through a meticulous collaborative process and have been embraced by the organization's leadership. We are grateful to the 26-person team who crafted the strategic plan over many months and the more than 375 Community caregivers who contributed their energy towards it.

This strategic plan is our public declaration that we are reaching for a higher standard in creating a Network-wide environment that is diverse, equitable, inclusive, and focused on health equity for all. We seek to create work, clinical, and community environments that establish a safe space of belonging for every single caregiver and patient in the Network.

## Six Pillars of Focus

Community Health Network aims to be a leader in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion. This strategic plan outlines a data-driven program of change—framed in The Way We Improve methodology—covering five years from January 2023 through December 2027.

To guide this work, we established six integrated pillars of focus (Exhibit 1), each with objectives and goals that speak to the expansion of DEI across the Network and the State of Indiana. The plan's specific strategies, timelines, and metrics for each pillar have been developed to best achieve these goals. Its success will be determined by transparently tracking indicators that will measure implementation progress on a DEI strategic plan scorecard.

Given that many of the tactics outlined in the strategic plan are new initiatives for the organization as we continue to ramp up our DEI infrastructure, they will require developing new data measures and tracking processes. New public dashboards will offer, as objectively as possible, a shared understanding of where we are and how well we are advancing toward the plan's objectives. With these new metrics, we can swiftly adapt our actions to stay on course or evolve our tactics as necessary. Efforts to establish these metrics, processes, and dashboards were already well underway even as we produced the strategic plan.

# Strategic Implementation

Successful implementation of the many goals outlined in our six strategic pillars will require a strong commitment of leadership, a willingness to break from our comfort zone, and the establishment of many new processes. We have fully committed to all three of these factors. Our goal is to provide our DEI strategic plan with enough “AIR” —that is: **(1) Accountability** at multiple levels of our organization; **(2) Integration** into everyday decision-making, programs, and ways of serving as caregivers; **(3) Infrastructure** to guide DEI implementation centrally and locally; and **(4) Resources**, including human, financial, and technical to support high-caliber DEI programming, outreach, and implementation.

## Exhibit 1. Summary: DEI Strategic Plan Pillars, Objective, Goals

Plan Pillar	Objective	Key Goals
<b>Belonging and Inclusion</b>	To become a network where all patients and caregivers feel empowered, respected, valued, and recognized. To work towards achieving organizational Inclusive Excellence. To seek to ensure equity in processes for caregivers and patients everywhere we provide care.	<p><b>G1.</b> To cultivate an authentic culture with actionable insights which supports belonging and inclusion.</p> <p><b>G2.</b> To evaluate, revise, and create policies and procedures to drive belonging and inclusion.</p> <p><b>G3.</b> To develop environmental strategies and affirming programs that foster belonging and inclusion for all caregivers.</p>
<b>Community Outreach and Engagement</b>	To meet diverse community members where they are in order to understand their points of view and elevate their voices. To offer supportive outreach or engagement programs and initiatives that improve health and quality of life. To support communities that are diverse in many ways including racially, ethnically, linguistically, religiously, by sexual orientation, culturally, regionally, accessibility-wise, and economically.	<p><b>G1.</b> To improve our community outreach and engagement data strategy to better understand diverse communities and to enhance impact.</p> <p><b>G2.</b> To develop a targeted outreach strategy that strengthens our impact with diverse and underserved communities.</p> <p><b>G3.</b> To define, implement, and support servant leadership as an important priority for all Community Health Network employees.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Williams, D. (2013). *Strategic Diversity Leadership: Activating Change and Transformation in Higher Education*. Stylus Publishing Press.

Plan Pillar	Objective	Key Goals
Education and Learning	<p>To promote continuous DEI education in pursuit of an environment where every caregiver has an understanding (knowledge) of DEI and belonging, and can demonstrate cultural competence. To enable every caregiver to model behaviors that create an environment where all patients, family members, and caregivers are valued, included, and feel psychologically safe.</p>	<p><b>G1.</b> To build a DEI catalog of learning plans that helps caregivers and patients to develop greater self-awareness, empathy towards others, and the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that create inclusion, belonging, and psychological safety.</p> <p><b>G2.</b> To create a DEI certificate program for leaders at the manager to senior levels in the organization that will prepare them to lead, engage, and develop an environment that is inclusive and excellent for all caregivers and patients.</p> <p><b>G3.</b> To organize and support coordination and sharing of DEI resources by nursing, providers, pharmacists, psychologists, and GME and to integrate DEI content into all Community Health Network educational offerings.</p>
Health Equity	<p>To serve as a strong partner in the Indiana community health care ecosystem, providing access to high-quality and equitable health care, coordination of care, and community outreach that offers all patients the opportunity to obtain their full health potential where no person is disadvantaged from achieving that full potential because of their identity or other socially determined circumstance.</p>	<p><b>G1.</b> To provide health equity leadership, resources and programming to support the needs of diverse and vulnerable communities.</p> <p><b>G2.</b> To develop targeted efforts to reduce health inequities for diverse and vulnerable communities in designated clinical areas as determined by the Health Equity Governance Committee.</p>
Recruitment and Retention	<p>To increase the diversity, success, and retention of highly qualified and engaged caregivers overall, with a special emphasis on increasing and retaining the diversity of our leadership, providers and clinical care community to reflect the demographics of our markets and the diverse patients whom we serve across the Network.</p>	<p><b>G1.</b> To establish equitable recruitment and hiring practices designed to attract diverse candidate pools across all job categories.</p> <p><b>G2.</b> To increase retention rates of caregivers and providers to achieve equity across diverse groups.</p> <p><b>G3.</b> To ensure the annual attraction and retention rate of diverse patients each year for services we provide or refer out is equal to or exceeds the diversity rate of the population served by a defined geographic or demographic area.</p>

Plan Pillar	Objective	Key Goals
Supplier Diversity	<p>To reflect the diversity of our patients and the communities we serve within our supplier base.</p> <p>To identify and expand our base of diverse suppliers in order to achieve equity and inclusion in Community's procurement process and invest in the communities we serve.</p>	<p><b>G1.</b> To identify, assess, and address current shortcomings and future opportunities in supplier diversity program to center equity in the procurement of vendors and suppliers.</p> <p><b>G2.</b> To establish goals for supplier diversity.</p> <p><b>G3.</b> To increase participation in the external supplier diversity sector.</p>

This implementation phase will flow across the next five years—and beyond, when we will move into further five-year cycles. We have identified nine success factors that will act to scaffold our efforts now and moving forward in key areas such as DEI accountability and communications, for example ensuring that DEI is foundational in all decision-making.

These nine factors will become guiding beacons for our work in bringing this strategic plan to life.

1. We will create an environment of accountability, transparency, alignment, and shared ownership of diversity, equity, and inclusion as important priorities.
2. We will dedicate sufficient financial resources to make measurable gains on DEI efforts across the Network and at the limits of our fiscal realities.
3. We will ensure that DEI is foundational in all decision-making.
4. We will enhance dialogue, action, and cultural humility to foster greater understanding and appreciation for the lived experiences of our caregivers, our patients, and the communities we serve.
5. We will consistently provide tools and resources to support actions and new behaviors across Community Health Network.
6. We will nurture and support richly diverse communities.
7. We will invest in continuing education for our entire community to support DEI.
8. We will create and develop new methods to improve access, advocacy, and retention of diverse caregivers, patients, and strategic business partners.
9. We will embolden DEI as part of our institutional brand and narrative of excellence, communicating this value, our strengths, and continuing challenges across all communication platforms of the network both internally and externally, providing both understanding and ways to get involved.

## A Brighter, Healthier, More Connected Future

Our world today is undergoing vast social, cultural, and other changes, many unprecedented in scope, affecting the demographics of those we serve and elevating health equity as an even more urgent priority. As we consider our mission as a health network delivering excellence and look to the future, DEI is clearly a central element in this reality. Our success in implementing this strategic plan will move us towards a productive future of enormous positive potential and opportunity for powerful impact in our communities.

For our Community caregivers, this strategic plan is a personal call to action as well as a professional one. Rather than wait another day, we must each work with renewed commitment to build supportive bridges among ourselves and between our organization and the diverse communities we serve. We must encourage engagement and mutual respect and assure everyone we encounter that there is a place for them at Community.

As we implement this strategic plan, DEI will become more integral than ever to the way we operate as an employer. This plan will ensure that we deliver care in a way that demonstrates true equity in access and outcomes, and it will give back to the communities that brought our organization to life. Further, we expect the DEI work in this strategic plan to become an integral part of the way healthcare delivery is done everywhere.

We know that we will learn much as we move forward with this five-year strategic plan. We are excited for this journey together and look forward to what is to come.

# DEI Strategic Plan

## Design Team Members 2022

**Diane McDaniel, ABD**  
Chief Diversity Equity and  
Inclusion Officer  
*Project Lead*

---

**Amy Arthur, PhD**  
Director Belonging and Inclusion

---

**Steve Bell**  
VP Supply Chain Management

---

**Ryan Chelli**  
VP Donor Relations

---

**Jill Christiansen**  
VP Social Accountability  
*Lead—Health Equity Pillar*

---

**Marla Coulter-McDonald, DMin**  
Director Spiritual Services

---

**Angie Dunst**  
VP Hospital Operations  
*Lead—Belonging and Inclusion*

---

**Stacy Hammons, PhD**  
ED Diversity Equity Inclusion  
*Lead—Supplier Diversity Pillar*

---

**Amy Heleine**  
VP Analytics

---

**Tricia Hern, MD**  
VP Clinical Improvement and  
Physician Leadership

---

**Nicholas Kiehl**  
Business Intelligence Analyst

---

**Kathy King**  
Director Talent Acquisition

---

**Al Larsen**  
VP Marketing and Communication  
*Lead—Recruitment and  
Retention Pillar*

---

**Deb Lyons, DNP**  
ED Nursing Communications  
Integration

---

**Kevin Mahan**  
VP Security and Safety

---

**Jenni Martin**  
Executive Assistant to CDEIO

---

**Dawn Moore, PharmD**  
VP Chief Pharmacy Officer

---

**Korey Paul**  
Business Intelligence Analyst

---

**Jean Putnam, DNP**  
EVP Chief Nursing Officer

---

**Bernard Richard, MD**  
Department Medical Director  
East Region

---

**Beth Tharp**  
SVP Hospital Acute Care Services

---

**Mary Alice Trent, PhD**  
Director DEI Education and Learning  
*Lead—Education and  
Learning Pillar*

---

**Deborah Whitfield**  
Director Outreach and Engagement  
*Lead—Community Outreach and  
Engagement Pillar*

---

**Amy Wire**  
VP Product Line

---

**Julie Zachary**  
ED Business Enablement

---

**Kathy Zoppi, PhD**  
SVP Academic Affairs

---



---

 **Community Health Network**  
1500 North Ritter Avenue  
Indianapolis, IN 46219

 **eCommunity.com**

 **800.777.7775**