SHEPHERD’S CLINIC’S STATEMENT ON JUSTICE AND EQUITY

The belief in health equity is central to our work at Shepherd’s Clinic. Everyone should have access to resources that promote good health. The mission of Shepherd’s Clinic is to serve the large number of people in Baltimore who do not have access to health care resources. In executing our daily work, we are particularly mindful of events in our country over the last several months. These tragic and disturbing events shine light on the systemic injustices faced by those in the African American community and make us recognize that now is the time to emphasize our commitment as a health care provider to this marginalized community. We undertake the task to provide health care resources to those who might not otherwise have such resources because we believe strongly in the value of each and every human life. In this moment, as the world mourns the accumulation of black lives lost and the forces underlying it, Shepherd’s Clinic reaffirms its commitment to equity and stands beside those organizing to end systemic racism. Black lives matter.

We are mindful of the struggles faced by our patients, the majority of whom are African American. We understand the challenges that our patients and prospective patients face especially with regard to the inequities faced by pregnant women, babies, and many others who seek health care. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed these inequities by shining light on the systemic practices and policies that result in upstream social disadvantage and the lack of resource allocations for marginalized communities to achieve equitable outcomes in downstream health. While we want each of our patients to feel that she or he receives excellent health care, we also want each patient to feel that she or he is valued as a person. We strive to treat all of our patients with dignity and respect.

Beyond a continued dedication to our core services to the marginalized communities we serve and the special challenges they face, Shepherd’s hereby pledges to further our commitment to the underserved by taking specific actions. During this program year, we will invest additional funding, personnel, and resources to community outreach. This will ensure that no eligible person in the neighborhoods we serve or seek to serve suffers an avoidable unfortunate health outcome due a lack of accessibility. We will work closely with experts in the field of equity, anti-racism, and inclusion to take intentional steps to become a bigger part of the solution. To solidify our commitment to diversity and inclusion, we will establish and implement policies and practices to ensure strategic and intentional recruitment of diverse board members, and provide equal access to board leadership opportunities. Additionally, we challenge our staff, volunteers, donors, and community members to commit themselves to intentional daily actions that seek to uplift and support those who are disadvantaged and who feel deprived of the respect they deserve.