

## BCPA Anti-racism statement

Dear members,

The past few weeks have served as a reminder of the violence and discrimination that Black people face around the world. As Canadians, we take pride in our culture of politeness and often fail to notice that discrimination occurs in our own country, in our communities and in our offices. In fact, violence and discrimination has been in our country for hundreds of years, since European colonizers stole this land from Indigenous people in the 16th century. As Psychologists, we cannot ignore the effects of racism and discrimination on mental health. Moreover, it is not enough to just talk about doing things differently – now is a time for action. The BCPA staff and Board have taken these events as an opportunity to reflect and identify areas where we can improve. Specifically, in the coming months we have committed to:

1. **Provide ongoing training to foster socially responsible practitioners.** We hope to do this by selecting culturally diverse speakers, ensuring that presenters include examples from diverse populations, and hosting workshops on important topics such as systemic oppression. We hope to make these materials available for on-demand streaming so that they are accessible to all current and future psychologists.
2. **Continue to advocate for mental health parity.** We recognize that there are several barriers to accessing mental health services for marginalized populations. For several years, BCPA has been advocating to make access to psychological services a right rather than a privilege. It's time for us to pursue this goal with more action as soon as possible.
3. **Create a Diversity Committee.** Last year, we created a Diversity Sub-Committee and we plan to encourage this committee to address social issues within our membership and the public in general. We want to expand this committee and identify some actionable goals.
4. **Create a Board development task force.** To increase Board diversity and adequately represent all psychologists in BC, we will create a task force to encourage members of a minority of marginalized group to apply, offering mentorship where necessary to build leadership skills.
5. **Include a presentation on racism or oppression and mental health during Psychology Month.** Psychology Month is February in Canada, so is Black History Month. We strive to include presentations in each region of BC and in commonly spoken languages such as Mandarin, Cantonese and Punjabi. In addition, we will offer presentations on how oppression and discrimination inevitably affect mental health and well-being.

As the Canadian Psychological Association so eloquently said, “a just society enables all its members to contribute, to thrive, and to make a positive difference when facing fortune and when facing adversity. BCPA invites people to stand together, to stand up and to stand close against anti-Black racism and discrimination of all kinds”.

We invite you to evaluate yourself and your peers and identify areas where *you* can improve. If you are interested in being involved in one or more of these initiatives, please email Alexina at [alexina.picard@psychologists.bc.ca](mailto:alexina.picard@psychologists.bc.ca)

Warm regards,

Alexina Picard  
Operations Manager