

August 22, 2023



Hi Team –

The summer season may be winding down, with earlier sunsets, the return of back-to-school routines, and a much-anticipated new season of football, but it's not over yet!! And we're making sure our TriHealth Team gets to "soak up" every last drop of summer fun this Sunday at Kings Island & Soak City for our annual Team Member, Physician and

Volunteer Celebration!! We're expecting more than 18,000 TriHealth team members, family and friends to enjoy a day of fun, food and thrills. And our senior leaders and I are looking forward to connecting with you and your loved ones – and maybe joining you on a ride or two – as we enjoy one another's company and show our appreciation for the very best healthcare team anywhere! So, I hope to see you there.... and maybe catch a ride together on The Racer!!



Getting Healthcare Right

Launching the Region's First Center for Health Equity

As I have said many times, eliminating health disparities and achieving health equity for ALL are foundational to fixing our nation's broken healthcare system and "Getting Healthcare Right" here at TriHealth and throughout our community. So, what is Health Equity and why is it important?

Health equity is the state in which every member of our community has a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health regardless of race, ethnicity, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socioeconomic status. And it is important because it's how we ensure we are providing **ALL** those we serve with convenient and timely access to the *right care* in the *right place* delivered in the *right way* at the *right cost* to achieve *the right clinical outcomes*. And doing this is, ultimately, how we achieve the Triple Aim of *better care, better health, and better value* for every patient, *always!*



Martin Luther King once said, "Of all of the forms of inequality, injustice in health is the most shocking and inhumane" ...we agree, and are doing something about it!!!

It Starts with Culture and People. TriHealth has made significant strides in recent years to become a more inclusive workplace for all team members and a more equitable care environment for our patients and the community, all by focusing on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEI+B). And this work has helped to support and cultivate diversity of **all** kinds in order to foster a true sense of belonging on the part of providers, team members, and patients. And ultimately, this has contributed to greater trust on the part of the community we serve. By fostering a sense of belonging and building trust, we are laying the foundation for intentionally eliminating health disparities and creating lasting health equity with our own patients and our community.

But Culture Alone is Not Enough. We know from our own internal REAL (race, ethnicity, and language) data collected and analyzed on TriHealth patients over the past several years that health disparities persist even within our own system, in addition to the larger community. With these new insights, it became clear that in

order to accelerate our work to eradicate health disparities and Get Healthcare Right, we needed to *do more* and *invest more* to make health equity a system priority, with a clear and defined purpose (as outlined in graphic to right). And with this clarity of purpose as our compass or “North Star,” earlier this year, we announced plans to create the **TriHealth Center for Health Equity** and appoint **Dr. Thomas Shockley, Jr.** to the newly created role of Chief Health Equity Officer. And thanks to our enduring partnership with bi3 (Bethesda Inc.) and Bethesda Inc. and bi3 President and CEO, Jill Miller, who like TriHealth, is committed to transforming healthcare for the better, we are now working together to fund the start-up and sustained operation of the Center and this important work.



Bold Leadership and New Resources Aimed at Achieving Health Equity. As we’ve discussed at recent Town Halls, the Center for Health Equity will be organized around the following three dimensions of Health Equity & Belonging:

- 1. Equitable & Inclusive Workforce and Culture;**
- 2. Equitable Access, Experience & Quality for ALL TriHealth Patients; and,**
- 3. Equitable Health Status for the Larger Community.**



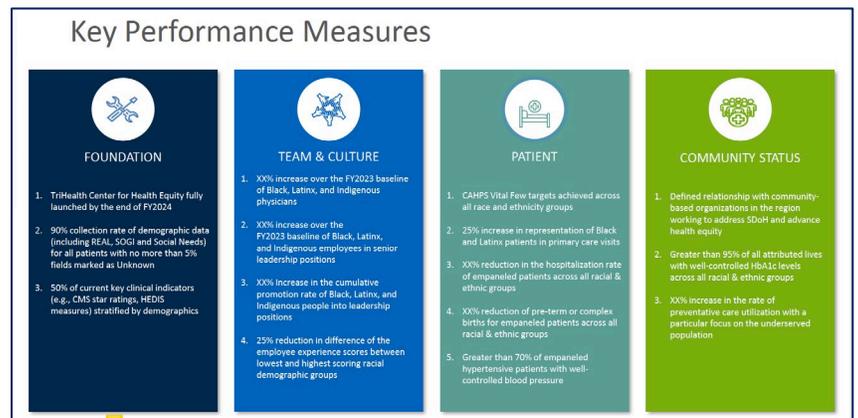
The graphic to the right provides more information on each of these three dimensions including targeted populations, defined outcomes, and key workstreams.

Today, I’m excited to announce the Center for Health Equity will officially launch this month under Dr. Shockley’s leadership. It will report directly to me, the System CEO, and the Safety, Quality and Service Committee of the Board. The existing DEI+B team will join the Center for Health Equity, continuing to support our Equitable & Inclusive Organization work (Team and Culture), with a dual reporting to our Chief Human Resources Officer, **Jerri Irby**, because of the important role Jerri and our HR team play in this work.

The Center will include the following functional work groups with dedicated support staff: **DEI+B, Community Health & Advocacy, Care Management, Communications, Performance Improvement, and Reporting & Analytics**. As part of this new organizational structure, the Center will also support our Community Impact Council, Health Equity Council, Employee Resource Groups, and Diversity Advisory Council, as well as offer guidance on research, education, advocacy, and community engagement initiatives.

Setting Priorities & Measuring What Matters to Guide the Center's Progress.

Peter Drucker, widely recognized as the father of modern management, once said, "If you can't measure it, you can't manage or improve it." So, the priorities and key performance measures outlined in the graphic to the right will be used to both manage and improve our performance in areas of health equity. In the coming weeks and months, we'll be finalizing these priorities and metrics, and providing regular updates on our progress in our Town Halls and my Weekly Updates.



Equity starts from the inside out. And as team members, we all play an important role in bringing our vision for Health Equity and Getting Healthcare Right to life through the work and service we provide to patients each day. **Be sure to tune in to our Team Member Town Hall livestream – TODAY at 12pm on [Bridge](#) –** to learn more about the rollout of our Center for Health Equity playbook and how you can make a difference.

Recap of Black Family Reunion

And speaking of proactively addressing health disparities to improve health equity, one important way we do this is by building an inclusive culture that reflects our diverse community and fosters a sense of belonging and trust among ALL of those we serve. A shining example of this commitment in action took place over the weekend and throughout the preceding week during the **35th Annual Midwest Black Family Reunion (BFR)**, of which TriHealth proudly served as the title sponsor.



And, without a doubt, our partnership with the Black Family Reunion was "seen and heard" throughout the community and by the hundreds of thousands of community members who attended the many events of this celebration. From parades and health fairs to gospel concerts, workshops, and seminars – not to mention last Monday's ceremony at TriHealth Baldwin, where **Tracey Farley-Artis**, BFR Executive Director, and I hosted the official kick-off (see pic to left) – TriHealth proudly showed



our active interest in, and commitment to, celebrating diversity in our community and better understanding and responding to the health needs and concerns of EVERY individual we serve. A BIG thank you to Dr. Shockley (pictured left) – who spoke on behalf of TriHealth at the BFR Breakfast on Friday morning – along with other members of the senior team – Terri Hanlon-Bremer, Steve Gracey, Steve Mombach, Dr. Bryan Strader and Jerri Irby – and the hundreds of TriHealth team members who volunteered throughout the weekend to help make this "proud and powerful" community event a huge success! Click

[here](#) to view more BFR photos from the weekend.



Commemorating the Career and Contributions of Dr. Tariq Shakoor

Last week, I had the privilege of joining many of our senior and physician leaders as we recognized and celebrated **Dr. Tariq Shakoor** for his many indelible contributions to TriHealth and our patients, as he now begins his “second” retirement.

Following a long and successful career as an accomplished gastroenterologist (GI) and nationally recognized leader in advanced endoscopy and ERCP, Dr. Shakoor agreed to come out of retirement in 2021 to lead our transformational rebuilding of our GI service line. Not only was he a stabilizing force for the program at the time, but he also played a critical role in reimagining the GI and Liver service line of the future and in recruiting the next generation of highly trained clinicians to provide complex and comprehensive GI care to our patients and community.

Today, TriHealth GI is back and better than ever, and we are forever indebted to Dr. Shakoor for his strong leadership on behalf of TriHealth physicians, team members, and patients that helped make this comeback possible!

To commemorate his enduring legacy to our system, last week we dedicated **Endoscopy Room #1 at Bethesda North in the name of Dr. Shakoor**, in recognition of his years of service at TriHealth, his attention to excellent patient care, his expertise in complex endoscopy, and for his leadership in reshaping TriHealth GI for the future. Please join me in thanking Dr. Shakoor for his exceptional service to TriHealth and to our patients and in wishing him all the best in his well-deserved “second” retirement!!

I look forward to seeing you on Sunday at Kings Island – and sharing a fun, final summer blast with you and your families! **THANK YOU** for all you do to make TriHealth and the care we deliver the best it can be, *always!* And, don't forget to “attend” today's Town Hall at 12 noon on [Bridge!!!](#)

