



## INCLUSIVE VOCABULARY – GENERAL TERMS

Treating patients from diverse backgrounds calls for thoughtful consideration and precise language can help patients and their families feel more comfortable when receiving care. Diversity includes:

- Ability.
- Ethnicity.
- Race.
- Religion.
- Sexuality and gender identity.
- Socioeconomic status.

Providing a safe and welcoming environment to all our patients and their families helps us provide better, patient-centered care for everyone.

*These guidelines were written by the American Psychological Association and Maysa Akbar, Ph.D., chief diversity officer of the American Psychological Association, the Associated Press, the American Medical Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

**Access** – The elimination of discrimination and other barriers that make it harder to join and be a part of a work group, organization or community.

**Allies** – People who recognize their privilege because of gender, class, race, sexual identity and socioeconomic status and work with oppressed groups to end oppression.

**Bias** – Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person or group compared with another, usually in a way considered unfair.

**Climate** – The environment in which patients feel included or excluded.

**Cultural competence** – The ability to work together with people from diverse cultures. Cultural competence improves health care experiences for our patients.

**Disability** – Any physical or mental condition (impairment) that makes it more difficult for someone with a condition to do certain activities.

**Discrimination** – Unjust or prejudiced treatment of a person or group because of race, age, sex, gender, ability, socioeconomic class, immigration status, national origin or religion.

**Diverse** – When a group, organization or community includes people with different social, ethnic, sexual or gender identities or backgrounds.

**Equity** – Refers to fairness and justice and is different from equality. Equality means providing the same tools or resources to all. Equity recognizes people do not start from the same place and require different tools or resources based on their needs.

**Generalization** – A statement about common trends in a small group or a person and applying it to a larger group.

**Health equity** – Ensuring everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.

**Human rights** – Rights everyone deserves that should not be taken away or interfered with by governments, organizations or other people.

**Inclusion** – An environment in which everyone's defining identities are accepted and allows them to feel valued, respected and supported.

**Intersectionality** – The overlap of diversity characteristics including race, gender, ethnicity and ability.

**Microaggressions** – Everyday verbal and nonverbal slights, snubs or insults that communicate hostile or negative messages to people in marginalized groups. Microaggressions can be intentional or unintentional.

**Minority** – An ethnic, racial, social or religious population with less power than those who hold the most power. It is not recommended to define people of color as minorities.

**Neurodiversity** – The inclusion of people with autism spectrum disorder and other neurologically based disabilities in different groups.

**Oppression** – Unjust or cruel exercise of power or authority that causes some groups to suffer.

**Pathway programs** – Programs in high school and college that make professions more accessible to marginalized groups. Pathway programs for health care professions create a more diverse and equitable health care environment. This term is preferable to *pipeline*.

**Population health** – The health outcomes of a group. Population health also includes patterns of health determinants and policies, and care that combines health determinants and policies.

**Prejudice** – A negative attitude toward another person or group without having interacted with that person or group.

**Privilege** – Advantages systematically given to a particular person or group of people.

**Social justice** – Commitment to creating fairness and equity in resources, rights and treatment of marginalized people and groups that do not share equal power in society.

**Stereotype** – Assigning assumed characteristics to members of a group.