



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

2022 Report



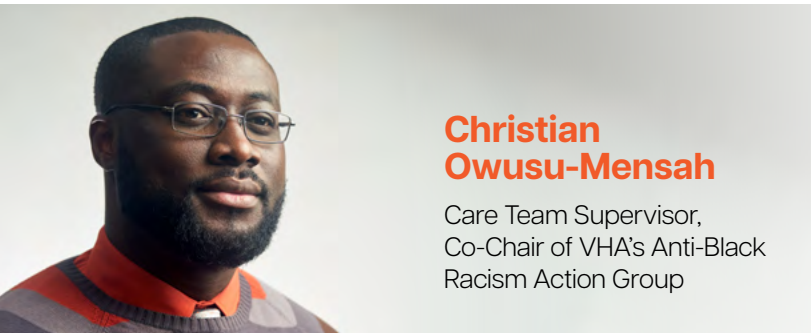
Adam Benn

Director of Diversity,
Equity & Inclusion,
Co-Chair of VHA's Anti-Black
Racism Action Group



Kelley Myers

Vice President,
Human Resources &
Organizational Development



**Christian
Owusu-Mensah**

Care Team Supervisor,
Co-Chair of VHA's Anti-Black
Racism Action Group

The word ‘transformation’ comes to mind when reflecting on VHA Home HealthCare’s diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) journey. 2022 proved to be another significant year of growth as the momentum of our robust program created an even deeper impact throughout our organization and into the communities we serve.

Our staff and service providers continue to be deeply engaged in anti-racism and equity work. We saw a considerable increase in participation in DEI education opportunities and skill-building workshops throughout the year. And more team members than ever are participating in important discussions and DEI-related projects at the team level. This meaningful rise in engagement reflects the central role DEI has in VHA’s organizational culture and the hard work of VHA’s Anti-Black Racism Action Group and team members across the organization.

Their work has persisted amidst the backdrop of continued local and global challenges. COVID-19 continued to shine a light on existing cracks within our society and health system as the most vulnerable in our communities struggle with access to healthcare and other services. Around the world, gaps in equity persist and resistance to solving these key issues has led to conflict and violence. This serves as a solemn reminder that the push for human rights and equity must continue even when it appears that those rights have been won.

Despite these challenges, there have been important changes that demonstrate that both globally and locally we remain committed to advancing human rights and inclusion. Awareness of the impact of systemic racism continues to grow, with many nations taking important steps towards addressing past injustices and creating a more inclusive future for racialized communities and other minority groups. Women’s priorities are moving into the mainstream of national politics. There have also been important policy changes for persons with disabilities, with an increasing number of nations moving towards recognizing the importance, the autonomy and independence of persons with disabilities. These are just a few examples of DEI work happening around the world.

At VHA, our Anti-Black Racism Action Group remains focused on four key areas: data, to gather a better understanding of the diversity at VHA and develop strategies to address gaps and remove barriers; education and training, to enhance our anti-racism and allyship offerings and to create opportunities for open discussion and continuous learning; policy and communication, to critically examine our language and develop guidelines to promote and ensure inclusion; and advocacy, to identify areas where VHA can influence systemic racism in our community.

We are pleased to present the results of our initiatives in our second Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report. This report reflects the accomplishments of the committee and the work happening at VHA more broadly. It also features a year-to-year analysis and we would like to recognize VHA's Research team and their pivotal role in that analysis and the interpretation of the data that will inform our ongoing DEI work at VHA.

Thank you for continuing on this journey with us as we grow, learn and deepen our knowledge and skills in this area, and work towards a more inclusive VHA – and a more inclusive home care sector. So, on behalf of our Anti-Black Racism Action Group, we are pleased to present to you our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report for 2022.

Sincerely,

Adam Benn

Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, Co-Chair of VHA's Anti-Black Racism Action Group

Kelley Myers

Vice President, Human Resources & Organizational Development

Christian Owusu-Mensah

Care Team Supervisor, Co-Chair of VHA's Anti-Black Racism Action Group



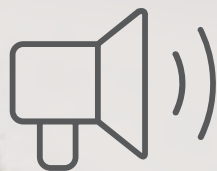
Recognizing and valuing the diversity of our team members, our clients and families and our community members, and ensuring equitable and inclusive practices in all aspects of our work is a core priority at VHA. From the many internationally educated nurses that have long been an important part of our workforce to the numerous languages spoken by our team members, our diversity is certainly something to celebrate. There is much work to be done, but I am inspired by the DEI champions at VHA and all we have accomplished together. I hope reading about our work in this report will be inspiring for you, too.

Dr. Kathryn Nichol

President and CEO



WHAT DID WE DO?



Advocacy

In 2021, the Advocacy subgroup drafted a “Call it Out” statement, which reflects VHA’s commitment to addressing issues of racism and harassment. The subgroup continued working with this statement this year, using it as the foundation for an update of VHA’s Valuing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Provision of Service Policy, and supported a pilot project to help prevent violence, harassment and bullying of healthcare workers as part of VHA’s work as a Best Practice Spotlight Organization (BPSO) as designated by the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario (RNAO).

Preventing Violence, Harassment and Bullying Against Health Workers is a Best Practice Guideline (BPG) developed by the RNAO to help stop these issues in the workplace. VHA’s pilot project was designed to identify, implement and evaluate potential recommendations as part of an overall strategy. Through the pilot, VHA created and tested three tools: a screening form that can help identify risks in the home, a tool for PSWs to use upon completion of a visit to reflect on and share their experience, and an educational workshop that looks at the issue of workplace harassment and violence, shares policies and provides strategies that staff may want to consider.

VHA is also helping to drive equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) work across the sector, playing a lead role in these efforts with the East Toronto Health Partners (ETHP) Ontario Health Team.

The ETHP work will include creating a 3-year Anti-Racism Framework, convening an EDI Community of Practice, building a strategy for training to address anti-Black racism and anti-Indigenous racism, and developing an equity-focused data collection and governance strategy. These initiatives will be developed with meaningful stakeholder engagement through an accessible and collaborative process.



Policy and Communication

In 2021, the Policy and Communication subgroup conducted a policy review and identified gaps and opportunities to strengthen the organization's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism in VHA policies. This year, the subgroup facilitated the consultation process and development of two new policies: VHA's Indigenous Land Acknowledgment Policy and Anti-Oppression/Anti-Discrimination Policy.

The subgroup also led the review and consultation of two existing policies – VHA's Valuing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Provision of Service Policy and the Inclusive Work Environment (Anti-Harassment) Policy. In addition, they worked with consultants from Rainbow Diversity Institute to facilitate a number of review/feedback sessions with staff and service providers.

This broader consultation process ensured that the updated policy was familiar and more user-friendly. In addition, Human Resources processes were reviewed and updated, including the pre-screening process for candidates and an update to the interview process for PSWs.

Working in partnership with VHA's Communications department and senior leaders, the subgroup also helped to recognize and celebrate meaningful events and dates of recognition for our diverse workforce. Each year, our Communications team creates a calendar of important and meaningful dates and develops internal and external communications to commemorate and celebrate the days our diverse communities value. These include organizational emails, stories and articles shared through our newsletters, social media posts, staff engagement contests and more. In this way, diversity is embedded into VHA's organizational communications.



“

Being a member of the Policy & Communication subgroup been incredibly meaningful to me. Reviewing and developing policies to ensure VHA is an inclusive environment has been a key piece in the change required for our staff and service providers to feel safe, supported and understood. The focus on DEI related policies has a tremendous impact on the organization, as they provide consistency, accountability and clarity when faced with difficult situations.

Overall, the impact of policies focusing on diversity, equity and inclusion foster a cohesive environment and positive work culture.”

Punita Laurier

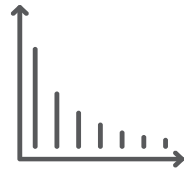
Occupational Therapist and Supervisor,
Rehab Best Practice



As a member of the Data Collection and Reporting workgroup I have the great privilege of thinking about **how to sensitively collect and harness data at VHA that supports the ongoing efforts to ensure our workplace remains equitable and inclusive to all.** Data collection is such an essential tool in the fight against racism as it sheds light on hard truths around how folks experience racism and/or other forms of discrimination in the workplace. Having better data helps us address these concerns with targeted solutions and lets us know if we are making progress on DEI issues that are important to the VHA community.”

Sonia Nizzer

Senior Research Associate



Data Collection and Reporting

The Data Collection and Reporting subgroup was tasked with completing a DEI survey and report for 2022, building on our insights from 2021. This subgroup reviewed survey questions and expanded the survey to include questions to help us better understand the experience and impact of micro-aggressions and to gain insights related to Internationally Educated Healthcare Professionals working to full scope. This group launched VHA's second DEI survey in August 2022 to gather demographic information and feedback on sixteen quantitative metrics from staff and service providers, volunteers and Board members.

The results of the DEI survey have informed the development of VHA's 2023 DEI Action Plan and other organizational initiatives.

Applying the Principles of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to Research at VHA

VHA is committed to investing in research and innovation to help make home care better, both at VHA and across the healthcare sector. This work is driven by the needs of our clinical teams and our clients and caregivers, our goal to help improve workplace health and safety throughout the home care sector, and our commitment to supporting greater connections across the healthcare system.

One of the main tools we use to gather research data is surveys.

“We always include questions about both gender and racial or ethnic identity in our surveys because we know identity can affect one’s experience in a number of ways.”

—Dr. Emily King, VHA’s Manager of Research

All identity-related questions are aligned with best practices from Public Health Ontario and the Canadian Institute for Health Informatics (CIHI).

The analysis of survey results is guided by these principles:

- Preserve the privacy of respondents
- Maximize inclusion
- Give visibility to the identities people share
- Maintain meaning

When presenting and sharing descriptions of our data, we aim to give each identity as much visibility as we can, as long as there are enough respondents to preserve privacy.

This approach with survey results is one of the ways VHA is bringing a DEI-focused approach to guide our research practices.



“ Racism affects us all in one way or the other. I joined the VHA Anti-Black Racism Action Group to contribute my voice to help raise awareness about anti-Black racism and its devastating impacts. The group takes actions within the organization to prioritize creating a work environment that is equitable and inclusive for everyone. I am proud to be a member of this incredible team.”

Deborah Osom Baah
Registered Practical Nurse and
Care Team Supervisor



Education and Training



Last year, the Education and Training subgroup launched anti-racism and equity training for leaders at VHA. In 2022, in addition to training for leaders, the subgroup had the goal of delivering comprehensive DEI training more broadly to the workforce. 2022 saw a number of DEI trainings and workshops offered to VHA staff, including twelve VHA Inclusion Dialogues which we have coined as VIDs, six DEI training sessions for staff and service providers and five 2SLGBTQIA+ Inclusion Trainings from our training partners at **The 519**. Altogether, 1,362 team members from across the organization engaged in DEI training.

The Education and Training subgroup also continued to support VHA leaders specifically, coordinating a 2SLGBTQIA+ 201 Inclusion Training session for leaders in June, and supported the enrollment of 40 VHA leaders in the San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training, which will continue through 2023.

VHA's 2022 Inclusion Dialogues

Seeing is Believing: Dismantling Racial Bias in the Workplace presented by Ontario Black History Society and hosted by Sean Mauricette	Building on our understanding of Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation
Understanding Anti-Black Racism in Healthcare Part I	Understanding Microaggressions in Healthcare
Understanding Anti-Black Racism in Healthcare Part II: Anti-Black Implicit Bias	Disability Employment Awareness Month - Understanding Ableism
Interrupting and Shifting Implicit Bias as Part of Interculturally Skillful Practice presented by Ilanet Goren	Sustaining ourselves for the work of Equity, Inclusion and Belonging presented by Leena Sharma – Mending the Chasm
Celebrating Asian and South Asian Heritage Month Panel	Understanding Antisemitism in Healthcare presented by Dr. Ariel Lefkowitz and Dr. Joanna Krongold

“ I am immensely proud to be a part of the Anti-Black Racism Action Group at VHA. I am fortunate enough to collaborate with remarkable and insightful leaders in this committee to spearhead meaningful BIPOC and DEI initiatives, such as creating learning opportunities for VHA staff. I was able to gain valuable feedback from racialized frontline providers, that these education opportunities allow them to feel heard and valued, which makes this experience even more meaningful for me. These educational initiatives have helped to amplify the voices of ethnic minorities at VHA, ultimately contributing to the organization becoming more open, adaptive and culturally inclusive.”

Banu Sundaralingam

Occupational Therapist and Professional Practice Specialist and Educator – Rehab

DEI In Action Spotlight: Tackling Implicit Bias in Recruitment

As part of VHA's commitment to a diverse and inclusive workplace, VHA's Human Resources Recruitment team strives to provide equal opportunities for all candidates. This year, in keeping with VHA's dedication to continuous improvement, the group focused on addressing implicit bias in recruitment practices and procedures.

The team engaged in comprehensive training to better understand unconscious bias and how it can affect everyone, even those who are committed to impartiality. Following this training, VHA's recruiters implemented a number of actions to address implicit bias:

- Language in prescreening guides has been adjusted to ensure all terms are easy-to-understand.
- Hiring panels must include a diverse group to incorporate different perspectives.
- A scoring system has been implemented in job interview guides to remove the possibility of scores being based on preconceived notions or unconscious bias.

In addition, VHA continues to offer accommodation to all candidates throughout the prescreening and interview process.

These efforts are ongoing as VHA's recruitment team continues to fine-tune our recruitment and selection processes and policies to support a diverse and inclusive workforce.



WHAT DID WE LEARN?



In 2021, VHA completed its first Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Report. Many of our findings in 2022 mirror what we learned in our first report. This report includes a year-over-year comparison of key data points related to inclusion and an analysis of that data that looks at key intersections between race and gender identity/ expression, as well as 2SLGBTQIA+ identities.

The 2022 DEI survey was administered to VHA's entire workforce and we received 1,491 responses. This represents a response rate of 53%. Participants were asked to self-identify in a number of key areas, including language, immigration status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation and gender identity, among others.

Demographics: Key Findings

In our 2022 DEI Survey, we found that:

VHA continues to be home to a unique and diverse workforce. This diversity includes Women, Black and Racialized communities and individuals born outside Canada.

This survey continues to highlight how diverse our workforce truly is. We found that:

- 78% of staff and service providers identify as Racialized.
- There are more than 85 languages other than English spoken by VHA staff and service providers. Top languages include Tagalog, Hindi and French.
- 2% of respondents identified as Indigenous.
- 5% of respondents identified as a person with a disability, and
- 1% of respondents identified as being trans, gender variant or intersex

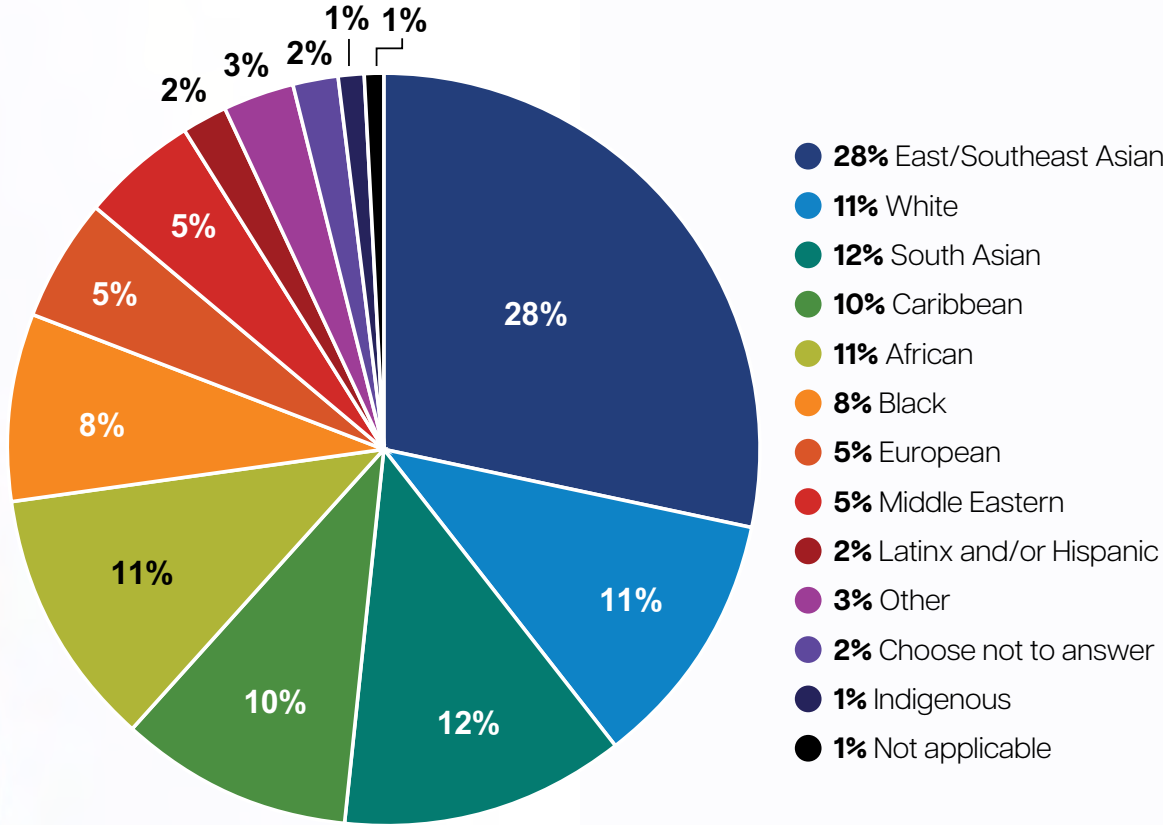
Survey Item	2021	2022	Difference (N or %)
Number of distinct languages	105	87	-18
Proportion of women (%)	82%	86%	+4%
Proportion identified as Racialized (%)	73%	78%	+5%
Proportion identified as 2SLGBTQIA+ (%)	8%	9%	+1%
Proportion identified as a person with a disability (%)	4%	5%	+1%
Proportion identified as being trans, gender variant or intersex (%)	3%	1%	-2%
Proportion identified as Indigenous (%)	<1%	2%	+1%





Ethnic/Cultural Identity

Our survey results indicate that the diversity across our team continues to position us well to serve diverse clients and families in Ontario.



VHA continues to see representation from across the 2SLGBTQIA+ Spectrum

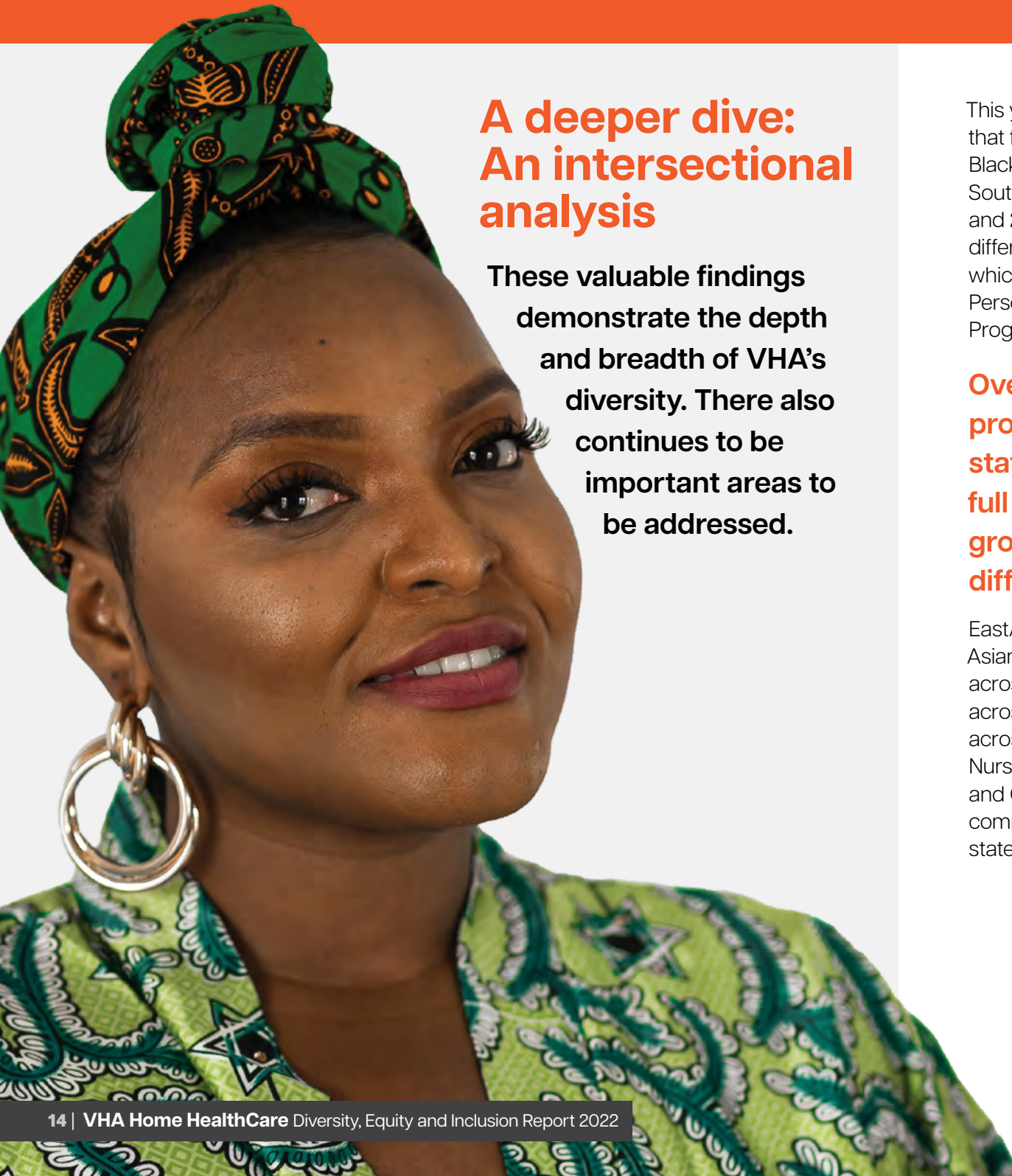
VHA continues to see employee representation from across the 2SLGBTQIA+ Spectrum. About 9% of respondents identified as 2SLGBTQIA+ in our 2022 survey. This reflects an increase of 1% from our 2022 survey. 0.4% of the total sample identified as two-spirit. 3% of survey respondents identified as Asexual in this latest survey, which was introduced as an identity option for the first time this year.

VHA is home to many internationally educated healthcare professionals

Our 2022 survey gathered data on our workforce's international education healthcare credentials for the first time. 33% of survey respondents expressed that they are internationally educated healthcare professionals – as Registered Nurses (12%), Personal Support Workers (11%) and Care Aides (8%).

When looking at the demographics of the nursing workforce, the College of Nurses of Ontario found that Internationally Educated Nurses (IEN) made up 13% of the total nurse workforce in Ontario.





A deeper dive: An intersectional analysis

These valuable findings demonstrate the depth and breadth of VHA's diversity. There also continues to be important areas to be addressed.

This year we completed an intersectional analysis that focused more specifically on the experience of Black women, Black African or Caribbean men, East/Southeast Asian Women, East/Southeast Asian Men and 2SLGBTIA+ individuals. We also took a look at the different responses based on employee class groups, which included Management, Supervisors, Office Staff, Personal Support, Rehab, Nursing and Community Programs.

Overall, Black women had lower proportions agreeing with the statements compared to the full sample and other selected groups, with statistically significant differences across many statements.

East/Southeast Asian women and East/Southeast Asian men had statistically significant differences across several statements, with higher proportions across the majority. We saw lower participation levels across some job classes (Community Support and Nursing) and some groups (Nursing, Personal Support, and Office groups) with lower proportions agreeing compared to the remaining sample for various statements.

1. Black women, Black, African or Caribbean men and 2SLGBTQIA+ respondents were less likely to report feelings of inclusion compared to the full sample.

When looking at the experience of inclusion in the workplace, overall, fewer Black women agreed/strongly agreed with statements regarding feeling included compared to the full sample and other selected groups. Black, African or Caribbean men and 2SLGBTQIA+ respondents also had lower agreement with those statements compared to the full sample and other selected groups. The most noticeable difference was found in questions that explored whether employees/service providers of diverse backgrounds are treated fairly in the internal promotion process, the inclusion of all employees/ service providers as part of VHA's culture and VHA as a place that fosters a workplace that allows employees/service providers to be themselves at work without fear.

	Full sample	Black women	Black African, or Caribbean men	East/ Southeast Asian women	East/ Southeast Asian men	2SLGBTQIA+
I feel that I am an integral part of my team at VHA.	83%	78% (-5)	84% (+1)	88%* (+5)	95%* (+12)	83% -
The inclusion of all employees/service providers is very much a part of VHA's culture.	82%	73%* (-9)	68% (-14)	85%* (+3)	91% (+9)	81% (-1)
VHA fosters a workplace that allows employees/service providers to be themselves at work without fear.	81%	72%* (-9)	74% (-7)	84%* (+3)	98%* (+17)	82% (+1)
At VHA, the different opinions, ideas, and perspectives brought by employees/service providers are valued by other workers	76%	62%* (-7)	84% (+8)	81%* (+5)	88% (+12)	80% (+4)
I believe employees/service providers of diverse backgrounds are treated fairly in the internal promotion process.	67%	52%* (-15)	53% (-14)	75%* (+8)	81%* (+14)	68% (+1)

Key	90% - 100%	80% - 90%	70% - 80%	60% - 70%	50% - 60%
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*significant

VHA data mirrors findings from Boston Consulting Group and CivicAction, which found that “Black workers are twice as likely as Asian workers and four times as likely as White workers to report experiencing racial discrimination in major decisions at workplaces in Canada”¹. Their report also found that in addition to facing microaggressions, Black employees have low rates of sponsorship and find hidden biases in promotion processes.

¹ BGC and CivicAction. (2020). The Pervasive Reality of Anti-Black Racism in Canada The current state, and what to do about it. Accessed at <https://www.bcg.com/en-ca/publications/2020/reality-of-anti-black-racism-in-canada>

2. Participation in VHA's DEI survey was not uniform across the organization.

The employee class groups that had the highest participation rates were Management, Supervisors, Office and Personal Support. Nurses, which make up the second largest employee group, had significantly less engagement than Personal Support and Rehab. Engagement was also low across the Community Support Programs.

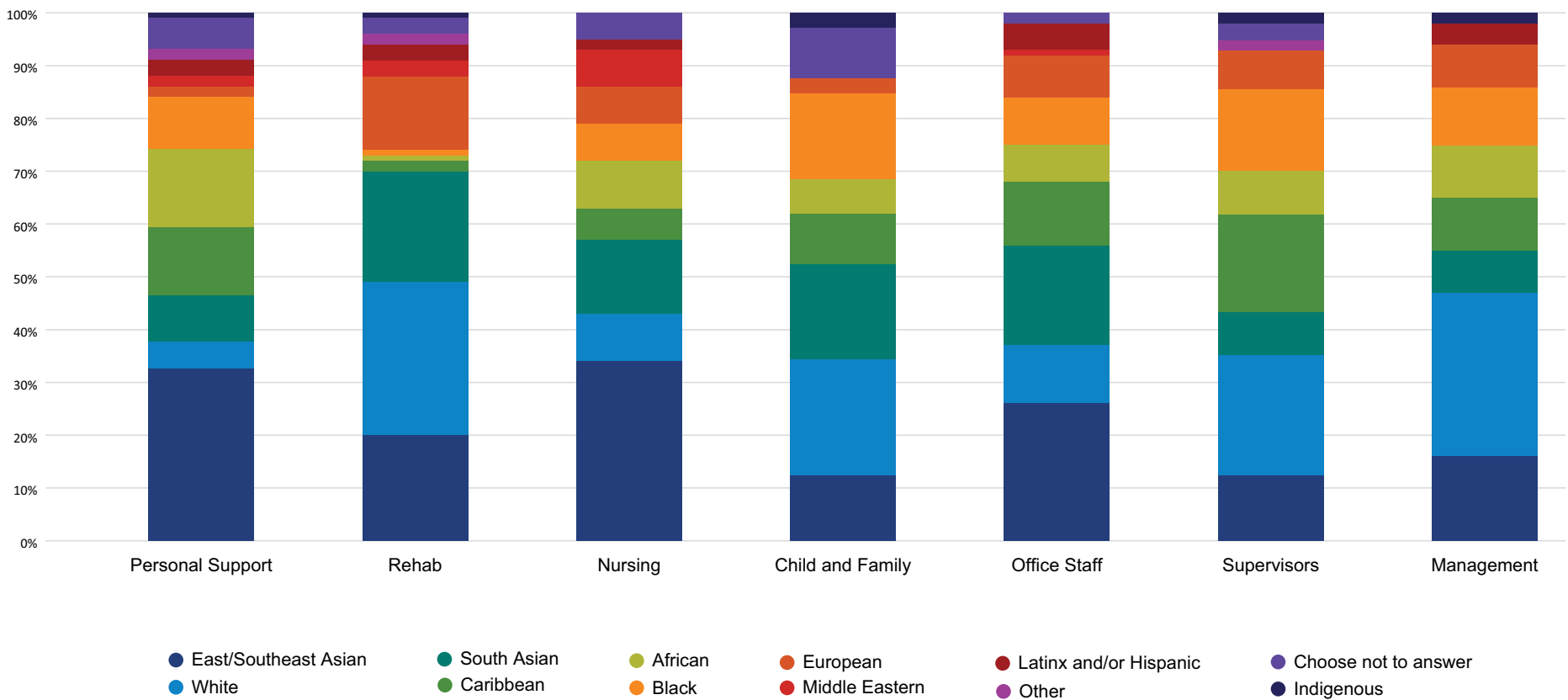
Job Group	Participation Rate
Management	95%
Supervisor	73%
Office	56%
Personal Support	55%
Rehab	54%
Nursing	44%
Community Support Programs	29%
Overall Group	53%

These varying participation rates impact our ability to make inferences from the results, as some areas may not be proportionally represented. This demonstrates a need for dedicated outreach to specific job classes, such as Nursing and Community Support Programs, in future.

3. VHA is a diverse organization, but some jobs are more diverse than others.

While VHA is home to a unique and diverse workforce, certain job groups, including Personal Support and Office, have ethnocultural diversity that mirrors the representation of the full sample, and greater overall diversity. While other job groups, such as Management and Rehab, see variation from the overall sample, with greater numbers of participants identifying as White/European and lower numbers of individuals identifying as East/Southeast Asian – although greater proportions identify as South Asian in the Rehab category compared to the full sample.

This chart reflects the breakdown by percentage of the ethnocultural response of the full sample, as well as the breakdown of that percentage by job group. Based on the number of respondents, a large percentage of the respondents from a variety of ethnocultural groups come from the Personal Support and Rehab groups. Groups like Supervisors and Management also see representation from most of the ethnocultural groups across the board, albeit at lower proportions to VHA’s full sample.



4. Experiences of Diversity and Inclusion differ across the organization.

In addition to our intersectional analysis, this year we also completed an analysis of the data that compared the experience of inclusion across job classes. Similar to our findings in our intersectional analysis, levels of participant agreement (responded agree/strongly agree) to the presented statement differed based on job class.

Management and Rehab had multiple instances with higher proportions and statistically significance differences as compared to the remaining sample. Conversely, Nursing, Personal Support, and Office groups often had lower proportions and statistically significant differences as compared to the remaining sample for various statements.

	VHA Full Sample	Personal Support (n=804)	Rehab (n = 224)	Nursing (n = 186)	Office Staff (n = 170)	Supervisors (n = 44)	Management (n =38)	Community Support Programs (n = 25)
VHA provides an environment for the free and open expression of ideas, opinions, and beliefs.	82%	81%	88%*	83%	76%*	81%	90%	88%
The inclusion of all employees/ service providers is very much a part of VHA's culture.	82%	80%*	88%*	83%	80%	79%	97%*	79%
I believe that VHA will take appropriate action in response to incidents of discrimination and bias.	81%	82%	87%*	76%	74%*	81%	92%	87%
VHA fosters a workplace that allows employees/service providers to be themselves at work without fear.	81%	79%	86%	84%	76%	77%	87%	88%
At VHA, the different opinions, ideas, and perspectives brought by employees/service providers are valued by other workers.	76%	74%	84%*	75%	75%	77%	84%	71%
I can voice a different opinion without fear of negative consequences	73%	72%	75%	74%	68%	65%	90%*	71%
I believe employees/service providers of diverse backgrounds are treated fairly in the internal promotion process.	67%	70%*	62%	65%	63%	63%	76%	65%

Key	90% - 100%	80% - 90%	70% - 80%	60% - 70%
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*significant

5. We continue to see lower representation of some equity-seeking groups, including persons with disabilities and trans and gender variant identities.

Our previous DEI survey results indicated the proportion of VHA workers who identified as having a disability was 4%. In 2022, this increased by 1%. Statistics have shown one in five (22%) of the Canadian population aged 15 years and over – or about 6.2 million individuals – has one or more disabilities.⁸ In Ontario, approximately 2.6 million people have a disability. This means roughly one in four Ontarians live with a disability and face various types of accessibility challenges in their everyday life.²

Our results indicate that our workforce does not reflect the proportion of individuals living with disabilities in our communities as described in the literature. The proportion of VHA workers with disabilities was highest in the Personal Support and Office categories, and lowest in Management and Supervisor.

Year over year at VHA, there was a lower representation in trans and gender variant identities. In our 2021 survey, 3% of respondents identified as transgender, gender variant, non-binary, intersex, or another gender identity or gender expression. In our 2022 survey, 1% of respondents identified as transgender, gender variant, non-binary, intersex, or another gender identity or gender expression, a reduction of 2%. This is notable considering the 1% increase in overall 2SLGBTQIA+ representation in our 2022 survey. The 2021 Census of Population marked the first time that data on gender were collected, allowing for cisgender and transgender men, cisgender and transgender women, and non-binary people to be captured. In 2021, cisgender people accounted for 99.66% of the population—the remaining 0.33% were transgender and non-binary people.³

Although our results indicate that our workforce reflects larger proportion of individuals who identify as transgender, gender variant, non-binary, intersex, or another gender identity or gender expression compared to the data gathered in the census data, the decrease of 2% is noteworthy, as it is the only group that saw a decrease compared to data presented in our 2021 report. The proportion of VHA workers who identified as trans and gender variant was highest in the Personal Support category.

² Government of Ontario. (2019). An Open and Accessible Ontario Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act Annual Report 2019. Accessed at: <https://files.ontario.ca/msaa-aoda-annual-report-2019-en-2021-05-18.pdf>

³ Stats Canada (2022). Understanding sex at birth and gender of people in Canada. Accessed at: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/220914/dq220914c-eng.htm>



Qualitative Insights

VHA employees were asked to provide open-ended feedback on four questions.

The following section summarizes top responses to each question. Where applicable, additional insights are included.

In what ways has VHA demonstrated to you its commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)?

1. Learning Opportunities

Respondents commented on the many opportunities for learning available to all VHA staff and service providers as a key indicator of the organization's commitment to DEI. These learning opportunities included VHA's Inclusion Discussions (VIDs), workshops and e-modules that helped improve their knowledge and understanding around the impact of discrimination and how best to address it. Some respondents referenced topics that were discussed including 'internal biases', 'micro-aggressions', and workplace violence as examples of key learnings.

“Much of the work related to DEI involves becoming aware of our internal biases. VHA does a great job in facilitating this process for us through DEI workshops, trainings, etc.”

“Virtual Courses provide a better understanding of diversity and equity and inclusion in the workplace and discussions deepen the understanding of other cultures and their experiences.”

2. Workplace Culture

- Respectful treatment of employees
- Feeling a sense of belonging
- Feeling heard
- Inclusivity

Respondents commented on VHA's workplace culture as a key area that demonstrates the organization's commitment to DEI. Specific elements noted were respectful and fair treatment, feeling accepted and heard and feeling that they belong. Respondents also shared examples of inclusion efforts by colleagues and leaders that emphasized a colleague's value at VHA.

“The staff is diverse with people of all backgrounds and religions working together. Despite our differences in culture, background or religion, I believe people get treated fairly and honestly.”

“I feel accepted as a person, for who I am.”

3. Keeping us informed

Respondents recognized the consistent communication shared with all VHA staff and service providers. These communication practices, described as 'emails, newsletters, and articles on the Loop', are frequent reminders that DEI is a priority at the organization. The acknowledgement of recognition days and cultural and religious celebrations have also been greatly impactful. Overall, these communication practices make VHA staff feel informed.

“I'm also reminded of VHA's commitment to DEI when we receive monthly emails celebrating many cultural backgrounds.”

“Sending out regular information to keep staff informed about how to educate ourselves to be non-biased and aware of diversity and inclusion in our workplace.”

How do you feel VHA should respond to world events that relate to DEI?

483 (75%) responses were in favour of VHA responding to global and national incidents/events and many praised the organization's efforts to date. Over half of this sample shared specific ways they would like to see the organization respond, outlined below:

Best Ways to Respond & Show Support ·

- Acknowledge the event/incident and VHA's position statement
- Ensure messaging and communication around event is appropriate and measured
- Create space for dialogue and learning
- Provide staff with supportive resources to support wellness

“It is important to be mindful of changing events in the world related to DEI and show VHA's commitment by acknowledging and supporting positive movements and events, or by challenging and refuting acts of discrimination and violence.”

“Yes - In general they [world events] do affect our clients and service providers and responses like this would a) help to inform others of an event or situation that they might not otherwise be aware of, b) could improve sensitivity during a visit if there is a time when client/provider is/has experienced negative effects of the event/news and c) would help to connect the VHA community as a whole.”

“By having open discussions with employees to see how they are impacted by these events and provide them with support that may be needed.”

What improvements, if any, can be made to improve DEI efforts at VHA?



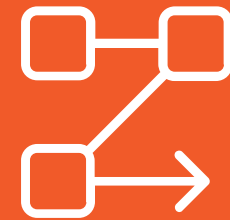
Enhancing current DEI Strategies

- Communication
- Training, education, and guided discussions
- Provider and staff engagement
- Evaluation



Safe and Inclusive Work Environment

- Enforcing DEI procedures and policies
- Better support when facing discrimination
- DEI in hiring procedures



Continuing DEI Momentum

- VHA is moving in the right direction, continue with the same established momentum

Experiences of ‘Inclusion’

We asked staff to respond to statements related to:

- A ‘Culture of Inclusion’
- Hiring and Career Development
- Policies and procedures
- Personal Experiences

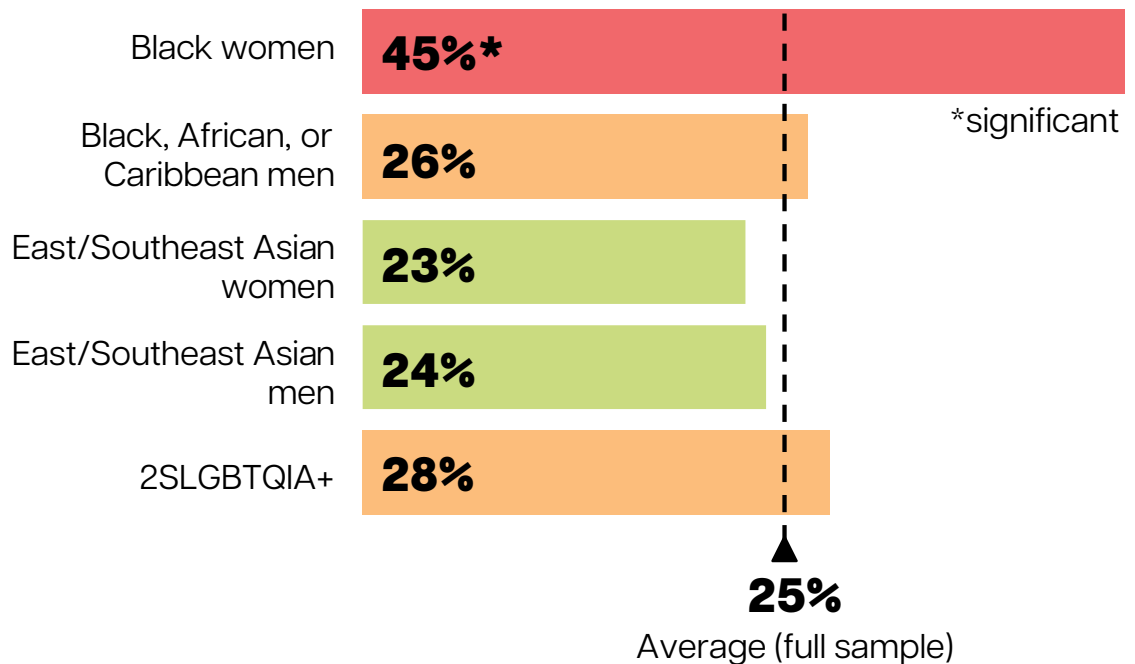
Staff were asked to identify whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement, and were given six options, including neutral and don’t know. Year over year, VHA demonstrated improvement in a number of key metrics. There were also a few areas where results declined compared to our 2021 survey. The chart below reflects a summary of key results compared from 2021 to 2022.

Survey Item	2021	2022	Difference (%)
“The leadership at VHA is committed to treating people respectfully.”	83%	84%	+1%
VHA provides an environment for the free and open expression of ideas, opinions, and beliefs.	80%	82%	+2%
“I feel that I am an integral part of my team at VHA.”	79%	83%	+4%
“Inclusion is very much a part of VHA’s culture.”	79%	82%	+3%
VHA fosters a workplace that allows employees/service providers to be themselves at work without fear.	78%	81%	+3%
“The different opinions, ideas and perspectives brought by employees/service providers are valued by other workers.”	75%	76%	+1%
“Staff could voice a different opinion without fear of negative consequences.”	70%	73%	+3%

% of Respondents Agreeing/Strongly Agreeing

Our 2022 Survey was the first time that we specifically asked about staff about their experience of microaggressions, specifically “Have you ever experienced microaggressions at work”. Overall, 25% of all respondents expressed that they had experienced microaggressions at work, however, this number differed based on identity, with significantly higher numbers of Black women reporting yes.

Have you ever experienced microaggressions at work?



What we learned is that while VHA is creating a culture of inclusion and developing processes that support a more equitable workplace, this experience is not uniform across the organization. Further, that based on one’s intersectional identity or job class, there may be additional barriers or challenges that are faced that affect one’s feeling of inclusion. This suggests that VHA must focus its attention on these groups and in these areas to address these concerns.

WHAT WILL WE DO?






As we look towards ongoing development of our diversity, equity and inclusion program at VHA, we will use this data to inform and drive our initiatives. Specifically, the deeper insights gleaned through our intersectional analysis and aggregation of data through job class and job level is key to tailoring our DEI plan to meet the unique needs of VHA's team.

In our 2023 DEI Action Plan, our goal is to increase engagement and improve outcomes in key areas with groups that reported lower engagement and lower levels of inclusion.



Specifically, we will explore initiatives that:

- Focus on engagement with Black Women, African/Black/Caribbean men and 2LGBTQIA+ people in the workplace
- Retain, develop and promote Black employees into leadership positions
- Improve engagement levels with nurses across the organization
- Improve two key areas where participants expressed lower levels of agreement, specifically fairness in the internal promotion process and the ability to voice a different opinion without fear of negative consequences.

2023 DEI Action Plan

Advocacy 	Policy and Communications 	Data Collection and Reporting 
<p>GOAL</p> <p>In partnership with the East Toronto Health Partners (ETHP), develop a framework for collecting identity-based data</p>	<p>GOAL</p> <p>We will update VHA’s Client Services Policies with a diversity, equity and inclusion lens</p>	<p>GOAL</p> <p>We will perform a year-over-year analysis looking specifically at the experience of Black and 2SLGBTQIA+ VHA staff and service providers</p>
<p>ACTIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lead ETHP Anti-Racism Framework Project 	<p>ACTIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review and update “Client Request Related to Services” Policy 2. Develop three-point strategy for training and communication related to policy updates 	<p>ACTIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine what additional data points are needed to deliver meaningful insights 2. Determine strategies to increase survey participation 3. Complete 2023 DEI survey
<p>TARGETS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Toronto Health Partners 3 Year Anti-Racism/DEI Framework created • Key health equity data element(s) identified in collaboration with VHA clients and health system partners 	<p>TARGETS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • +3% strongly agree/agree response improvement achieved across key metrics for 2SLGBTQIA+, Black Women and African/Caribbean/Black Men 	<p>TARGETS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • +3% improvement achieved across key metrics for 2SLGBTQIA+, Black Women and African/Caribbean/Black Men • 80% staff/service provider agreement on key inclusion metrics

2023 DEI Action Plan

Education and Training 	Organizational Culture 
<p>GOAL</p> <p>We will deliver ongoing inclusion training targeting VHA's leaders and teams who have been underrepresented in training events</p>	<p>GOAL</p> <p>Retain, develop and promote Black employees into leadership positions</p> <p>Ensure sustainability of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee</p>
<p>ACTIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inclusion training for VHA leaders with an emphasis on inclusive recruitment and promotion practices 2. Examine barriers to training participation and create targeted learning opportunities to address these issues 	<p>ACTIONS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creation of Black Leaders forum 2. Sunset VHA's Anti-Black Racism Action Group and transition to a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee and broadly consult to determine Employee Resource Group strategy
<p>TARGETS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four (4) inclusion training sessions for VHA leaders held • Two (2) VIDs with a specific focus on VHA leaders and designated teams held 	<p>TARGETS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self reported demographic information embedded into onboarding and exit surveys • Pulse check survey developed targeted to Black leaders (managers, supervisors) • Strategies identified to support retention of Black leaders



VHA Home HealthCare Diversity Statement

VHA is committed to ensuring that:

- We foster a culture where diversity is respected and valued while maintaining confidentiality and privacy
- Staff/service providers, volunteers and Board members reflect the diverse communities we serve
- Our services are accessible and sensitive to the needs of diverse groups
- VHA is an equal opportunity employer
- VHA is an 2SLGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer & questioning, two spirit) inclusive environment
- Individuals at all levels of the organization are trained in managing and understanding diversity through orientation and continuing education opportunities
- There is zero tolerance for racism and discriminatory behaviour at all levels of the organization
- All VHA communications present a positive and balanced portrayal of diverse groups





VHA Home HealthCare
30 Soudan Avenue, Suite 600
Toronto, ON M4S 1V6
www.vha.ca

VHA Home HealthCare would like to acknowledge that we are living and working on Indigenous land. This includes the territories of the Un-ceded Algonquin Anishinabe, the Attawandaron, the Anishinaabeg, the Haudenosaunee, the Lunaapeewak, the Mississaugas of the Credit and the Wendat peoples.