

planned parenthood toronto

equity statement

definition of equity

Equity is an approach whereby all people - especially those with lived experience of intergenerational, historic and contemporary forms of marginalization, whether intentional or unintentional - have equal access to opportunities to define and achieve goals. Equity acknowledges unequal starting places and addresses unequal needs, conditions, and positions of people and communities that are created by institutional and structural barriers. Equity is different from diversity and inclusion. Diversity is the presence of difference within a certain context. Inclusion is about valuing and welcoming a diversity of identities and experiences.

Achieving institutional equity relies on a willingness to see each community member's strengths and needs; and offering diverse options so that every person has access. Equity is more than an outcome; it is an ongoing process that seeks to correct systemic barriers and create justice and liberation for all.

definition of marginalized communities and individuals

The term “marginalized communities and individuals” is contested and like other language that may be used to describe oppressed groups there are disagreements and contention associated with the use of the term. There is no single widely accepted term. For the purposes of this document, we use the term “marginalized communities and individuals” to include groups that seek equity and are oppressed by societal structures. Marginalized communities and individuals are disproportionately impacted by discrimination due to systems of oppression. Oppression takes many forms including but not limited to anti-Black racism, classism, sexism, and ableism. Communities that experience marginalization include: Indigenous, Metis and Inuit people, Black people, Asian and Pacific Islander people, diverse ethnic, linguistic, or cultural communities, 2SLGBTQIA people, women, non-binary people and those of other marginalized genders, people who are homeless, people impacted by poverty, people with support and access needs due to their lived experiences with mental health and/or disability.

This not a complete list and it is always evolving. It is also important to note the impact of Intersectionality. Intersectionality is when people who belong to multiple marginalized communities experience interlocking and interdependent systems of discrimination and oppression. An individuals' experiences of oppression are shaped by the intersection of various aspects of their identity.

why is an equity statement important?

Toronto is a city with tremendous opportunities, however due to discrimination and inequity many of these opportunities are inaccessible and do not benefit everyone. Identifying and shifting the status quo is integral in solving these problems and creating a truly inclusive community for all.

As a pro-choice community health centre that advances and advocates for the sexual health, health and well-being of youth, we strive to be strategic and responsive to the changing needs of the community. We believe that everyone should have the right to control their lives and make informed decisions about their health and sexuality. We deeply recognize our ongoing responsibilities connected to having access to power, such as capital, networks, and influence. As such, it is important for us to be explicit in our commitment to equity. We hope this statement will:

- Instigate conversations about equity;
- Be a tool for change;
- Keep our organization accountable; and
- Invite others to consider their own equity processes

Planned Parenthood Toronto (PPT) is proud of changes we have already made to advocate for and address inequality at our organization and in the community. We also recognize there is more to do both within our organization and in the community. This document will change and evolve as we continue our journey and will align with organizational commitments to ongoing learning. We invite you to share your questions, feedback, thoughts, and concerns, about our equity and inclusion journey and your own. Please send any comments to equity@ppt.org.

statement:

PPT will be responsive to the changing needs of youth in Toronto and the many people and communities that create the vitality and resiliency of our city. We acknowledge that systemic barriers to equity exist and that PPT can also perpetuate systemic barriers within our organization. [See Action 1]

Equity can only be achieved by actively pursuing it as a goal and understanding that it is an ongoing process with no completion date. We strive to ensure we are supporting and creating inclusive and equitable environments. We value diversity and inclusion and are committed to working towards equity. We recognize that treating all groups equally will not result in equity. Doing equity work must include a willingness to embrace discomfort, we commit to engaging with discomfort and see it as a good guide that we are on the right track in achieving justice and liberation for all. [See Action 2]

We will continue and increase our work to make meaningful, respectful and equitable connections with marginalized communities and individuals, through sharing resources, creating more opportunities to collaborate, making authentic connections, co-designing goals, and engaging leaders with lived experience to ensure all communities in Toronto see themselves reflected at Planned Parenthood Toronto. [See Action 3]

One important way to help achieve equity is to amplify the voice and power of marginalized communities. We want to ensure that people can thrive and reach their full potential by amplifying the voices and power of the community. [See Action 4]

We commit to reporting back and communicating about our successes and challenges in our equity and inclusion journey. [See Action 5]

actions

Action 1: PPT will offer a wide range of sexual health, health and wellbeing services that are anti-oppressive and culturally responsive to the community. To our best ability possible, we will identify, acknowledge, and dismantle to systemic barriers.

Action 2: PPT will provide anti-oppressive and culturally responsive training opportunities for staff, volunteers, and Board members and will seek where possible to make similar opportunities available to equity-seeking communities and partners. We will commit resources to supporting the process of ensuring equity at PPT. We will continue to review policies and processes (formal and informal) through an equity lens and will review processes to identify and address unconscious bias.

Action 3: PPT will track service use and satisfaction from marginalized communities and will determine how to take additional action to reach these communities, hire additional staff, or prioritize these requests. We will encourage people from equity seeking groups to apply for employment and other opportunities and will engage diverse people in our work at all levels. We will review and address any systemic barriers related to volunteering at PPT.

Action 4: PPT will actively recruit, retain and support so that our board, staff, and volunteers are directly reflective of the communities in Toronto, while ensuring a high number of employees from equity seeking groups. Working with marginalized communities, we will together consider how best to establish new programs that situate the decision-making power within those communities.

Action 5: We will seek community feedback on the equity statement. PPT will set yearly goals and measures and report on our progress annually. PPT will review this statement and the language used within it annually as we recognize that language changes and evolves over time. PPT will release a yearly report on our progress towards equity.