

# ABR Listening Sessions: Frequently Asked Questions

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## What are the Humber River Health Listening Sessions: Towards Addressing Anti-Black Racism initiative about?

As part of our strategic plan in 2023, we committed to embrace equity, diversity and inclusion at Humber River Health. Our focus at this time is a deep commitment to understanding and addressing Anti-Black Racism across our workplace for staff, physicians and volunteers.

As a significant step toward meaningful solutions, we are holding a series of listening sessions to hear the stories and experiences of people who self-identify as Black, Caribbean and African.

This is a first step in a long-term initiative. At this time, we will focus on listening and understanding with the goal of using the information shared to inform subsequent action plans.

The first series of groups will be for staff, physicians and volunteers, beginning on February 10, followed by five in-person sessions across our three sites, and two virtual sessions.

The second series of groups will be with patients, visitors and caregivers. Those groups will be offered in collaboration with our community partners, and will be located within community settings. Dates for these sessions will be announced soon.

## What will happen in these sessions?

Each session will be co-facilitated by two members of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion leadership team, including: Dr. Zaki Ahmed, Chief of Staff, Faith Forbes, Chief Financial Officer, Jessica Allison, Director of Strategy and Organizational Development, and Shaianna Coleman, Manager of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. There will also be a note-taker to make sure we capture your experience in detail. Each group will take an hour.

The facilitator will ask participants to share their experiences with Anti-Black Racism at Humber River Health. Each participant will have an opportunity to speak (and to pass if you just want to listen). The focus for these groups is for us to listen deeply – we will not be offering solutions within these groups, but listening deeply to what is needed for long-term, systemic change.

We will ask everyone in the group to listen to each other's experience respectfully and to keep what they hear confidential.

## Who should participate?

These sessions are focused on hearing the stories and experiences of people who self-identify as Black, Caribbean and African.

## Should I come if I have experiences to share but I'm not from the Black community?

Our first groups, beginning February 10, will be with people who work, practice medicine and volunteer at Humber River Health. These groups will focus solely on the experiences of SPVs who self-identify as being of Black, Caribbean and African ancestry.

We welcome the experiences and thoughts of those who are closely connected with people from those communities (e.g. caregivers, spouses). This opportunity will be provided when we begin our community based listening groups.

## Is this mandatory?

Participation is voluntary, though we really hope that everyone connected to Humber River Health who self-identifies as being of Black, Caribbean and African shares their experiences either through the listening sessions or through our anonymous [feedback form](#).

## When are the sessions?

We have tried to schedule sessions at times and locations that allow for as much flexibility as possible. If you need coverage for the time you would like to attend, your leaders will support you to participate. Please see full schedule below:

## Community Listening Session Schedule

Date	Time	Location	Facilitators
February 10	12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Wilson - Meeting Room #3	Faith Forbes & Shaianna Coleman
February 12	11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Wilson - Meeting Room #2	Dr. Zaki Ahmed & Jessica Allison
February 15	7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	Wilson - Meeting Room #3	Dr. Zaki Ahmed & Jessica Allison
February 20	2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Finch Campus - Boardroom	Faith Forbes & Shaianna Coleman
February 21	6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.	Virtual	Faith Forbes
February 23	2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Church Campus - Boardroom	Dr. Zaki Ahmed & Jessica Allison
February 29	12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	Virtual	Faith Forbes & Shaianna Coleman

For those that plan to participate, please choose the session that best aligns with your availability.

## How do I sign up for these sessions?

Wilson Hospital (In-person) - <https://hrhwilson.eventbrite.ca>

Finch Campus (In-person) - <https://hrhfinch.eventbrite.ca>

Church Campus (In-person)- <https://HRHchurch.eventbrite.ca>

Virtual Sessions - <https://hrhvirtual.eventbrite.ca>

## What if I want to share my experiences but can't come to a listening session?

There is an online option using our anonymous feedback form. The questions in this form are very similar to what we will explore in the listening session. Please feel free to [use this link](#) whether or not you are coming to the groups.

## Why Anti-Black Racism instead of focusing on other forms of discrimination that are just as prevalent?

Humber River Health has a broad commitment to embed equity, diversity and inclusion in everything we do – which includes eliminating all forms of discrimination and making long-term systemic change.

Anti-Black Racism is one of the most deeply embedded forms of system inequity in our culture, especially demonstrated through poor health outcomes. By directly facing the deep structural issue of Anti-Black Racism, we will be able to make changes that create equity and inclusion for everyone.

In Canada, evidence has shown that Black and Indigenous populations experience the greatest health inequities and disproportionate health outcomes and that targeted interventions that address these inequities, ultimately create the foundation for improving conditions for all groups that are structurally excluded or marginalized.

In June 2020, The City of Toronto's Board of Health voted unanimously to recognize Anti-Black Racism as a public health crisis, citing that 40 per cent of Black children live in poverty compared to 15 per cent of non-racialized children, and Black women continue to earn 57 cents for every dollar that non-racialized men earn.

We recognize that other forms of discrimination feel immediate right now, however, this initiative is not aimed at minimizing that experience. We are deeply committed to support all of our staff, physicians, volunteers and patients no matter their faith, ethnicity or background. As we do this Anti-Black Racism work, we will improve our capacity to address all forms of discrimination.

(For a useful scoping review on Black Health in Canada, see Olanlesi-Aliu A, Alaazi D, Salami B. Black Health in Canada: Protocol for a Scoping Review. JMIR Res Protoc. 2023 May 25;12:e42212. doi: 10.2196/42212. PMID: 37227759; PMCID: PMC10251231.)

## **What is going to happen with this information?**

These listening sessions are the foundation for a long-term strategy. The focus in these sessions will be to explore and understand your experiences. Following the internal and external groups, the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion team will identify themes and possible priorities for long-term change. At that point, we will invite participants to phase two, to help shape priorities and actions. In addition to the long-term work, we will also listen for short-term ideas that are brought forward by participants.

## **When will we hear the results?**

Our aim is to share initial themes within a month of completing the internal listening sessions. We aim to share the outcomes and themes from all listening session when we have completed the community based sessions as well, likely sometime in Spring/Summer 2024.