

Novant Health

Workforce representation Aspirational long-term goal

Frequently asked questions from Novant Health leaders

What is the new long-term goal for workforce representation?

As an organization, Novant Health has long-term strategic goals to ensure that we remain competitive in a rapidly changing marketplace. One of our current long-term goals is focused on inclusion, specifically “this organization values team members from different backgrounds.” A new long-term goal for 2019-2021 is that our workforce will reflect the communities we serve in various aspects of diversity. An additional component of this goal is we continue to provide diversity and inclusion education for our team members. Our team members need to reflect the communities we serve so everyone feels welcome to come to us for care and feels valued as a team member, which in turn increases the quality of care we provide to each patient.

Why do we need this long-term goal? Is this about meeting quotas?

At Novant Health, diversity and inclusion is a core value. We are holding ourselves accountable for this core value just as we do with the other core values, which is why we have long-term goals for diversity and inclusion. This new long-term aspirational goal will demonstrate our ongoing commitment to diversity and inclusion. We are building a truly diverse workforce as well as a culture of inclusion where our team members feel like they belong and are equipped to deliver remarkable care to each and every patient and our patients feel they have received the highest level of care.

The aspirational goal is not about meeting targets or fulfilling quotas — it’s about finding and including our best talent, being the best in the industry, and addressing gaps where our workforce does not fully represent our communities. We seek to enable each team member to deliver the best and most responsive care possible aligned with our mission, vision and values.

I want to increase the diversity of my team, but I don’t always receive applications from a diverse pool of candidates. What should I do?

Our HR team is committed to recruiting the best talent from a wide-ranging pool of candidates. The talent acquisition team is casting a wider net that includes posting positions on many job boards and sharing with professional associations to attract a more diverse candidate pool. We want the best possible candidate selected for every position.

As leaders, it is important to slow down and consider additional candidates, so you have options from which to choose the best person to meet the needs of your team and our organization. Partner with the HR Team to find new, creative ways for where and how you can look for and evaluate applicants.

Use the Talent+ assessment data for applicants in your iCIMS dashboard to identify applicants who possess skills and behaviors best aligned with our organizational culture and vision to provide a remarkable patient experience.

Is this goal just about increasing the number of people of color (Black, Latino, Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander and multiracial) in our workforce?

No, our overall goal for Novant Health is to reflect the communities that we serve, representing many dimensions of diversity including race/ethnicity, gender, abilities, veteran status, sexual orientation, etc. The largest gap is in the visible dimension of diversity of race and ethnicity. As a leader, we want you to understand that there are other less visible aspects of diversity

It may be helpful for you to consider Novant Health's definitions of diversity and inclusion:

Diversity: The similarities and differences of people found in our workforce and marketplace (community). Diversity includes many characteristics that may be visible such as race, age, gender and it also includes less visible characteristics such as personality, ethnicity, religion, job function, life experience, sexual orientation, gender identity, geography, ability, regional differences, work experience and family situation – all of which make us similar to and different from one another.

Inclusion: Intentionally engaging human differences and viewing such differences as strengths in both patients and team members. The key to inclusion is that we value the perspectives and life experiences of each person. These actions build an environment that fosters mutual respect, trust and commitment.

I'm concerned there could be a perception among my team that I'm hiring someone with lesser qualifications in order to meet a goal. How should I address that?

At Novant Health, we want the best talent to help us deliver on our promise to provide remarkable care. Help your team members understand that all candidates put forward in a slate for an open position meet the qualifications for the job and explain why we are committed to this goal. Hiring decisions involve a number of factors, including skills, qualifications and experience, as well as fit with our organization's culture and mission. Explain how our commitment to increased workforce representation will help position Novant Health to compete better for top talent, especially as the communities where we live and work continue to have growing and changing demographics.

Remember to share with your team members that inclusion is about viewing differences as strengths. Bringing different and useful perspectives to your team helps us better care for a diverse population and provide culturally-competent care.

Are we inclusive of all people in our hiring at Novant Health? What about members of our community who committed a crime but paid their debt to society?

At Novant Health, we are committed to providing a welcoming environment for all people and look for opportunities to hire team members based on many different dimensions of diversity. We believe the key to inclusion is that we value the perspectives and life experiences of each person. These actions build an environment that fosters mutual respect, trust and commitment and better fulfills our mission, vision and values. If you have a specific question about a job candidate with a legal history, we encourage you to partner closely with the HR team to discuss any specific questions. These situations will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

What if a job candidate is qualified but has a strong accent that I find difficult to understand?

That candidate may still be a great fit for the Novant Health team. There are many aspects of a candidate that we must consider during the interviewing process including skills, qualifications and experience. One resource available to team members with accents (either a local dialect or from abroad) who have identified a need to enhance their communication with patients is the Cross Cultural Communication program. Through the program a speech scientist works with team members to help identify what rules or parts of their native language may create challenges in clear communication and offers solutions to enhance ease of communication.

The first two groups of team members have completed their work and all participants reported significant improvement in their own understanding of their communication skill sets. Additionally, each expressed a higher degree of confidence and stronger ability to connect with patients and team members as engaged listeners.

What if we exceed our aspirational workplace representation goals?

Our patient populations are rapidly becoming more diverse across all of the Novant Health markets. We are focusing on closing the gap between workplace representation and those who reside in our communities. But all of our goals are aspirational. When we meet or exceed our aspirational goals, our workforce will better represent the communities we serve, and we'll be proud to show that this organization values team members from different backgrounds. As an organization, we will continue our efforts to ensure that gaps in the workforce remain closed so we reflect the changing demographics of our community and provide a workplace where all in our midst feel included.