



## Acacia Anti-Racism Strategy

### Introduction

This document outlines Acacia's commitment to anti racism and sets clear goals and aspirations as an organisation. We recognise the multi-cultural nature of our Birmingham community and that people from racialised communities are more likely to experience a mental health problem but less likely to receive the help they need.

Being there for everyone experiencing a perinatal mental health problem is fundamental to our core values, and racism too often contributes to unnecessary barriers and deep-rooted inequalities in relation to services and support.

These goals will not be achieved overnight but we want to commit to listening harder and working closer with affected communities and individuals so that we can champion the change that needs to take place, beginning with ourselves.

Being antiracist results from a conscious decision to make frequent, consistent, equitable choices daily. These choices require ongoing self-awareness and self-reflection. When we choose to be antiracist, we become actively conscious about race and racism and take actions to end racial inequities in our daily lives.

The goal of our strategy is to support all of our staff and volunteers to become increasingly anti racist so that we, as an organisation can become increasingly anti racist too.

### Vision and Mission of Our Anti Racism Strategy

**Vision:** Acacia is a faith-based charity, and we promote inclusions in all elements of our work where all individuals, regardless of race, are treated equitably, feel valued, and have equal opportunities to succeed. - Leviticus 19:34

**Mission:** To actively dismantle racism and promote racial equity through education, policy reform, and inclusive practices.

### Objectives

1. **Increase Awareness, Understanding and Impact of Racism**
  - o Educate all members of staff/volunteers about the history, forms, and impacts of racism.
  - o Promote ongoing dialogue about race and racism.
2. **Foster an Inclusive Culture**
  - o Create an environment where diversity is celebrated, and all voices are heard and respected.
  - o Encourage and support diverse leadership and participation at all levels, from Trustees through to frontline workers to ensure inclusions is felt by all, especially our client group.

3. **Implement Equitable Policies and Practices**
  - Review and reform policies, being mindful to ensure that they promote equity and do not reinforce systemic racism or any form of bias.
  - Establish accountability measures for maintaining anti-racist practices.
4. **Support and Empower Marginalised Communities**
  - Provide resources and opportunities for marginalised communities to thrive.
  - Advocate for systemic changes that address racial inequalities.
  - Oversight for the closure of referrals where English is not the first language of the individual.

## **Actions and Initiatives**

### **Education and Training**

1. **Mandatory Training**
  - Implement mandatory anti-racism training for all workers, including leadership, staff, and volunteers.
  - Offer ongoing workshops and resources on topics such as unconscious bias, cultural competency, and structural racism.
2. **Resource Development**
  - Explore, develop and disseminate educational materials on anti-racism, including books, articles, videos, and toolkits.
  - Create/maintain a dedicated webpage to share anti-racism materials and links to other relevant sites.
3. **Facilitate Dialogue**
  - Organise regular forums, discussion groups, and panels to facilitate open conversations about race and racism and the impact on service delivery.
  - Encourage the sharing of personal experiences and stories to foster empathy and understanding.

### **Policy Reform**

4. **Policy Review**
  - Conduct a thorough review of all charity policies and practices to identify and eliminate those that reflect racial disparities.
  - Involve Experts by Experience group in the policy review process to ensure multiple perspectives are considered.
5. **Equity Audits**
  - Perform equity audits at least annually to assess the impact of policies and practices on different racial groups especially where English is not the first language.
  - Use audit findings to guide policy adjustments and improvements in practice.
6. **Inclusive Recruitment and Retention**
  - Explore and implement strategies to attract, hire, and retain a diverse workforce.
  - Include questions at interview so candidates have the opportunity share how they are culturally competent and committed to our Anti Racism agenda.

### **Community Engagement**

7. **Partnerships and Collaboration**
  - Partner with local organisations, community groups, and educational institutions with similar aspirations/goals to promote racial equity in perinatal mental health.

- Support community events and initiatives that advance anti-racism goals.

#### 8. Advocacy

- Advocate for public policies that address racial inequalities and support marginalised communities.

### Accountability and Transparency

#### 9. Establish Accountability Mechanisms

- Create an EDI/anti-racism working group to oversee the implementation of the strategy and an expert reference group of those with relevant experience from diverse backgrounds.
- Develop clear metrics and benchmarks to measure progress at Acacia and hold ourselves accountable.

#### 10. Regular Reporting

- To produce reports on the charity's anti-racism efforts, including successes, challenges, and areas for improvement.
- Produce an annual Acacia EDI Impact Report drawing together equity audits and all other data and reporting relating to our EDI/anti-racism progress and challenges.
- Ensure transparency by sharing progress with all stakeholders.

### Support and Resources

#### 11. Funding and Resources

- Allocated budget and resources/hours specifically for EDI/anti-racism initiatives and activities.

#### 12. Well-being and Support Services

- Offer support services signposting, such as referrals for counselling and mental health resources, for those affected by racism.
- Create safe spaces where individuals can discuss, and address issues related to racism and discrimination.

### Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

#### 13. Ongoing Assessment

- Continuously assess the effectiveness of the anti-racism strategy through surveys, feedback, exit interviews and evaluations which feed into our annual EDI impact report.
- Adjust the strategy as needed based on assessment findings and emerging best practices.

#### 14. Long-Term Commitment

- Commit to long-term action and sustainability in anti-racism efforts.
- Foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement in relation to anti-racism.

### Conclusion

An effective anti-racism strategy requires dedication, resources, and a willingness to challenge and change the status quo. Rome wasn't built in a day and we recognise that this is a long term commitment that will take time. We also acknowledge that it can sometimes feel uncomfortable coming face to face with the reality of the experiences of people of colour. We pledge not to shy away from the challenge but to commit ourselves to this deliberate and sustained plan. In this way Acacia will work towards a more equitable and inclusive charity for all.