R-20-09

IN AFFIRMATION OF COOK COUNTY HEALTH'S WORK TOWARDS HEALTH EQUITY

WHEREAS, Cook County Health has a more than 180 year history of providing health care to everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, immigration status, sexual orientation, or ability to pay; and

WHEREAS, in addition to providing direct clinical care, Cook County Health also works to identify and address social needs, including but not limited to food insecurity, housing instability, and justice-involvement; and

WHEREAS, the majority of CCH's patients are under-served minority groups and those with health insurance rely on public insurance as their primary payor;

WHEREAS, CCH continues to provide the majority of uncompensated care in Cook County, including to individuals ineligible for public health insurance coverage options;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has amplified the dramatic, persistent, and historic racial and social inequities that exist in communities of color in Cook County; and

WHEREAS, the recent killings of George Floyd, Rayshard Brooks, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery have further awakened more people to the structural and systemic racism against African Americans in our society; and

WHEREAS, Cook County Health remains proudly and deeply committed to values of diversity, justice, inclusion, compassion, hope, and equity; and

WHEREAS, Cook County Health endeavors to address structural and systemic racism and take an inclusive approach in our work; and
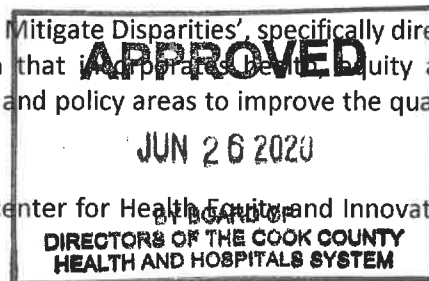
WHEREAS, in CCH's most recent strategic plan, IMPACT 2023, Focus Area 5, "Impact Social Determinants of Health and Advocate for Patients" contemplates a number of initiatives that CCH will undertake to address continued inequities that lead to poor health outcomes for vulnerable communities; and

WHEREAS, objective 5.2, 'Elevate Organizational Contributions to Mitigate Disparities', specifically directs CCH staff to advance a Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach that incorporates health, equity and sustainability considerations into decision-making across sectors and policy areas to improve the quality of life to its residents; and

WHEREAS, objective 5.2, specifically directed the creation of a center for Health Equity and Innovation with CCH; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Health Equity and Innovation was established in the FY2020 budget to foster a learning health system, provide ideation of initiatives to support strategic priorities through programmatic, data, and technological innovations, and develop ground-breaking partnerships to achieve health equity; and

WHEREAS, Cook County Health's Center for Health Equity and Innovation will promote justice and equity, convene experts in data and analytics, as well as community leaders, and align resources to develop effective, sustainable long-standing gains towards achieving equity; and

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WHEREAS, Cook County Health recognizes that we are at a defining moment in our history as a nation, a county and a health system.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the independent governing board of directors of Cook County Health affirms our continued commitment to eliminating structural and systemic racism by promoting health equity and advocating for equity in healthcare, education, employment, public safety; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Cook County Health will convene planning for racial equity summit to be held in 2020 to listen, engage, convene, partner, advocate and identify actions in order to advance real solutions that result in meaningful change for our patients and the communities we serve; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, CCH will use the Center for Health Equity and Innovation to identify and advance strategies, initiatives and programs that advance equity throughout Cook County; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, CCH will proudly continue to provide care to all without regard to income, insurance or immigration status and without regard for race, ethnicity, age or sexual orientation.

Approved by the Cook County Health and Hospitals System Board of Directors on June 26, 2020.