



# Diversity and Inclusion

## 2010-2015



Prepared by Nilda Mahrer  
April 2015

AtlantiCare continues to embrace its strategic commitment to diversity and inclusion. In 2010, we began to formalize our approach to this most valuable piece of the puzzle. During the past five years, our diversity and inclusion initiatives have consisted of multi-faceted approaches to ensure alignment with our organizational vision and Performance Excellence Commitments.

These initiatives continue to thrive with the support of our leadership team, the dedication of our Diversity and Inclusion Council, as well as our Employee Resource Groups. This document was created to take you through our five year journey.

## Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Purpose

To further position AtlantiCare as a leader and trusted partner in the delivery of culturally and community competent, respectful health care services to our diverse community.

## Diversity and Inclusion Focus Areas



Recruit a diverse workforce reflective of the communities we serve.



Foster a learning environment that values diversity and encourages employees to reach their full potential.



Provide customer experiences reflective of beliefs, cultural and community practices to foster an environment of respect for our diverse patients and their families.



Achieve organizational vision of building healthy communities.

# Employee Resource Groups

At the heart of our Diversity and Inclusion initiatives are our dedicated and engaged Employee Resource Groups. ERGs help us with cultural and community awareness activities, education, and community outreach thus impacting employee engagement, customer experiences and community connectivity.



**ALMA (AtlantiCare Latinos Moving Ahead)** ALMA engages and empowers our organization by advancing cultural awareness and education in the compassionate care of our community.



**APEG (Asian Pacific Employee Group)** Educate the community on issues related to improving the delivery of patient care and focus on the unique health needs of the Asian Pacific community.



**CAARE (Creating Accessibility, Awareness, Respect and Empowerment)** To enhance AtlantiCare's culture of inclusion for the disabled community by leveraging unique abilities and removing barriers employees, caregivers and customers face through the healthcare continuum and employment process.



**Heritage of SOUL (Support, Outreach, Unity, Leadership)** Heritage of SOUL will empower our workplace and community to embrace diversity and promote healthy living.



**HONORS (Helping Our military with Navigation, Opportunities, Resources and Support)** HONORS will support the goals of AtlantiCare by promoting and understanding the roles and contributions made by veteran and active duty military employees and family members. HONORS will pay tribute and honor the service of AtlantiCare employees and their families by being a trusted resource for services, information and support.



**PATHS (Peace, Acceptance, Trust, Healing and Spirituality)** To better understand spiritual diversity to benefit collegial relationships, patients, and their families.



**PRIDE (Promoting Respect, Individuality, Diversity and Equality)** PRIDE engages in Promoting Respect for Individuality, Diversity, and Equality for the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgendered community and their allies.

## ERG Business Impact

Our ERGs have evolved into valuable business partners. They have become the go-to groups to assist with employee engagement efforts, community outreach, and customer experience initiatives. Below are examples of their contributions toward our organizational vision:

## Employee Engagement

- ❖ Designed & piloted Computer Literacy Education in support of enhancing workforce computer literacy. Piloted with our Dietary and Housekeeping departments.
- ❖ Collaborated with our Dietary Department to coordinate serving Pan-Asian foods during the month of May in cafeterias.
- ❖ Donated interfaith prayer books to all nursing units during Nurses Week.
- ❖ Collaborated with Dietary Dept. to provide free lunch or dinner to Veterans during Veteran's Day.
- ❖ Conducted staff Spiritual Needs Assessment to identify opportunities for providing support and education.
- ❖ Designed and delivered End-of-Life faith based beliefs and traditions education to staff.
- ❖ Collaborated with Dietary Dept. to identify dietary accommodations for staff and families during Ramadan.
- ❖ Provided LGBT and Transgender education sessions for staff.
- ❖ Hosted Zumbathon to encourage healthy lifestyles and raise funds for activities.
- ❖ Hosted "Rio Gay Janeiro" event during PRIDE month at hospitals. Event attended by Atlantic City Mayor Don Guardian.
- ❖ Developed a Diversity Champion Award – awarded to employee demonstrating exemplary community involvement.
- ❖ Collaborate on an annual Strength In Diversity event – diversity keynote speaker, education, and networking

## Community Engagement and Outreach

- ❖ ALMA Scholarship – awarded to Latino student pursuing degree in healthcare related field.
- ❖ Created an "It Gets Better Video" in support of LGBT youth. Video posted on It Gets Better website
- ❖ Participation in numerous AtlantiCare and community health fairs.
- ❖ Participation in numerous AtlantiCare and community career fairs.
- ❖ Participation in Gift-of-Life Program in support of organ donation.
- ❖ Created external "Meet-Up" social group for Healthcare LGBT professionals and allies.
- ❖ Participation in Nutrition Project in support of healthy lifestyles – delivered to over 500 Pre-K children.
- ❖ Participation in local Pleasantville K-Lock Event in support of physical activity for youth.
- ❖ Donated back-to-school supplies to Atlantic County Special Services School.
- ❖ Holiday card drive for troops serving overseas.
- ❖ Donated (20) wheelchairs to Honor Flight Network of South Jersey.
- ❖ Sponsored hole for Stockton Veteran's Organization golf tournament and Alpha Psi Fraternity.
- ❖ Created partnership with Stockton University/Lambda Theta Alpha Latina Sorority.
- ❖ Coordinated a Winter clothing drive for the Atlantic City Rescue Mission.
- ❖ Participation in Stand-OUT Expo in AC – supporting awareness of LGBT community.
- ❖ Partnered with Pakistani and Muslim community to host community job fair.

## Patient Engagement Efforts

- ❖ Obtained Healthcare Equality Index (HEI) Leader status for AtlantiCare for 3 consecutive years. Patient Equal Visitation policy highlighted in Human Rights Campaign (HRC) Hospital Resource Guide as best practice.
- ❖ ERG Patient Rounding Program – members assist Customer Experience department with patient rounding to obtain feedback on delivery of care.
- ❖ Coordinated community focus group sessions to obtain LGBT community feedback on delivery of care.
- ❖ Identified and seated an LGBT community member to the ARMC Patient Advisory Council.
- ❖ Donated breastfeeding cooler bags to new moms in OB departments.



Our **PRIDE** group spearheaded the work to revise internal workplace and patient policies and practices which has led to ARMC designation as a Leader in Healthcare Equality for three consecutive years.



### Example of policies and practices:

- Changed definition of Family on Patient Visitation Policies
- Added more inclusive language on Patient Bill of Rights
- Added more inclusive language on EEO, Harassment-Free Workplace and Non-discrimination policies.
- Seated an LGBT community member on Patient Advisory Council
- Facilitation of LGBT and Transgender Education to workforce

In 2014, ARMC's Patient Equal Visitation Policy was identified as a "Best Practice" and highlighted in the Human Rights Campaign Resource Guide for hospitals.

## Fundraising

Through fundraising activities, our ERGs have raised over \$49,000 to support internal/external programs and organizations, and to support their activities. Since 2010, the groups have donated over \$18,000 to the following programs and organizations:

American Conference on Diversity  
Armed Forces Atlantic City Parade  
AtlantiCare Baby Friendly Programs  
AtlantiCare Behavioral Health  
AtlantiCare Cancer Care Institute  
AtlantiCare Health Services  
AtlantiCare Healthy Schools Programs  
AtlantiCare Pharmacy  
AtlantiCare Starfish Fund  
Atlantic City Rescue Mission  
Atlantic County Special Services  
Covenant House  
Egg Harbor City Latino Organization

Greater AC GLBT Alliance  
Habitat for Humanity  
HONOR Flight of Southern New Jersey  
Literacy Volunteers of America  
Oasis Church in Pleasantville  
South Jersey Community Food Bank  
South Jersey Young Marines  
Veterans Affairs Stockton College

# Diversity and Inclusion Education

Employees are encouraged to seek out elective diversity and inclusion education to strengthen their abilities to communicate across differences and provide culturally competent care to our patients. Educational offerings are promoted through our Corporate Education Department, and our Diversity and Inclusion Team Page on our Starfish portal. Education is available to staff and physicians.

## Creating An Inclusive Workplace: Communicating Respectfully in a Diverse World

- Explores communication skills for promoting inclusion and respect at AtlantiCare
- Provides techniques to use in addressing and resolving workplace conflicts
- Provides techniques to reduce bias

## Faith and Spirituality at the End of Life

- Provides participants with knowledge about a range of faith/spirituality specific end of life practices.
- Videos reside on the Diversity and Inclusion internal employee portal. Available to staff and physicians.
- Designed by the PATHS, our interfaith employee resource group.

## End-of-Life Care of Muslim Patients

- Provides participants with knowledge about the Muslim faith specific end of life practices
- Videos reside on the Diversity and Inclusion internal employee portal. Available to staff and physicians.
- Designed by the PATHS, our interfaith employee resource group.

## Your LGBT Patients: An Introduction

- Designed to familiarize employees with the needs and concerns of LGBT patients.
- Webinars coordinated by PRIDE, our LGBTQ employee resource group and delivered by the Human Rights Campaign.

## Transgender Patients: Best Organizational Practices

- Designed to familiarize employees with best organizational practices for providing knowledgeable, sensitive, welcoming care to transgender patients.
- Webinars coordinated by PRIDE, our LGBTQ employee resource group and delivered by the Human Rights Campaign.

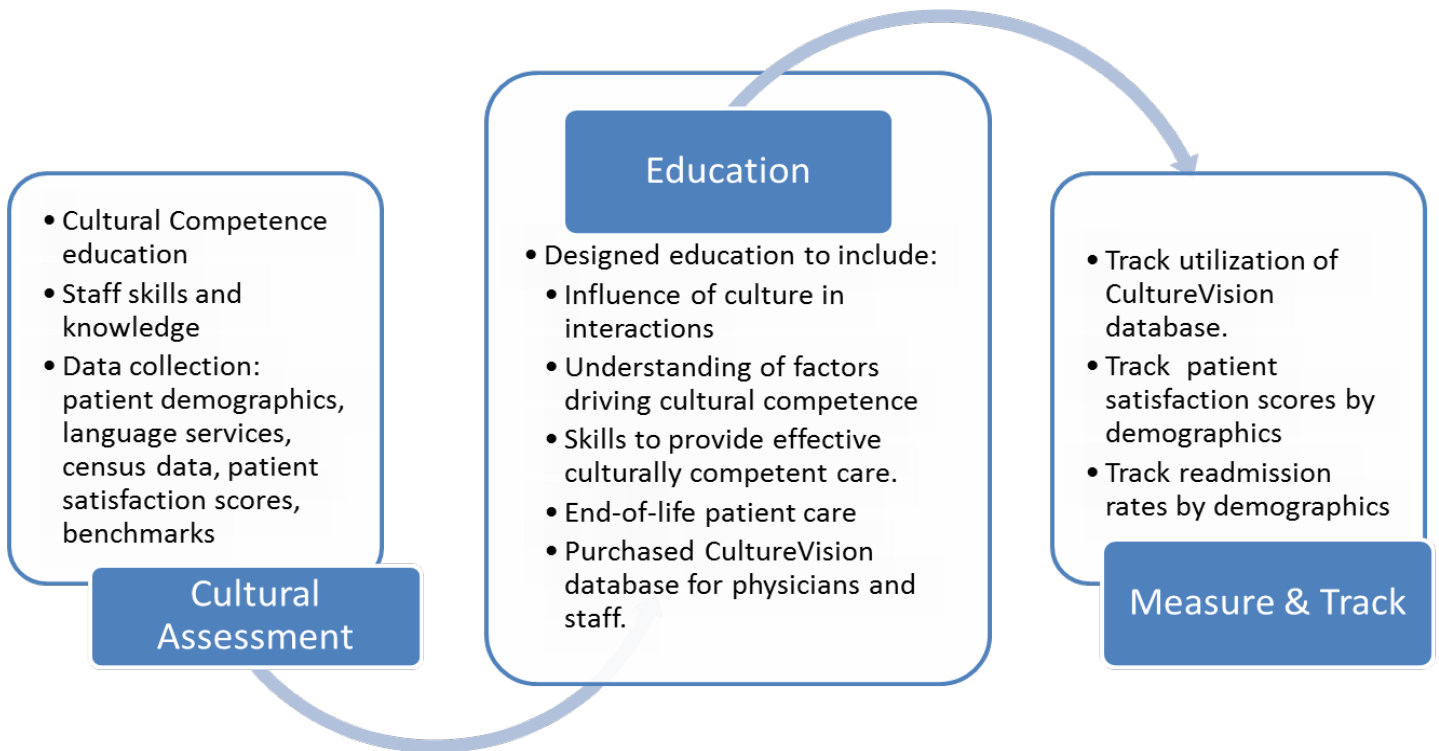




# Cultural Competence Education

At AtlantiCare we treat patients from around the world. We believe that understanding the individual needs of our diverse customers is a critical factor in reducing health disparities and building healthier communities.

In our efforts to enhance the delivery of culturally competent care to our patients, we embarked on a systematic approach. Our approach began with a cultural assessment of current education, staff knowledge and skills, and available data. This assessment led to the design of our Cultural Competence education. The effectiveness will be tracked by our patient satisfaction scores.



## Cultural Competence: Understanding our Differences

- Introduces the basic elements of cultural competency and its impact on health care.
- Opportunity to explore other cultures and community groups.
- Web-based CultureVision tool introduced.



*On-the-spot- access to culturally competent patient care*

## Our Journey Continues

Identifying innovative strategies to sustain our employee and patient engagement levels will continue to be at the helm of our diversity and inclusion journey. Our Diversity and Inclusion efforts will continue to expand throughout our AtlantiCare system and create new opportunities as we continue our integration process with Geisinger Health System. This expansion will include the launch of a Women's Employee Resource Group to provide a focused forum around work/life balance, career management, and healthcare issues and barriers to care.

We will continue to leverage the robust diversity of our workforce and community partnerships to help us achieve our vision to build healthy communities.

**To learn more about  
Diversity and Inclusion at AtlantiCare,  
please contact:**

**Nilda Mahrer**  
**Manager HR Programs**  
**(609) 407-4817**  
**[nilda.mahrer@atlanticare.org](mailto:nilda.mahrer@atlanticare.org)**

