



ASN Statement on Executive Order on Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping

The American Society of Nephrology (ASN) opposes the Executive Order on Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping issued on Tuesday, September 22, 2020. The society calls for immediate revisions to or rescission of this misguided executive order.

With more than 21,000 physicians, scientists, and other health professionals, ASN leads the fight to prevent, treat, and cure kidney diseases throughout the world by educating health professionals and scientists, advancing research and innovation, communicating new knowledge, and advocating for the highest quality care for patients.

On Monday, June 1, 2020, ASN asserted, “Racism prevents ASN from fulfilling its mission to prevent, treat, and cure kidney diseases and to advance the highest quality of care for patients” and that “ASN strongly supports and will advance efforts to achieve equality to reduce the adverse impact of racism, especially on health and in health care.”¹

ASN shares the dream espoused by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and referenced in the executive order: Our nation’s children will “not be judged by the color of their skin,” yet daily many of the 37 million Americans living with kidney diseases are sentenced to experience adverse health outcomes, ranging from increased prevalence of kidney diseases to decreased access to kidney transplantation, based solely on their skin color.²

The United States cannot address this national failure if we refuse to acknowledge its existence. Racial equity cannot be achieved without health equity, and health equity cannot be achieved without addressing systemic racism, implicit bias, and structural oppression.

To accomplish its mission and guarantee the highest quality care for patients, ASN must educate, train, and reinforce health professionals—be they federal employees, contractors, or grantees—about the structures of power that divide Americans and lead to disparities in health and health care. It is unethical for a physician to prescribe a therapy without knowledge of their patient’s diagnosis and family history, and the failure to understand the deep roots and current effects of racism and bias of any kind violates ASN’s commitment and inhibits the society’s ability to ensure the health and wellbeing of **all Americans**.

The executive order states “all individuals are created equal and should be allowed an equal opportunity under the law to pursue happiness and prosper.”³ ASN is committed to building a future where equality exists in kidney health. By opposing the Executive Order on Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping, ASN advocates for dismantling racist structures of power in this country.

¹ American Society of Nephrology. ASN Issues a Statement Against Racism. June 1, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.kidneynews.org/careers/in-practice/asn-issues-statement-against-racism>

² Agarwal, A. Letter to Chairman Neal. September 25, 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.asn-online.org/policy/webdocs/20.9.25ASNResponsetoChairmanNealreRaceandGFR.pdf>

³ Trump, D J. Executive Order 13950, Combating Race and Stereotyping. 85 Fed Reg 60685. 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-combating-race-sex-stereotyping/>