



Queen's
UNIVERSITY

HEALTH SCIENCES
Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Indigeneity,
and Accessibility Initiatives

2025

QHS EDIIA INITIATIVES

An Annual Recap: Progress, Reflections, and Future Directions in QHS EDIIA Initiatives.



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Land Acknowledgement

Queen's University is situated on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Territory. To acknowledge this traditional territory is to recognize its longer history, one predating the establishment of the earliest European colonies. It is also to acknowledge this territory's significance for the Indigenous peoples who lived, and continue to live, upon it – people whose practices and spiritualities were tied to the land and continue to develop in relationship to the territory and its other inhabitants today.

The Kingston Indigenous community continues to reflect the area's Anishnaabek and Haudenosaunee roots. There is also a significant Métis community and there are First Peoples from other Nations across Turtle Island present here today.

Associate Dean, Indigenous Health 2025 Reflection

Over the past year, the Office of Indigenous Health, housed within The Nest and supported by a small but dedicated team, has made significant strides in advancing Indigenous health education and research at Queen's University. Despite our modest size, we have worked collaboratively to integrate Indigenous perspectives and culturally safe practices throughout the Faculty of Health Sciences. Our efforts are deeply enriched by the many Indigenous and non-Indigenous students who generously contribute their time, energy, and insights, and I am profoundly grateful for their commitment—without whom our work would not be possible. It has been wonderful to co-host events with Indigenous community partners and welcome Indigenous health leaders who share their invaluable knowledge with us. These collaborations ensure that our faculty fosters a true sense of belonging and support for Indigenous learners as they advance in their academic and professional journeys. We also gratefully acknowledge the continued support from our donors, whose generosity provides essential funding that sustains and expands our initiatives. Together, we continue to promote Indigenous wellness and address systemic health inequities through community-driven research projects and culturally relevant curriculum development.

Beyond our local impact, the office actively engages in national Indigenous health leadership by contributing to critical policy and educational initiatives. Our involvement with the National Circle for Indigenous Medical Education and the Indigenous Physicians Association of Canada helps ensure that culturally responsive standards and frameworks are embedded across Indigenous medical education in Canada. The collective expertise of our small team, alongside the support and enthusiasm of students, donors, Indigenous partners, and collaborators, enables us to amplify Indigenous voices and advance reconciliation within health systems and academic institutions. We remain committed to supporting Indigenous learners, faculty, and communities with integrity, collaboration, and respect.



**Sarah Funnell, MD, MSc,
CCFP, FRCPC. Associate
Dean & Chair of Indigenous
Health, Faculty of Health
Sciences. Assistant
Professor, Department of
Family Medicine**

Associate Dean, Equity and Social Accountability 2025 Reflection



Hello, and welcome to the 2025 annual report. What a busy and energizing year, filled with many QHS initiatives that strengthened our community and advanced our shared commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, Indigeneity and accessibility (EDIIA). We are proud of the collective progress made across our faculty!

The 25 goals and 127 actions across 9 pillars in the EDIIA Action Plan guide our day-to-day work. This year, we saw the first “green” squares on our progress tracker (next page). This achievement reflects the dedication and perseverance of our staff, as well as the invaluable contributions of our many volunteers, including students, faculty, and staff who serve as EDIIA champions across the faculty.

Our ongoing Belonging Project also remains central to our work. We continue to gather and reflect upon stories of belonging—and not belonging—from faculty, staff, students, and members of the Kingston community. This project helps us deepen our understanding and shape initiatives that respond to lived experiences while also celebrating positive changes for within our culture and community.

We were honoured to host several exceptional speakers this year including Dr. Alike Lafontaine at our EDIIA General Assembly, where he challenged us to reflect on emotions such as outrage and indifference in today’s current EDIIA context. We were also pleased to begin working with our new Dean, Dr. Lisa Tannock. We look forward to the strategic directions, new roles and initiatives, and expanded opportunities that 2026 will bring as we continue to deepen our EDIIA efforts.

Finally, I want to extend our sincere thanks to all who supported the Nest and EDIIA Initiatives Team and all of our activities within Queen’s Health Sciences in 2025. Together, we remain committed to making our faculty, university, and broader community more inclusive, welcoming, and vibrant for all.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Colleen M. Davison".

Dr. Colleen Davison, BSc, HBOR, BEd (OCT), MPH, PhD. Associate Professor, Department of Public Health Sciences. Cross Appointed, Department of Global and Development Studies, Associate Dean, Equity and Social Accountability, QHS

PROGRESS TRACKER OF THE QHS EDIIA ACTION PLAN

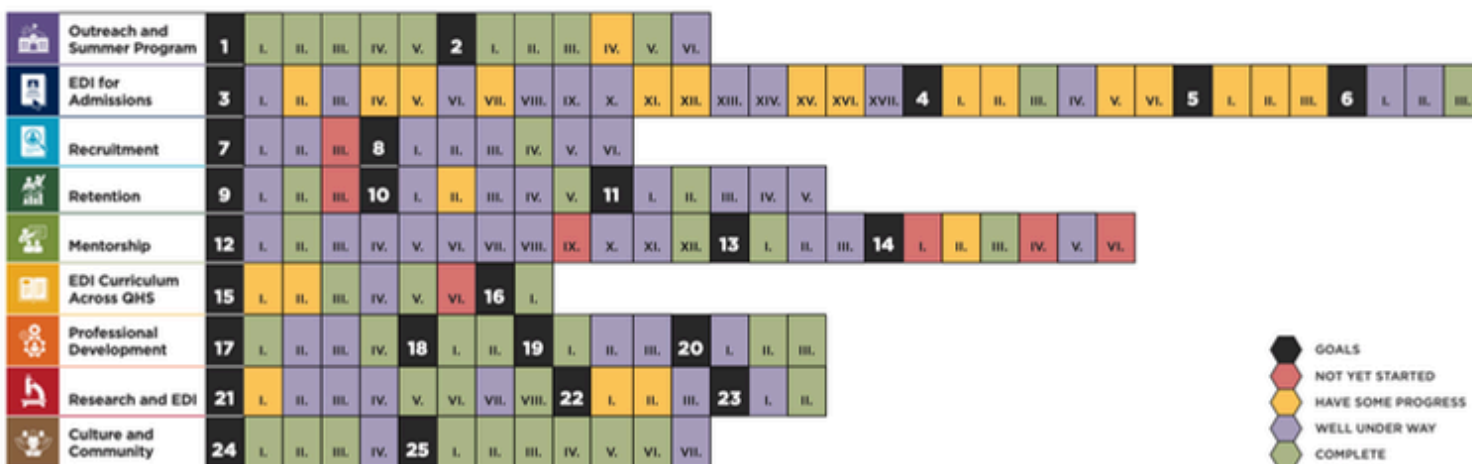
EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, INDIGENEITY, AND ACCESSIBILITY ACTION PLAN

QHS is accountable to its learners, faculty, staff, and alumni. We are also accountable to the Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox, and Addington community and more broadly, to the national and global community where QHS can play a role in improving health and health equity.

QHS has an obligation to take action to respond to the education and health needs of our communities in an equitable and inclusive manner. It is the responsibility of QHS to develop education, research, and clinical activities that prioritize “health for all” and which support health equity, accessible health care and population health. QHS is also accountable to the many commitments our University and Faculty have already made such as those to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls to action and the Scarborough Charter as well as to human rights declarations and to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Our current and future health professionals, scientists, educators, and communicators must advocate for community members and patients disenfranchised by power structures and social conditions negatively impacting their health. We commit to these multiple layers of social accountability and to regularly assessing and enhancing our social accountability mandate.

Each year we assess progress on the 25 goals and 127 actions in our [EDIIA Action Plan 2022-2027](#). Find below the state of progress across nine pillars as of December 31, 2025. Click [here](#) for the full transcript.



*Find the QHS EDIIA Action Plan [here](#).



Pillars





1 Outreach and Summer Program

The Queen's Health Sciences Outreach and Summer Program (QHSOSP) supports equity deserving (low socioeconomic status, first generation, racialized, immigrant, refugee, 2SLGBTIA+, persons living with a disability, amongst others) high school students from Kingston and the surrounding area. The program promotes health sciences education amongst equity-deserving youth, creates opportunities for these youth in the health sciences field, and fosters diversity within health sciences programs. Youth are provided monthly experiential learning workshops, mentorship, academic support, and a week-long summer camp.

In 2025, the fifth cohort of Kingston high school students were admitted to QHSOSP.

Students participated in monthly health sciences workshops (e.g. nursing, rehabilitation therapy, kinesiology, radiology, amongst others) and were paired with Bachelor of Health Sciences mentors. Over the summer, students participated in a weeklong immersive program that provided them with the skills to prepare for post-secondary programs, first aid training, and exposure to health sciences education. At the end of the program, each student received a laptop, a donation made by CDW Canada.

The program has maintained a continuing community relationship with Pathway to Education, Kingston, Immigration Services Kingston and Area (ISKA) Youth Group and KEYS Employment Centre who nominate refugee youth living in Kingston.



2 Admission

Support Admission changes in MD Program

In 2024, the Queen's MD program announced changes to the admission process to create a more inclusive entry point for all applicants, minimize systemic barriers, and increase student diversity for the 2025 admissions cycle. QHS EDIIA Initiatives supported the MD program by providing input on the pathways for lower socioeconomic status applicants, Black applicants, and Indigenous applicants and the lottery system for all applicants who meet the academic requirements of the program. QHS EDIIA Initiatives provided extensive input on the Black admissions pathway with a focus on providing support to prospective and incoming Black learners.

Collaboration with Mushkiki Miikan and Community of Support

Under the leadership of QHS EDIIA Initiatives, Queen's University has become a partner of Mushkiki Miikan and Community of Support. As a partner, learners across Queen's University can access the support offered through both programs. QHS EDIIA Initiatives continues to build awareness of both programs across campus.

Mushkiki Miikan supports Indigenous learners in pursuing medical education by collaborating with various universities across Ontario. The aim of the program is to increase access, provide tailored assistance, and foster a supportive environment for Indigenous learners throughout their medical education journey.

Community of Support is hosted by the University of Toronto and supported by various universities across Canada. Queen's joined as an institutional member in 2025. The aim of the program is to support prospective students facing systemic barriers on their journey to medical education, basic sciences, graduate research and rehabilitation sciences programs. The program provides resources in admission information, volunteer, research, and mentorship opportunities, and free application support (e.g. MCAT and CASPer prep), application guidance, and interview preparation.



EDIIA Learner Action Committee

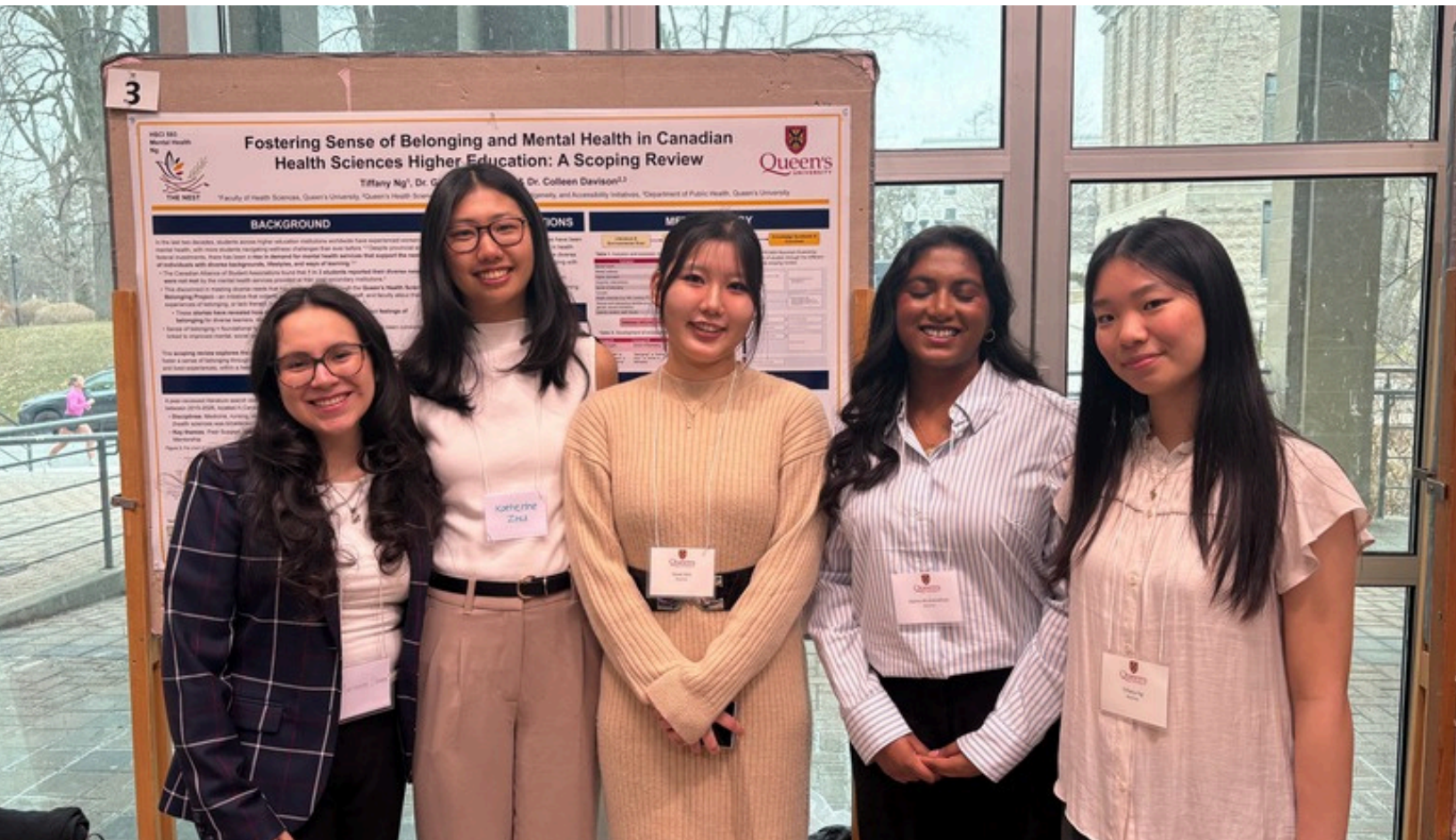
The QHS EDIIA Learning Action Committee is undertaking the following work:

- Implementation of an EDIIA admissions intervention module
- Advancing unconscious bias admissions training
- Scoping review of holistic admissions interventions
- Scoping review of stigma faced in health sciences equity pathways

Undergraduate Research Projects

Undergraduate Research Projects supervised by the QHS EDIIA Initiatives leadership included:

- Unconscious bias in health sciences admission processes
- SWOT Analysis of QHS EDIIA Action Plan Admission Goals
- Approaches to collecting, disseminating & actioning admissions demographic data



3 Recruitment



QHS Inclusive Recruitment Guide

QHS EDIIA Initiatives team collaborated with the QHS Human Resources and Staffing team to develop the QHS Inclusive Recruitment Guide. The purpose of the Queen's Health Sciences (QHS) Inclusive Recruitment Guide is to provide QHS program and departments with resource and guidance on how to align with Queen's University employment equity policies and procedures. With the aim of enhancing diversity and inclusion and reducing bias through the recruitment of staff and faculty. The guide has now been published and released to all departments/programs across QHS for engagement within their own respective hiring processes.

EDIIA Learner Action Committee - International Student Support Package

The QHS EDIIA Learner Action Committee developed an International Student Support package that outlines various resources available to international students on and off campus. The resources include information on registration and enrolment, mental health and wellbeing, funding, Kingston community supports, amongst other aspects.





Seeking Funding to create a Black Recruitment and Student Advisor Position

The Office of Equity and Social Accountability is collaborating with the Queen's Advancement team to identify funding to support the creation of a QHS Black Recruitment and Student Advisor position that would support Black learners across all QHS programs. This position is needed particularly with the creation of Black Admission Pathways.

Undergraduate Research Projects


Undergraduate research projects supervised by the QHS EDIIA Initiatives leadership involved the identification of key interventions in the recruitment and retention of Black learners in Health Sciences programs. Wellness interventions for equity-deserving students and inclusive and safe spaces for students on campus (outside of classroom) were also foci for these undergraduate research projects in 2025.

Tracking iCount Equity Census

Human Rights and Equity Office has provided the Office of Equity and Social Accountability with access to the annual iCount Equity census data and data from the Diversity and Equity Assessment and Planning (DEAP) tool platform. This helps to monitor Queen’s Health Sciences programs and departments’ EDIIA initiatives as well as demographic gaps in comparison to the Canadian workforce population in designated groups (i.e., women, racialized persons, Indigenous Peoples, and Persons with Disabilities).

Faculty


(Includes: Academic, Academic Assistant, Adjunct, Archivist, Fellow & Librarian)

Faculty	Women	Visible Minorites	Indigenous Peoples	Persons with Disabilities
Canadian Population	51.0%	25.5%	4.4%	27.0%
Canadian Workforce	48.2%	26.8%	4.2%	9.1%
Most under-represented ranking		3	2	1

Persons with disabilities are the most underrepresented, followed by Indigenous Peoples and racialized faculty (visible minorities). Women are adequately represented; however, it should be noted that women are predominantly represented in adjunct and academic assistant positions.

Staff

(Includes: CUPE 1302, CUPE 229, CUPE 254, Executive, General Staff & Research)

Staff	Women	Visible Minorites	Indigenous Peoples	Persons with Disabilities
Canadian Population	51.0%	25.5%	4.4%	27.0%
Canadian Workforce	48.2%	26.8%	4.2%	9.1%
Most under-represented ranking		3	1	2

Indigenous Peoples are the most underrepresented, followed by racialized/visible minorities and persons with disabilities. Women are adequately represented; however, it should be noted that women are predominantly represented in research and general staff positions.



4 Retention

Belonging Project

QHS EDIIA Initiatives launched the QHS Belonging Project at the QHS EDIIA General Assembly in December 2023. The QHS Belonging Project is an ongoing data collection platform that has two primary objectives. The first is to collect stories/testimonies of belonging or not belonging to translate into case studies for learners in academic settings and staff in professional settings. This objective aligns with the QHS EDIIA Action Plan's pillars of Curriculum, Professional Development, Culture and Community and Retention. The project's second objective is to continually track experiences of belonging on campus, in QHS and in local health care settings for evaluation, improvement and social accountability purposes.

The platform where stories can be recorded allows learners, staff, faculty, and community members to share experiences about their sense of belonging or not belonging. The stories collected will provide QHS with an idea of the areas for improvement required in the faculty and its related healthcare settings. The Belonging Project aims to support more inclusive culture and spaces in QHS. The [2024-2025 Belonging Project Report](#) was released at the end of 2025.



Use the QR code to the left to participate in the Belonging Project survey

Belonging Wellness Series

The Queen's Health Sciences (QHS) Belonging Series is a new initiative to help promote an inclusive culture and a stronger sense of belonging across the faculty. Supported through Queen's BeWell Grants, these QHS staff and faculty events give everyone a chance to build stronger connections with colleagues and enjoy some fun activities throughout the academic year. The Belonging series involved a yoga session, laughing for health events, financial well-being seminar, staff appreciation video, and then wrapped up in June 2025 with a Scavenger Hunt and Pizza Lunch for all QHS staff and faculty.





5 Mentorship

QHS EDIIA Mentorship Action Committee – Mentorship Guide

The QHS EDIIA Mentorship Action Committee drafted a Mentorship Guide that aligns with the QHS EDIIA Action Plan Mentorship Pillar recommendations. The mentorship guide components include mentorship opportunities available across Queen’s University, mentorship training opportunities, and frameworks and strategies on how to engage in equitable and inclusive mentorship. The guide is currently under review. In addition, the Mentorship committee is finding ways to increase engagement with mentorship resources at Queen’s University and beyond.



6 Curriculum



Collaboration with QHS programs

QHS EDIIA Initiatives team collaborates with various QHS programs to advise on the integration of equitable and inclusive practices in their respective curriculum. For example, the team supported the delivery of an Interprofessional EDIIA Session, Translational Medicine I-EDIIA in Health Sciences Symposium, Department specific trainings and participation as guests and speakers at student events like the Health and Human Rights conference. QHS EDIIA Initiatives staff also collaborated with the MD program to help deliver EDIIA sessions to pre-clerkship students.



Belonging Project Case Studies

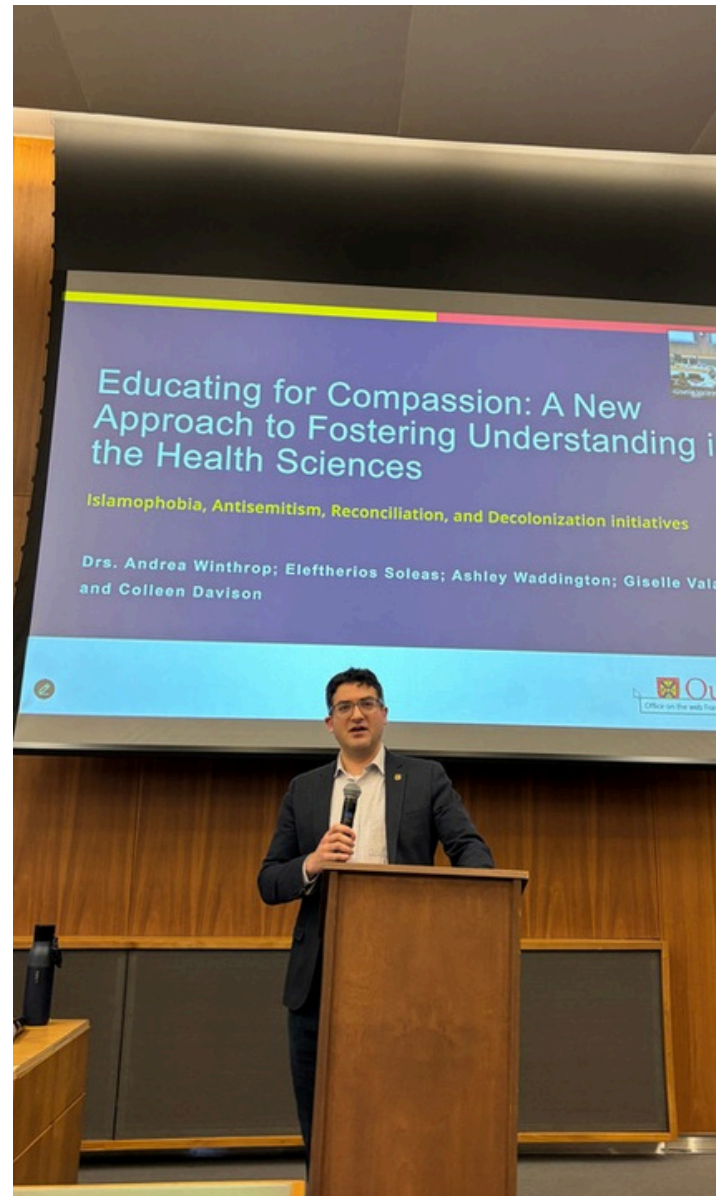
As part of the QHS Belonging Project, the stories of belonging or not belonging at Queen's and across Kingston were translated into case studies for use by educators across QHS. These case studies can inform actions to enhance EDIIA.

7 Professional Development

Respectful Collaboration: Teamwork in a diverse workplace

This learning series is designed to further understanding of key topics in pursuit of a kinder, more peaceful world. It is critically important to continually work on building a culture of respect, humility, and compassion at Queen's Health Sciences (QHS). That culture includes colleagues, learners, patients and their families, and extends to the workplace, classrooms, and community.

Everyone in the QHS community is encouraged to build these learning modules into their personal educational and professional development journeys. Modules regarding Islamophobia and Antisemitism have been developed in collaboration with Muslim and Jewish staff and faculty at Queen's University.



Being an Upstander

QHS EDIIA Initiatives collaborated with the Office of Professional Development and Educational Scholarship and with the PGME EDIIA lead to develop EDIIA clinical simulation training, which was piloted in early 2025 and launched the spring of 2025. An accompanying guide was developed as a living document that evolves in response to feedback, new research, and input from lived experiences. In healthcare and academic environments where power dynamics, systemic inequities, and high-stress situations intersect, it is essential that we create space to grow in how we respond to discrimination, harassment, exclusion and bias, and how we support inclusion and care for all. The 'Being an Upstander' training sessions and guide provide information on how to conduct a pre-brief and debrief during training sessions, a set of scenarios of discrimination based on real experiences in the clinical and academic setting, and additional resources that will help facilitate discussion on how to be an upstander.



EDIIA Professional Development Events

QHS EDIIA Initiatives has supported a series of speakers at Queen's University:

- Dr. Jaris Swidrovich's talk titled, *A Storied Life of Woven Threads: A Two Spirit Indigenous Pharmacist's Path to Better Health Care.*
- Dr. Alike Lafontaine's talk titled, *The Outrage Cure: Understanding Anger, Outrage, and Indifference to Health Relationships, Systems, and Self.*

EDIIA Health Sciences Research Guide

We are in the process of finalizing a Health Sciences EDIIA Research Guide to support researchers on how to integrate equitable and inclusive practices into all research activity (e.g. developing a research team, recruiting participants, data analysis, knowledge synthesis). The guide is currently undergoing peer review to integrate feedback from a large number of EDIIA Health Sciences experts prior to publication.

The Nest Student Lab

QHS EDIIA Initiative leadership continues to supervise undergraduate research projects. The Nest Student Lab encourages co-learning and co-mentorship amongst all students involved in EDIIA Health Sciences education research projects.

ICAM Presentations

QHS EDIIA Initiatives team attended the 2025 International Congress on Academic Medicine in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The team delivered an oral presentation on lessons learned in cultivating EDIIA Initiatives for Queen's Health Sciences program/departments. In addition, we presented a poster that outlined the progress of the QHS EDIIA Action Plan.





9 Culture and Community

Champion Forum

The QHS EDIIA Champions Forum aims to form a closer-knit community committed to EDIIA with a focus on transforming QHS structures for accessibility, inclusivity, and belonging while embedding equity, inclusion, and anti-racism into education, research, and care. Members (e.g. Departmental EDIIA Committees, Program EDIIA leads) help to ingrain EDIIA principles in the culture of QHS to establish and sustain a culturally safe and inclusive environment by:

- Sustaining a QHS community of support
- Communicating EDIIA initiatives to their respective departments/programs
- Sharing resources
- Advancing social accountability (e.g. QHS EDIIA Action Plan)

The Office of Equity and Social Accountability hosted a specific champions appreciation event in April 2025 to provide a space for cross-faculty recognition, networking and celebrating of EDIIA initiatives.

DEAP Tool Engagement

The DEAP tool is a self-audit tool used by the Queen's departments/programs to understand their demographic profile, assess the inclusivity of a unit, provide opportunities to reflect on areas of improvement, amongst other components. Queen's HREO provide QHS Office of Equity and Social Accountability with access to the [DEAP Tool](#) platform to monitor QHS departments/programs engagement with the self-audit tool and their progress. The Office of Equity and Social Accountability is engaging with the QHS Human Resources team to develop a collective goal for the Faculty of Health Sciences that focuses on increasing completion rates of mandatory training.

QHS EDIIA General Assembly

QHS EDIIA Initiatives hosted the annual QHS EDIIA General Assembly on December 3, 2025. The event involved updates from the Associate Dean, Equity and Social Accountability and the Associate Dean, Indigenous Health, a keynote delivered by Dr. Alika Lafontaine, a leadership panel discussion, and QHS EDIIA Innovation updates from EDIIA Champions.





QHS EDIIA Guide Webpage

QHS EDIIA Initiatives launched the QHS EDIIA Guide [webpage](#) that offers a series of resources for learners, staff, and faculty to advance an equitable and inclusive cultural transformation across QHS. The resources include the EDIIA Style Guide, Inclusive Recruitment Guide, Trauma Informed approaches Guides, Religious and Faith-based Accommodations, and QHS EDIIA Admissions. The repository of resources will only continue to grow.

Supporting EDIIA-focused Student Events

QHS EDIIA Initiatives team supported various student led events hosted by QHS learners including:

- Black History Month Event hosted by the Queen's Black Medical Student Association
- Project LETS initiative led by Bachelor of Health Sciences Students

The Nest Team



The QHS EDIIA Initiatives team includes:

- Associate Dean, Equity and Social Accountability
- Associate Dean, Indigenous Health
- QHS EDIIA Initiatives Director
- Indigenous Recruitment and Student Support Advisor
- QHS EDIIA, Administrative Assistant
- QHSOSP Student Coordinator
- Promise Scholar Intern
- MPH Practicum Placement Student
- QHS EDIIA Student Coordinators

The larger team meets regularly for QHS EDIIA Initiatives social activities. The leadership team meets regularly for strategy and operational planning.





Beyond the Pillars

Broader Accountability

QHS EDIIA Initiatives continues to monitor how it meets the call for actions in:

- The Queen's University Principal's Implementation Committee on Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion (PICRDI) Report, helping to foster a welcoming campus for a diverse community. The QHS EDIIA Action Plan has helped the Faculty to align its strategic priority with the broader University.
- The Truth and Reconciliation Report, demonstrating a commitment to advancing reconciliation with a strong focus on health-related call to action. The formation of the QHS Indigenous Health Office has helped to prioritize this work.
- The Scarborough Charter, advancing Black Excellence in Queen's Health Sciences through consultation and collaboration. The work of the QHS EDIIA Senior Advisor has helped QHS EDIIA Initiatives strategically focus on the Scarborough Charter.

Indigenous Initiatives

The QHS Office of Indigenous Health will be reporting on Indigenous Initiatives through the QHS TRC Report. The purpose of this report is to demonstrate initiatives undertaken by QHS Office of Indigenous Health to address health related truth and reconciliation commission calls to action 22, 23, and 24.



Staff Appreciation

Words of Gratitude from the Associate Dean, Equity and Social Accountability and the Associate Dean, Indigenous Health

The remarkable work to advance an equitable and inclusive cultural transformation across QHS is the result of the QHS EDIIA Initiatives team and Champions who continue to advocate for justice and social change. This headway would not be possible without their commitment and diligence in support of QHS learners, staff, and faculty. A huge thanks to everyone in the QHS community who champions equity, diverse inclusion, Indigeneity, accessibility, and all forms of anti-oppression. We would like to recognize the important work of Nathan Cheechoo, Indigenous Recruitment and Student Advisor, Connie Wighton, Administrative Assistant, and the Nest student staff in 2025-2026: Calee Boissoneau-Hunter, Chloe Chilton, Edidiong Essienton, Brittany Kwan, Rachel Moses Massey, Bisola Olaseni, Sharon Okoroma, Oluwamisimi (Simi) Oluwole, Cynthia Wang, Lindsay Yu, Jessica Zhang, and Zhanyi (Brooke) Zhu. In addition, we thank all our undergraduate research students whose projects are listed in our [Nest Student Projects](#) webpage. We also acknowledge Giselle Valarezo who has been a leader in and tirelessly advocates for many of the initiatives listed here. We also express gratitude to the QHS Executive team and our new Dean, Dr. Lisa Tannock. Thank you for providing us the sense of certainty that EDIIA Initiatives are critical and central to the work of our faculty and University. We carry on, onwards and upwards together.





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