



# **BUILDING A STRONGER UNION**

## *HEU's Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*

Since 1944, the Hospital Employees' Union has advocated for better working and caring conditions, defended public health care, and stood against privatization. We have a long history as a strong, democratic, progressive, socially conscious union committed to social justice and advancing labour and human rights on a local and global level. We identify and challenge historical and systemic inequities and hear, respect, serve, empower and advocate for, each and every member. Together we fight for fairness, solidarity, equity, inclusion, and understanding, knowing that our members' economic security depends on our success.

Privatization, attacks on workers' rights, and the devaluing of our members' work have undermined the dignity and security of our members. These forces have reshaped the union and at times threatened to undermine our solidarity. We understand that equity and inclusion are intrinsically linked and that an injury to one is an injury to all. And we know that building a powerful and inclusive union requires acknowledgment and understanding of the structures that oppress workers. Sexism, racism, colonialism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism, and ableism have no place in our union.

We see HEU as a union for everyone. And we know that equity is a critical part of union life and work and must be embedded into all our practices. We are committed to resisting oppression and to building an economically and socially just society. We work hard every day to ensure that all members are heard, represented and able to contribute fully to their workplace, communities, and union.

We believe that our union is strongest when its leadership is inclusive and reflects the full diversity of the membership. Because it is so important for diverse voices, perspectives and lived experiences to be engaged in the work of the union, we commit to including underrepresented groups when determining the union's leadership composition and mandate at the provincial, regional and local levels.

To ensure that HEU events are inclusive and barrier-free, we actively seek out varied perspectives and consider the complexity of the different realities, lifestyles and availability of our members and employees when determining how we work, plan, deliver and evaluate our communications, campaigns, events, education, services, and activities.

In keeping with our history, when we know better, we do better. And despite our significant progress over the last 75 years, we know we can do better still. That's why our promise to our current and future members is that we will continue to work to advance the union's goals and objectives and power our solidarity through diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). We promise to ensure ongoing DEI education for both leadership and members, and ongoing resources for embedding effective DEI practices into every aspect of our work. We promise transparency and accountability to you, our members, as evidenced by seeking and providing regular communications on our progress.

At HEU, we recognize that we all have unique lives and experiences. We respect our differences and appreciate our interdependence. We know that diversity makes us stronger collectively when all voices are encouraged, heard and valued. That's why we believe that no matter who you are, or what your role is in our union, you belong with us.

*Adopted by delegates to the 31st Biennial Convention of the Hospital Employees' Union, November 2018*