



Hello. My name is Barbara Schmidt. At Southcoast Health, I am the Director of Organizational Culture and Engagement. In that role, I chair our Diversity and Inclusion Council.

**Today at noon**, together across Southcoast Health and with our health care colleagues throughout Massachusetts, we will hold a silent demonstration organized by the Massachusetts Hospital Association, the Massachusetts Senior Care Association and 1199 SEIU. Our demonstration will last for 8 minutes and 46 seconds in representation of the lives lost to unacceptable acts of racism.

During this time, we recognize that the murder of George Floyd represents centuries of biases and violence against Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC); systemic racism that has both daily and long-lasting impacts in BIPOC communities and on individual lives.

This needs to be the line ... a line that is drawn with a collective focus on action, in addition to better conversations about racism. In the 8 minutes and 46 seconds at noon today, we will remember George Floyd and express the urgent need for change. We will remember that he was someone's father, son, friend and colleague, and that his murder is the latest in a horrifically long line of targeted violence and hate. During these minutes, let's think about our next steps. We will need each other's ideas, voices and energy in the conversation – and the commitment.

How do we stop and focus on a dialogue in which we listen to each other, learn from each other and move to make changes? We know that we can't fix the United States of America, and yet we also know that every one of us can improve in our own lives. Starting now.

We can all commit during these moments of silence to do one thing – to be a part of our solution not just today, but in the weeks, months and years to come. When we talk about acknowledging biases and systemic racism, we must recognize that creating and building new solutions will take time and require endurance. Some may have had the privilege of not *having* to think about race on a daily basis ... but I challenge all of us who have had that privilege to take responsibility and action.

Moving forward, the Diversity and Inclusion Council will share more resources to learn about the roles we can play in building an anti-racist future.

Thank you for joining all together in remembrance of George Floyd and all of the BIPOC lives lost amid deep injustice. Thank you for engaging in the discussion and dedicating yourself to positive change. Please reach out to me, Barbara Schmidt, if you'd like to be involved in the Diversity and Inclusion Council as we advance that discussion.

Thank you,

Barbara Schmidt  
Director of Organizational Culture and Engagement  
Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Council