

Statement on Social Justice

The recent tragic deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery are disheartening and unsettling reminders that systemic racism and injustice impacts every part of our patients' lives, including safety and health. African American older adults have experienced a lifetime of race-related stressors, the accumulation of which has had a profound negative impact on physical and psychological well-being. African American older adults have an additional risk of experiencing other forms of discrimination, including ageism, which increases their vulnerability to negative health outcomes. There are more than 4 million African American older adults living in this country, many of whom have experienced limited access to healthcare and community resources, resulting in health disparities and poor health outcomes.

As advanced practice registered nurses we are uniquely positioned to reduce these negative effects through compassionate person-centered care, and by providing hope and healing in each patient encounter. As leaders in healthcare, GAPNA will continue to advocate for equal access to care and supportive community resources. We will continue to support decisive actions that address longstanding inequities and eliminate social injustice when and wherever we encounter it.

During these pivotal times, the historic words of Elie Wiesel remind us that, *“When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy... Wherever men and women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views, that place must—at that moment—become the center of the universe.”* These words hold true today.

GAPNA remains committed to promoting excellence in advanced practice nursing that enhances the well-being of ALL older adults, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, income, and sexual orientation. Together we will continue to promote social justice and health equity while increasing awareness, education and training of APRNs who care for older adults.

Board of Directors
Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association

June 15, 2020