



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 9, 2020

Marcelo Hochman, MD  
President

Andrew McMarlin, DO  
Vice-President

Marta T. Hampton, MD  
Secretary-Treasurer

Dana Holladay  
Administrator

The Charleston County Medical Society (CCMS) was founded in part as a reaction to the prevailing Jim Crow ideology that prevented African-American physicians from joining the then all-white medical society. Thus in 1951, over a decade before the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the founding members of CCMS established an inclusive organization that was open to all medical doctors. Responding to the same intolerance that spurred our predecessors, we denounce the recent incidents of racism and violence that have triggered such profound grief and distress in our community and throughout the country.

Unjust discrimination violates the core oaths and ethical principles that we as physicians uphold in the care of all our fellow human beings. It also has led to poor health outcomes, lower life expectancy and inequalities in health care services which disproportionately affect black and other communities of color. These long-standing racial health disparities have been highlighted and exacerbated during the coronavirus pandemic.

It is time to look inward at both our institutions and ourselves and consider what we can do to heal what ails us. The Board of Directors of CCMS, speaking on behalf of the entire Charleston medical community, expresses its humble promise to help rectify the lingering health consequences of the current and historic misdeeds committed against African Americans.

Specifically, we continue to embrace and encourage African-American physicians to join CCMS in order to help guide our organization's efforts to educate members of the medical community regarding bias, racism and discrimination that have led to unacceptable gaps in health. We will continue to pursue elimination of the Certificate of Need law, which limits access to needed health services and facilities, especially in rural communities and by black Americans. We will continue to pursue passing of the Expansion of Charity Care Act which would incentivize providing free medical care to the most vulnerable of our patients, many of whom are black. The physicians of CCMS are committed to helping right a wrong in South Carolina – just as we did in 1951.

Board of Directors of Charleston County Medical Society

*Marcelo Hochman MD*  
Marcelo Hochman MD, President