

Prospero Team,

A few moments ago, during our company-wide meeting, I addressed the events of the last two weeks. The graphic killing of George Floyd is a tragedy with far-reaching consequences that impact all of us, now and into the future. Unfortunately, it reflects a long history of violence against black Americans that stretches back over 200 years.

Many of our patients and families are black Americans for whom we work hard every day to care for, love, and empower, as we do with everyone in our care. Putting patients and families first is why we exist. And so, it deeply hurts us all to witness a person's life being senselessly and helplessly extinguished, in his own community where he should feel safe and supported.

Many of our teammates at Prospero are black Americans who are suffering greatly at this moment. They are suffering because, in the killing of George Floyd, a part of their humanity and sense of hope was stolen from them. The same communities that are now disproportionately affected by the aftershocks of the killing have also been hit the hardest by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. This is a time for us to wrap our virtual arms around teammates who are suffering. We must show support for those who strive to drive positive change and put an end to the systemic racism that plagues our society.

To our black teammates, I say to you: "We see you. We hear you. We are there for you." As a company committed to improving quality of life for all no matter the color of a person's skin, we condemn the killing of George Floyd and stand together with you, as we do with the black residents of the communities we serve. At Prospero, you will always have a workplace committed to your safety and freedom from prejudice and discrimination.

It is important to be clear, unequivocal and unapologetic on one additional point: black lives do matter. At Prospero, our mission is fundamentally about the exultation of human life. We help those who are suffering with physical, mental or emotional anguish. Every day, we strive to improve the quality of life for our patients and families; to eliminate their suffering; and, to put them in charge of their life stories. We do this without regard to race, religion or sexual preference. Fidelity to our mission demands total clarity on this point, and anything less is hypocrisy.

As we struggle with acrimony and divisiveness in our communities, let us commit to dialogue and conversation so that we may build our understanding of those who have suffered the indignities of discrimination. Maya Angelou once said: *"I don't believe an accident of birth makes people sisters or brothers. It makes them siblings, gives them mutuality of parentage. Sisterhood and brotherhood is a condition people have to work at."* During these times, we must work deliberately at our collective sisterhood and brotherhood by showing our unequivocal support for our teammates of color.

Over the next several days, I will be convening a group of Prospero employees to join me in an organized effort to ensure we're fostering an open, inclusive dialogue as part of our ongoing commitment to address inequities in the healthcare system and our larger society. In the meantime, please refer to the suggestions from the Center for Advancement of Palliative Care (CAPC) for suggestions on how to take action.

How to take action, courtesy of The Center to Advance Palliative Care:

- [Sign petitions](#) calling for racial justice
- Donate to organizations that combat racism and address inequality
- Call or email your local representatives to ask them to take action against police brutality

- Become a better ally, friend, and colleague by listening and learning
- Recommended reading:
 - [How to Be an Antiracist](#) by Ibram X. Kendi
 - [White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism](#) by Robin DiAngelo, PhD
- [An Anti-Racist Reading List](#) compiled by Ibram X. Kendi for *The New York Times*

Warmest personal regards,

Doug

Doug Wengers, Prospero CEO