Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: A Survey of LeadingAge Members

Over the next three years, LeadingAge will offer members a host of practical tools and resources they can use to develop a more diverse and inclusive workforce. The effort is rooted in LeadingAge’s strategic goal to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the long-term services and supports workplace.

In early 2021, LeadingAge conducted a survey to gauge the level of DEI activities among its multisite organizations and life plan communities. The survey response rate was 36% (306 responses). Here are the survey highlights.

**Diversity of Board and Senior Leaders**

- 12% of board members are people of color.
- 12% of senior leaders are people of color.

**Percentage of Members with DEI Initiatives**

- 53% of survey respondents have DEI initiatives in place.

**Steps Members Have Taken to Implement a DEI Initiative**

- Launched a DEI council or taskforce (71%)
- Developed a DEI strategic plan (43%)
- Allocated budget and other resources (39%)
- Established a board-level DEI subcommittee or taskforce (30%)

**DEI Priorities for Next 12-18 Months**

**Top 2 DEI Priorities**

1. **69%**
   - Holding DEI training for employees

2. **65%**
   - Fostering a DEI workplace culture

**30-40% of Providers are:**

- Establishing organizational diversity strategies and goals.
- Communicating DEI activities to staff and residents.
- Recruiting diverse talent for management and C-suite positions.
- Planning for career advancement and/or succession planning.
Top Challenges in Advancing DEI Strategy and Goals

- Employee engagement (34%)
- External cultural, societal, or sector shifts (30%)
- Lack of benchmarks to define DEI goals (30%)
- Organizational crises (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic) (30%)
- Inadequate resources and infrastructure to support DEI (28%)

DEI Benefits Reported by Organizations

- Better decision-making, creativity, and innovation (29%)
- Improved workplace culture (16%)
- More diverse workforce and broader pool of candidates (10%)
- Improved cultural competency (10%)
- Managers/leaders are better connected to residents/staff of color (10%)
- 13% are beginning a formal DEI program and have not yet identified benefits.

How Organizations Define DEI Success

1 in 5 providers have established DEI goals and metrics that define success.

The top metrics are:
- General employee engagement (67%)
- Employee retention rates (56%)
- Increased racial/ethnic diversity among senior leaders (59%)
- Employee recruitment (50%)
- Increased racial/ethnic diversity among board members (50%)

Who Oversees DEI Activities in the Organization?

- Chief people officer, SVP of HR, or HR team member (38%)
- C-suite team member who is not CEO or SVP of HR (25%)
- No designated position (9%)
- CEO (8%)
- Chief diversity and inclusion officer (7%)
- Other (13%)