

### **Why is the #TraineesVote Program Needed?**

Healthcare is at a turning point. From the inequities revealed by the Covid-19 pandemic, to the impact of policies such as abortion, gun, and clean-air laws on health, healthcare workers are looking beyond just biomedical knowledge to improve their patients' lives: they want to impact the policies and community realities that make patients sick.<sup>1 2</sup> Civic Health Alliance (CHA) established #TraineesVote to address the psychological distress that many healthcare workers feel in response to witnessing human suffering without having ways to change the upstream causes of these conditions. The #TraineesVote program brings civic engagement into residency programs. Civic engagement provides avenues for advocacy and can change the narrative and direction of the moral challenge that physicians experience. Advocacy allows health professionals and healthcare delivery organizations to address the Social and Political Determinants of Health beyond care settings, which may improve their physical health and well-being and improve the lives of their patients. Indeed, Healthy People 2030 highlights that voter participation is associated with better self-reported health outcomes.<sup>3</sup> We believe healthcare workers, and trainees in particular, will experience improved health due to their civic-engagement efforts.

### **What is #TraineesVote?**

Residency is a particularly challenging time for learners to participate in activities outside of work settings. #TraineesVote represents a nationwide coalition of residency programs that encourage their trainees and peers to Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) and remain civically engaged. This program provides an easy way to keep trainees civically engaged in non-partisan activities and advocate for patients during their residency years. The program has three (3) levers for engagement that offer opportunities for residents and health systems to advocate for safe and fair elections.

- *Individual focus:* Remind residents to be civically engaged (e.g., include voter registration information in intern packets; offer lectures connecting civic engagement and advocacy to improved health)
- *Institutional focus:* Support the health system to do more civic engagement (e.g., sign up for the [Civic Health Compact](#))
- *Population focus:* Create GOTV opportunities where community members engage in clinical settings (e.g., set up voter booths in clinic or community settings).

When activated, these levers may enrich the academic experience of trainees, reduce feelings of distress, and positively impact patient and community outcomes and engagement.

### **How Will This Benefit Your Program?**

The #TraineesVote program allows residency students to develop health and civic-engagement projects during their training and explore ways to integrate civic participation into their clinical mindset. In doing so, the program offers four (4) benefits to your institution:

- Provides opportunities for residency project(s)
- Appeals to incoming applicants
- Engages your population of residents, staff, and patients in GOTV and other civic-engagement efforts
- Sets you apart as a lead institution committed to changing the healthcare culture around civic engagement

### **Who Are We?**

The Civic Health Alliance is a non-partisan coalition of health and civic leaders allied around a common cause: the advancement of America's health through civic engagement in care settings and communities.

For more information, please contact us at [partnerships@civichealthalliance.org](mailto:partnerships@civichealthalliance.org). We look forward to working with you!

<sup>1</sup> Jalili, M., Niroomand, M., Hadavand, F. et al. Burnout among healthcare professionals during COVID-19 pandemic: a cross-sectional study. *Int Arch Occup Environ Health* 94, 1345–1352 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00420-021-01695-x>

<sup>2</sup> Lubell, J. How pandemic's toll adds up to "moral injury" for physicians. American Medical Association. Published on November 11, 2021. <https://www.ama-assn.org/practice-management/physician-health/how-pandemic-s-toll-adds-moral-injury-physicians>.

<sup>3</sup> United States Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2030. Civic participation. Accessed on February 6, 2023. <https://health.gov/healthypeople/priority-areas/social-determinants-health/literature-summaries/civic-participation>