



**SASA**  
SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY OF ANAESTHESIOLOGISTS

# SASA Anti-Racism and Discriminatory Practice Policy

2022

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# SASA ANTI-RACISM AND DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICE POLICY

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## **1. PREAMBLE**

- 1.1 SASA acknowledges that due to Apartheid and other discriminatory laws and practices, there are disparities in the profession of anaesthesia. These disparities are reflected in discrimination based on: race, class, age, sex, disability, gender, religion, language and culture and aggression in many forms. There are remnants of direct and indirect discrimination in the implementation of procedures and practices that do not foster a sense of equity and equality of opportunity and belonging for all.
- 1.2 SASA's intention is to acknowledge the past, accept the lingering effects of the past on the present, and plan for a future where every anaesthetist or potential member of the Society experiences equity and belonging.
- 1.3 SASA will be guided by the Constitution of South Africa, and other relevant legislation in its efforts to transform the Society.
- 1.4 This Policy is intended to be read in conjunction with, and makes reference to, the SASA Transformation and Diversity Policy.

## **2. POLICY GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- 2.1 SASA commits itself to promoting an environment in which the dignity of all is respected and protected. Victims of racism or discrimination should never feel that their grievances are ignored or trivialised, or fear reprisals.
- 2.2 All SASA Officer Bearers, staff, membership, and the profession at large have a role to play in creating and maintaining an environment in which racism and discrimination are unacceptable. They should strive always to ensure that their conduct does not cause offence and they should discourage unacceptable behaviour on the part of others.
- 2.3 All SASA Office Bearers and Staff must take appropriate action in accordance with this Policy when instances of racism and/or discrimination within the profession of anaesthesia, but particularly within the Society or by members, are brought to their attention.
- 2.4 Allegations of racist or discriminatory words, actions or practices will be taken very seriously and investigated rigorously and promptly. If allegations are found to be true, the procedures outlined will be initiated, as appropriate.
- 2.5 Unsubstantiated, frivolous or malicious allegations will also be viewed in a serious light and the person making such allegations may themselves face disciplinary action.

### **3. SCOPE OF POLICY**

All SASA members are subject to this policy and must endeavour to comply with it by showing respect for one another's diverse racial, cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds and treating one another with dignity and respect.

#### **3.1 Policy relating to SASA Office Bearers, Staff and Membership**

SASA is first and foremost a professional society advocating for best practice in the profession with the central focus on enhancing patient safety and patient-centred care. In partnership with members, we acknowledge our responsibility to provide a Professional Society for our members and prospective members, and to educate membership and the wider community about racism, prejudice and discrimination.

#### **3.2 The objectives of this policy and procedures are to:**

- clearly communicate the Society's stance on diversity and belonging.
- create an environment wherein all stakeholders are challenged to reflect on their personal attitudes and behaviours.
- regularly interrogate practices, policies and structures through the lens of our Transformation and Diversity Policy.
- consciously develop a culture of learning and listening, to better understand how and when conscious and unconscious bias lead to discrimination and become sensitised to racist words, actions, and practices.
- communicate the attitudes and standards of behaviour expected by our members and the profession in relation to each other, colleagues, stakeholders and the public.
- eliminate from the SASA community any words or actions that arise from racist or discriminatory belief systems
- ensure that there are always choices and effective processes available to those who report incidents of racism or discrimination.

### **4. PROHIBITED BEHAVIOUR**

Any behaviour set out below is prohibited:

- Racist behaviour, or
- unfairly discriminating against any individual or group.

The contravention of the above may lead to formal disciplinary action by the Society in accordance with this Policy. It is the responsibility of every member to read and apply the requirements of this Policy.

It is the responsibility of SASA Office Bearers, Business Unit Committees and members, staff, Special Interest Group Committees and SASA Membership to read and apply the requirements of this Policy.

## 5. RACIST AND/OR DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES

Racist and/ or discriminatory practices may comprise, but are not limited to, any of the following:

- a. Direct racism or discrimination – i.e. a clear and overt act of racism or unjustifiable discrimination.
- b. Indirect racism or discrimination - i.e. when a rule or practice seems to treat everyone fairly, but actually unfairly discriminates against individuals or groups.

Examples of direct racism and discrimination could include, but are not limited to, the following utterances, actions and practices:

- Hate speech, defined as expression which goes beyond mere insults or offensive language, and which may infringe the dignity of certain persons or groups. i.e., spoken, or written words that are intended to offend, insult, intimidate, or threaten an individual or group based on a trait, attribute or identity marker such as race, gender, colour, ethnicity, ability, class, country of origin, sexual orientation, religious belief, political conviction, age etc. Hate speech can encourage further discrimination, intimidation, and/or violence toward the group or individual being targeted.
- Derogatory remarks concerning a person's race, gender, colour, ethnicity, ability, class, country of origin, sexual orientation, religious belief, political conviction, age, or any other marker of identity or difference and/or derogatory comments about a person based on any of the abovementioned attributes.
- Use of slang terms to refer to someone of another race, gender, colour, ethnicity, ability, class, country of origin, sexual orientation, religious belief, political conviction, age, or any other marker of identity or difference.
- Cat-calling, wolf-whistling or any other attempt to embarrass or humiliate someone publicly in relation to their race, gender, colour, ethnicity, ability, class, country of origin, sexual orientation, religious belief, political conviction, age, or any other marker of identity or difference.
- Physical abuse or violence e.g. hitting, shoving, tripping, pinching, slapping, punching or
- threats of physical abuse which the offender overtly associates with the victim's race, gender, colour, ethnicity, ability, class, country of origin, sexual orientation, religious belief, political conviction, or any other marker of identity or difference.
- Creation and publication of memes or other representation of persons on any social media platform which are derogatory or offensive to any person on the basis of race, gender, colour, ethnicity, ability, class, country of origin, sexual orientation, religious belief, political conviction, age, or any other marker of identity or difference.
- Wearing racist, discriminatory or derogatory insignia.
- Offensive physical gestures or body language referring to persons of a particular group.
- Deliberately excluding individuals from activities on the grounds of race, gender, colour, ethnicity, ability, class, country of origin, sexual orientation, religious belief, political conviction, age, or any other marker of identity or difference.
- Telling jokes that are derogatory or offensive to members of a particular race, gender, sex, class, sexual orientation, language, age or religious group.
- Slang terms or derogatory comments about interracial relationships.

- Making statements to or about a person or a group of persons based on their race, gender, creed, social class, sexual orientation, age or language or any other characteristic(s), that either directly or indirectly implies non-belonging and/or that the person(s) has no place within the society.
- Imitating accents or speech patterns with the intention of mocking or ridiculing.
- Negative, discriminatory or offensive comments about individuals or groups.
- Negative, discriminatory or offensive comments about individuals or groups pertaining to:
  - appearance physical ability
  - clothes intellectual ability
  - food culture
  - accent or dialect religion
  - language country of origin
  - social status family
  - financial status perceived or actual sexual orientation
- Any other form of negative or derogatory action, behaviour or treatment related to markers of identity or difference.

## **6. GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- 6.1** SASA commits itself to promoting an environment in which the dignity of all is respected and protected. Victims of racism or discrimination should never feel that their grievances are ignored or trivialised, or fear reprisals.
- 6.2** All SASA Councillors, staff, business unit and Special Interest Group committees and SASA members have a role to play in creating and maintaining an environment in which racism and discrimination are unacceptable. They should strive always to ensure that their conduct does not cause offence and they should discourage unacceptable behaviour on the part of others.
- 6.3** All SASA office bearers must take appropriate action in accordance with this policy when instances of racism and/or discrimination in the Society are brought to their attention.
- 6.4** Allegations of racist or discriminatory words, actions or practices will be given the highest priority and investigated rigorously and promptly. If allegations are found to be true, the procedures outlined will be initiated, as appropriate.
- 6.5** Unsubstantiated, frivolous or malicious allegations will also be viewed in a serious light and the person making such allegations may themselves face disciplinary action.

## **7. POLICY MONITORING ENFORCEMENT**

This policy as set out is monitored and enforced through specific and detailed procedures in the SASA Transformation and Diversity Policy.

Specifically, the Policy details procedures relating to reporting, documenting, inquiry and process toward resolving or acting upon reports of racism and/or discriminatory practice.

Please reference the SASA Transformation and Diversity Policy for further information. ([click here](#)).

Every SASA Councillor, Office Bearer, Business Unit and SIG Committee Member, SASA Staff and ultimately SASA membership are expected to read and familiarise themselves with this Policy as well as the SASA Transformation and Diversity Policy.