



June 11, 2020

Dear InSOPHE Community,

We continue to grieve the unjust killings of George Floyd while in Minneapolis police custody on May 25, 2020, and Breonna Taylor while she slept in her home on March 13, 2020, in Louisville, Kentucky. While Ms. Taylor's and Mr. Floyd's deaths are at the forefront of our minds, they are far from the first.

Since January 1, 2015, 1,252 black people have been shot and killed by police and that does not include those who died in police custody or were killed using other methods.

This problem hits close to home, as Hoosiers have also witnessed such tragedies—most recently with the death of Dreasjon (Sean) Reed on May 9, 2020. The systemic racism that led to the deaths of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and Dreasjon Reed does not come with an easy resolution; dismantling this oppression requires the collective efforts of everyone in our society.

As public health professionals, we are trained to work alongside our communities to tackle complex problems. Across the many fields we represent, we are able to address the health disparities that disproportionately and unjustly affect our community members who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC). From food security, opioid use recovery, tobacco use, to mental health, healthcare, housing, and the environment—we have a responsibility to equitably advocate, educate, and promote the health and safety of all.

Systemic racism is not a new public health crisis. Public health educators have been working for decades to address its root causes and symptoms in our communities, but still it persists. Now—more than ever—we need to listen, support, and stand alongside our BIPOC colleagues and community members to take action to create a more *just* and *equitable* society for our current and future generations.

Sincerely,

InSOPHE Board of Directors