

University of Maryland School of Medicine Department of Radiation Oncology: 2024

Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (EDI)



Committee Chair

Melissa L. Vyfhuis, MD, PhD
Assistant Professor
Tate Cancer Center
Director, Rad Onc EDI

Committee Vice Chair

Chaitanya Kalavagunta, PhD
Assistant Professor
Tate Cancer Center

"Our committee's success relies on input from the broadest representation of faculty and staff... and encouraging EDI awareness as well as educational efforts can build sustainable relationships that will lift us all."

—Melissa L. Vyfhuis, MD, PhD

Focusing on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion for all

The Radiation Oncology EDI Committee includes faculty and staff from our 7 practice sites across the state of Maryland. The committee's mission is to cultivate and sustain an environment of inclusion and diversity in which members are valued, respected, heard, and empowered. We believe that such a workplace supports success for all department members and is a basic element in providing the highest level of patient care. The EDI Committee meets regularly and maintains a vigorous schedule of activities, including:

- Ensuring continuous accessibility of updated training on unconscious bias, equity in clinical trials, and inclusion in the workplace.
- An EDI Book Club, with participation from all levels in the department.
- An EDI Virtual Film Club, with discussion and follow-up.
- Department-wide surveys to identify challenges and needs for improvement.
- Adherence to and dissemination of information about changing institutional, state, and federal requirements.
- Relevant research, publications, and commentary in the peer-reviewed literature.

Among our published research and collaborations (with links to abstracts):

- Adherence to guideline-concordant care and its effect on survival in Black patients with head and neck cancers: A SEER-Medicare analysis.
- Clinical outcomes of black vs. non-black patients with locally advanced non-small cell lung cancer.
- Identifying psychosocial needs of patients with cancer undergoing curative radiation therapy in an inner-city academic center to address racial disparities.
- Implementing survivorship care planning in two contrasting health systems: lessons learned from a randomized controlled trial.
- Insurance status is an independent predictor of overall survival in patients with stage III non-small-cell lung cancer treated with curative intent.
- Nutrition in cancer: Evidence and equality.
- Patterns of care and survival in stage III NSCLC among Black and Latino patients compared with white patients.
- Racial analysis of clinical & biochemical outcomes in prostate cancer patients treated with low-dose-rate brachytherapy.
- Restricted access to abortion, the Dobbs ruling, and radiation oncology: Standing united against reproductive injustice.
- The impact of body mass index and residence in food priority areas (FPAs) on patterns-of-care and cancer outcomes in patients with stage III NSCLC.

For more information see:

<https://www.medschool.umaryland.edu/radonc/equity-diversity-and-inclusion-committee/>

A rich environment for EDI research and collaboration

UMMC/UMGCC is a national leader in addressing cancer disparities, with racial minorities representing 48% of enrollees in clinical trials, compared to a U.S. Average of only 16%.

We value Diversity among leadership. All 4 vice chair positions are held by women and racial minorities, and 4 of 7 medical directors are women.

Our 7th and newest (2024) site at UM Capital Regional Medical Center in Largo, MD Offers cancer care to a historically marginalized and medically underserved community in Prince Georges County.