

By Shari Drakes BSN, RNC-OB

The year 2020 will be one that none of us will soon forget. Covid-19, social distancing, quarantine, and facemasks; words that were rarely, if ever, spoken just one year ago. The world looks very different than it did 10 months ago. The year 2020 not only brought us fears for our health and the health of our loved ones, but it also brought us civil and racial unrest. From George Floyd, Black Lives Matter, defund the police, protests, and in some areas riots; the world around us was, and still is, unsettled. Sometimes, everything going on around us seems distant and disconnected from our daily lives. Sometimes, it walks right in and sits down at our table. When the POWER team was around that table brainstorming about our fall POWER virtual workshop and what our topic should be, there was no question; The Reduction of Ethnic and Racial Disparities in Healthcare was the clear topic of choice.

On November 19<sup>th</sup> from 10 am until noon, the IDHI **POWER** team was able to join 40 attendees from 15 different facilities together to learn what our part is in the reduction of ethnic and racial disparities within healthcare. Dr. Debra Bingham, D.Ph, RN, FAAN, an associate professor for Healthcare Quality and Safety at the University of Maryland, school of nursing, and the founder and executive director of the Institute for Perinatal Quality Improvement, was the keynote speaker. She delivered an amazing presentation that empowered all those in attendance with the knowledge needed to be able to make a difference in their work environments. Dr. Bingham's discussion was enlightening and opened our eyes to the role we each play in reducing racial and ethnic disparities within the healthcare setting. Each member of the **POWER** team; Dawn Brown, BSN, RNC-ONQS, Tina Pennington, MNsc, RNC-NIC, and Shari Drakes, BSN, RNC-OB, also presented a portion of the Four R's (Readiness, Recognition, Response, and Reporting) from the safety bundle on reducing peripartum ethnic and racial disparities. The POWER team was able to reinforce Dr. Bingham's information and bring home the message that we can ALL make a difference.

## HOW CAN I **SPEAK UP** AGAINST RACISM?

### **S**et limits

Allow only racially respectful speech and actions in your work space. #NotOnMyWatch

### **P**ractise and prepare

Plan how to act and to disrupt conversations and behaviors that are disrespectful, racist, or dehumanizing.

### **E**xpress your concerns

Be bold, clear, and straightforward. Discuss why you are concerned.

### **A**pologize

Say you're sorry, change your behavior, and ensure reconciliation if you said or did something that perpetuates racism.

### **K**eep improving

Be courageous. Become aware of your implicit and explicit biases. Seek feedback and collect data so you can keep learning and improving.

### **U**ncover and learn

Be curious, mindful, and open to new perspectives as you deepen your understanding of racism and its harmful impact.

### **P**ersuade others

Spread the word and encourage others to #SpeakUpAgainstRacism!

