June 1, 2020, Washington DC – The Society for Maternal Fetal Medicine (SMFM) issued the statement below to its membership and staff, in light of the murder of George Floyd and subsequent protests.

“The Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine (SMFM) recognizes the impact of racism and is committed to working towards the elimination of the racism and health inequities that impact our members and the patients they serve.

In 2017, SMFM disseminated a survey asking members which issues required our attention. One of the most cited topics was health disparities. Our members recognized the disproportionate burden carried by some members of our Society and the patients they serve. At this moment, when across the nation, there are protests in response to the persistent discriminatory and racist acts that have made the headlines, we should reflect on ways that we can work together towards change.

Our Society members are tremendously affected by these events. We are persons of color, married or in loving relationships with, parent, employ or work with persons of color. In our offices and hospitals, we provide healthcare for persons of color. Racism is a public health crisis. We cannot eliminate health disparities and health inequities without removing racism. Racism is entangled into the policies of our country, and unless we acknowledge that fact, we cannot move towards a solution.

So what is SMFM doing about it? We started by listening to you. In recent years, we have partnered with grassroot organizations and nonprofit organizations that have dedicated their efforts to studying and reducing health inequities. We are educating our members and the public about the role of race and racism in healthcare inequities. We are partnering with other professional organizations to promote policies that improve access to care and reduce the role of structural racism and injustices. We are advocating for research and implementation on effective strategies to reduce health inequities. On social media, we work to amplify the voices aligned with our goal to reduce health inequities. Within the SMFM organization, we are working to increase inclusion and representation while building the pipeline to leadership. We will continue our efforts and work with our membership on this challenging but necessary task. Now more than ever, we need to be unified in our purpose.

Sincerely,

The SMFM Executive Committee

Judette Louis, MD, MPH  Brian Iriye, MD  William Grobman, MD, MBA
President  Immediate Past-President  President-Elect

Joanne Stone, MD, MS  Tony Sciscione, DO
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