

For Immediate Release: Thursday, June 25, 2020
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Mayor Arrigo and Revere Board of Health Declare Racism a Public Health Crisis

Declaration builds on ongoing racial justice initiatives and new policies to support anti-racism in Revere

Thursday, June 25, 2020 -- Today Mayor Brian Arrigo was joined by Dr. Nathalee Kong, Chair of the Revere Board of Health, and Dimple Rana, Director of Healthy Community Initiatives, to declare racism a public health crisis in the city of Revere, creating renewed urgency and paving the way for additional funding to address social determinants of health and racial equity, including behavioral health, housing stability and economic mobility. The announcement comes in support of the anti-racism rally planned for Friday, June 26.

"We have all witnessed very clearly how COVID-19 disproportionately impacts communities of color. Unfortunately, among the medical community, these realities are not new. Study after study shows that Black Americans experience greater rates of diabetes, kidney failure and heart disease, and still more show how they receive inferior care in comparison to their white counterparts," Dr. Nathalee Kong, Chair of the Revere Board of Health. "We must all focus our efforts on eliminating the systemic racism that leads to the sharp inequities in health outcomes for communities of color. Over the past several months I have seen firsthand the strength of this city, and I know that together we can rise to meet this challenge."

In 2019, the City of Revere participated in a [Community Health Needs Assessment](#) in partnership with the Town of Winthrop, City of Chelsea, MGH and North Suffolk Public Health Collaborative, which resulted in a Community Health Improvement Plan. Among its findings, the assessment identified significant racial and ethnic disparities in chronic conditions that result in higher mortality rates in Revere as compared to the state's average. Behavioral health, housing stability and economic mobility were the three priority areas identified as greatest needs for additional support and resources.

"My team and I have worked diligently over the past several years to dedicate resources and establish programs and partnerships that will address the social determinants of health that result in inequity in our city. We know there is more work to be done, with more urgency, as we see disproportionate impacts this pandemic is having on communities of color, and the continued violence and systemic racism perpetuated against Black residents in particular," Mayor Arrigo said.

Today's declaration builds on ongoing racial justice initiatives and new policies to support anti-racism in Revere, including the reinstatement of the City's Human Rights Commission and Appointment of its Executive Director. Mayor Arrigo has recommended Dimple Rana's appointment as executive director of the Human Rights Commission to the Revere City Council, which will vote on the proposal on Monday, June 29. The Commission will be dedicated to protecting and preserving the civil and human rights of all Revere residents.

“I look forward to my appointment as Executive Director of the Revere Human Rights Commission upon confirmation by the City Council on June 29 and I want to thank Mayor Arrigo for his leadership in standing up to hate and taking action in reactivating the Human Rights Commission,” said Dimple Rana, Director of Healthy Community Initiatives for the City of Revere. “The reactivation of the commission, together with today’s declaration of racism as a public health crisis, mark significant milestones in our ongoing efforts to achieve racial equity in our city. Our work to address racial and health disparities has been underway for years, with much more to be done. In all of these efforts we will pursue a continuum of community engagement as we work together to eliminate the pervasive racial inequities that exist throughout our society and in our city.”

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