

## MFL Project Executive Summary: Report. Respond. Restore.

Addressing interpersonal mistreatments at Boston University Chobanian and Avedisian School of Medicine

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Sponsors	<p>Main Sponsor: Aviva Lee-Parritz, MD, Director, Office for EVI, BUMG;  Other Stakeholders: Makaila Manukyan, Cassandra Pierre, MD; and Megan Bair-Merritt, MD; Jeffrey Schneider, MD and Shawnda Walker; Hee-Young Park, PhD; Susannah Rowe, MD</p>
Significance	<p>In the current state, there is a lack of trust for victims to come forward, in part due to lack of transparency, leading to underutilization of the currently existing reporting systems. There is no process to integrate and manage the multiple reporting systems. And, there is an overall shame and blame culture when mistreatments occur. We propose a multi-level initiative that is systemic and sustainable. This will give our community the means to effectively REPORT incidents, RESPOND to incidents, and then RESTORE a culture of trust and collegiality for everyone to thrive by enabling our community to develop a growth mindset guided by institutional values.</p>
Innovation	<p>We are proposing a novel system that is designed to promote a culture change from “shame and blame” to a growth mindset. This system is also novel because it will include integrative mechanisms to enhance the current resources and will focus on transparency and trust.</p>
Methods/Prototypes	<p>We initiated our investigations last in Fall 2022 by first meeting with our sponsor Dr. Aviva Lee-Parritz. We then conducted qualitative, semi-structured empathy interviews with multiple project stakeholders. These include leaders that are managing the current reporting systems at BUMC or are dealing with them to resolve issues. We additionally investigated reporting systems from our peer institutions, and met at least monthly with our sponsor who guided us along the whole process.</p>
Results	<p>Overall, a qualitative analysis of our semi-structured interviews revealed three categories, which we grouped into the WHAT-reporting systems, the WHO-reporters and potential reporters, and the HOW-what happens to reports and what is being reported on categories, each of which had several themes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) WHAT-reporting systems: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Existing anonymous reporting systems are underutilized</li> <li>b) Reporting systems are not well known</li> <li>c) Some systems (Ombuds office) are well utilized, but under-resourced</li> </ol> </li> <li>2) WHO-barriers to reporting for reporters and potential reporters <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Lack of trust in the reporting process</li> <li>b) Lack of transparency in reporting process</li> <li>c) Anonymous reporters are not told the outcome of the reported incident</li> <li>d) Reporters prefer to speak to a person whom they can trust</li> <li>e) Fear of retaliation if reporter’s identity is found out</li> <li>f) Too many reporting systems, unclear what to report where</li> </ol> </li> <li>3) HOW-reports and reports handling: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) No clear path regarding how to handle reports</li> <li>b) Lack of communication both between the reporting systems and with the</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

	<p>reporter.</p> <p>c) Current anonymous systems allow for unchecked potential bias in reporting</p>
<p>Proposal</p>	<p>We propose a multi-pronged initiative</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>An institutional values statement</i>- Proving our organization with clear institutional goals and guidance regarding values and expected behaviors</li> <li>2) <i>A centralized committee</i>- To integrate data from all reporting mechanisms. This committee would include broad representation and would be made up of a diverse group of leaders, that have a high level of discretion and commitment, as well as a high degree of training. The committee would integrate data from existing systems to track incidents. Finally, the committee would create and maintain online resources to document incident statistics to demonstrate transparency.</li> <li>3) <i>A centralized accessible app/web reporting tool</i>- Provides easy access for all members of our community with identification of the appropriate reporting system for each type of incident.</li> <li>4) <i>Peer ambassador program</i>- To support those that experience interpersonal mistreatment. Peer ambassadors would be trained in how to support colleagues to find the right resources, and especially, to help them figure out which reporting mechanism is best for their situation. Peer ambassadors could also act as a liaison with the Ombuds office.</li> <li>5) <i>Report, Respond, Restore Educational Campaign</i>- The goal of this effort is to increase visibility and raise awareness about the reporting process across the School of Medicine. All members of our community must understand our reporting system in order for it to be effective. Underlying the campaign message will be a focus on a growth mindset and approaches that avoid a shame and blame culture.</li> </ol>
<p>Timeline</p>	<p><u>1st year</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Institutional Values Statement- The creation of a values statement can be crafted and created through a few short meetings and asynchronous work.</li> <li>- Update and enhance existing website resources for reporting</li> <li>- Begin Report. Respond. Restore educational campaign</li> <li>- Identify training resources for Peer Ambassador Program and begin recruiting Peer Ambassadors in various sub-communities</li> <li>- Create committee to manage and plan future year initiatives</li> </ul> <p><u>2nd-4th years</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create Centralized Committee to manage and report data</li> <li>- Centralize, and when needed, develop, electronic systems for reporting incidents</li> <li>- Data Reporting to all community members on a regular basis</li> </ul> <p><u>5th year</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assess metrics of success to determine effects on culture change and reporting benchmarks</li> </ul>
<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>We believe the four recommendations we have provided are both sustainable and feasible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● First, the creation of a values statement would require only a one time commitment of interested parties, and would set the stage for a growth mindset culture.</li> <li>● Secondly, creating a centralized committee for handling the incidents would</li> </ul>

	<p>require ongoing work, including first selecting and training a diverse committee, and it would be their responsibility to ensure that the reporting website is updated and maintained. But this type of work has already been similarly implemented at other institutions, including Tufts University and the University of Vermont. In addition, we already have several already-existing websites that could serve as the foundation of our website recommendation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Third, the peer ambassador program would require a designated employee to be charged with leading and training the ambassadors as well as advertising the program. But the ambassador training will be limited to training people in how to guide reporters to the right reporting system rather than to become an individual reporting entity, and so it should be relatively easy to implement.</li> <li>● Finally, it is essential to have an effective advertising campaign both to highlight Report.Respond.Restore access points but also to drive the culture change across the campus.</li> </ul> <p><i>Risk/benefit assessment:</i> Although some parts of this initiative will require FTE for the employee in charge of the peer ambassador program, the sustainability of this initiative will be driven by service-oriented, dedicated, individuals willing to donate their time as committee members and peer ambassadors in exchange for gaining DEIA experience through this initiative, which is directly aligned with Boston University's 2030 strategic vision.</p>
<p>Challenges and Limitations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Our data collection process focused on leaders and central stakeholders. It would be informative to consider ways to incorporate the voice of all members of our community including faculty, staff, students, and employees such as security and building and grounds.</li> <li>● Resources (time and money) are also a potential limitation. However, we believe that it is a worthwhile investment in order to create long-term cultural change and increase faculty satisfaction and retention.</li> </ul>
<p>Next Steps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Our MFL team is invested in assisting with enhancing the current institutional values statement in order to create a new and visible institutional values statement that would serve as an anchor and guide across our community.</li> <li>● We hope to collaborate with stakeholders to understand availability of resources to plan out future implementation of the Report.Respond.Restore program.</li> </ul>