



American Society  
of Hand Therapists™

# ASHT DEI Strategic Plan

## ASHT DEI Vision Statement

ASHT is dedicated to creating an inclusive, accountable and diverse organization. We welcome all that bring a unique perspective and professional expertise to advance our mission and the development of science, advocacy, research and wellness of every individual in our surrounding communities. ASHT is committed to identifying and removing barriers to educational opportunities, access and success for all our community members by implementing these established guidelines:

**1** EXPLORE EXISTING ASHT GOVERNANCE POLICIES AND PRACTICES TO ENSURE INCLUSION AND EQUITY THROUGHOUT THE SOCIETY.

**2** FOSTER RELATIONSHIPS WITH EXISTING ASHT COMMITTEES AND DIVISIONS AND PARTNER WITH ALLIED GROUPS TO SUPPORT DEI IN THE HAND AND UPPER EXTREMITY THERAPY SPECIALTY.

**3** COMMUNICATE TRANSPARENTLY WITH ASHT MEMBERS AND THE HAND AND UPPER EXTREMITY THERAPY SPECIALTY ABOUT ASHT EQUITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES, PROCESSING AND INTEGRATING INSIGHTS FROM THE MEMBER COMMUNITY ALONG ASHT'S DEI JOURNEY.

## Introduction

**It is with sincere gratitude that the ASHT DEI Committee presents its strategic plan for advancing diversity, equity and inclusion in ASHT and the occupational and physical therapy professions.**

In 2020, the ASHT Board of Directors, a select task force and staff began a conversation on steps to take to move from words to strategies and actions. In examining what made other allied organizations successful in their DEI efforts, the board identified the need for a strategy to build DEI efforts across ASHT. In 2021, the board took the important action of proposing a change to the Society's bylaws that added a standing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee to its governance structure.

Our work began in August 2021 with the aim to thoughtfully infuse DEI principles throughout ASHT and the specialty, with the goal of ultimately supporting the equitable provision of hand and upper extremity rehabilitation.

Our work began with research, analysis and engagement of therapists, surgeons and other key ASHT stakeholders through surveys, interviews and listening sessions, and led to creating overarching goals and action items that provide a plan for ASHT to implement and reference to achieve long-lasting accessibility and inclusivity.

The work of the ASHT DEI Committee has been focused on how to address the needs within the scope of ASHT as a whole, while honoring the perspective of all members. We recognize this is a challenge in itself.

The plan presented here is imperfect as it stands. It is a working plan that needs to continue. This was challenging but vital work, and we are grateful to the dedicated committee members who shared their perspectives, experiences and ideas to create ASHT's first DEI Strategic Plan. But this is only the beginning. As a next phase, the committee will focus on strategy implementation – where we will explore role identification, responsibilities, actions and initiatives, timelines, metrics and the resources needed to execute the strategic plan.

We appreciate the board's support and commitment to moving these strategic concepts into action and outcomes that will make ASHT a more inclusive, welcoming organization that is strengthened by the diversity and engagement of our members.

Finally, we recognize that diversity, equity and inclusion cannot reside in one committee, division or area within ASHT or the specialty. The initiatives we will undertake in the months and years ahead will be woven into all areas of ASHT and will be part of the fabric of ASHT and its mission.

## ASHT DEI Values and Behaviors

**1**  
**INCLUSIVENESS**

TREAT ALL INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR IDEAS WITH RESPECT AND OPENNESS.

**2**  
**ACCOUNTABILITY**

ACKNOWLEDGE AND ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTIONS, PRODUCTS, DECISIONS AND POLICIES. APPLIED TO INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITIES ON THE PART OF MEMBERS AND ASHT.

**3**  
**DIVERSITY**

RECOGNIZE AND CELEBRATE THE VAST RANGE OF SOCIAL AND INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITIES OF THE PEOPLE WITHIN ASHT.

**4**  
**COLLABORATION**

WORK WITH ASHT COLLEAGUES AND PARTNERS THROUGH INFORMATION, IDEA-SHARING, AND INNOVATIVE THINKING TO CREATE SOLUTIONS BY LEVERAGING EVERYONE'S KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES.

## ASHT DEI Strategic Goals

**1**  
**FOSTER** *a culture of welcoming and belonging throughout ASHT*

**2**  
**DEVELOP** *and promote DEI resources/toolkits throughout ASHT*

**3**  
**INCREASE** *DEI education, awareness and programming within ASHT*

**4**  
**ENGAGE** *allies and stakeholders to advance/live the ASHT DEI vision*