Do No Harm

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November 19, 2026

Daniel Wechsler, MD, PhD, President
American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology
1061 American Lane, Suite 310
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4973

Dear Dr. Wechsler,

I write to you today in my capacity as chief medical officer of Do No Harm, an organization dedicated to promoting merit, fairness, and excellence in healthcare and healthcare education. With over 54,000 members, including pediatric hematologists/oncologists, we are focused on keeping identity politics out of medicine. We seek an end to divisive and unscientific trends in medicine, such as "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" (DEI) and youth-focused gender ideology.

To that end, we have seen decisive actions taken on the part of both federal and state governments. These actions include the presidential executive order "Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity," which makes clear that illegal DEI policies "undermine our national unity, as they deny, discredit, and undermine the traditional American values of hard work, excellence, and individual achievement in favor of an unlawful, corrosive, and pernicious identity-based spoils system."[1] Likewise, your home state of Georgia has been a leader on these issues, particularly in academia, by ending diversity statements in hiring at public universities, promoting diversity of thought, and making clear that "[e]qual opportunity and decisions based on merit are fundamental values of the University System of Georgia."[2,3,4]

Similarly, we believe medical societies — and their leadership — have a critical obligation to bring an end to divisive DEI practices. Given your installation as president of the American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology (ASPHO), you lead an organization of 2,000 members whose mission is to "support and empower the pediatric hematology and oncology medical and scientific community."[5] Undoubtedly, this mission reflects the profound impact ASPHO members make every day in advancing research, education, and compassionate care for young patients and their families. We hope that under your leadership ASPHO will take the necessary steps to renew its focus on excellence — a standard its members expect and its patients deserve.

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[1] Trump, D. J. (2015, Jan 21). Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity, Executive Order, The White House. Captured August 25, 2026, https://perma.cc/6BFT-KRAH
[2] McCray, V. (2023, Aug 30). University System of Georgia Bars Diversity Statements in Hiring. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Captured August 25, 2026, https://perma.cc/8VBQ-P4JH
[3] University System of Georgia. (2023, Apr 20). Board of Regents Approves Statement of Principles Regarding Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression. Captured August 25, 2026, https://perma.cc/2BZE-QGZW
[4] Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. (2024, Nov 12). Board Policy Revisions (Supporting President's Report). Meeting of 12 Nov. 2024. Captured August 25, 2026, https://perma.cc/JE65-6KCK
[5] American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. (n.d.). About · ASPHO. Captured August 18, 2026, https://perma.cc/G9VS-AUS4

There is work to be done. ASPHO has unfortunately continued to prioritize DEI to its own detriment, replacing merit with identity considerations. This is evident on ASPHO's 2027 Conference "Call for Workshops" webpage, which asks presentation submitters to "seek speakers from a diverse group of faculty," considering factors such as "gender" and "race/ethnicity."[6] Further, the webpage offered the highly ideological session "Hematology Consults in Transgender Medicine" as an example of a "previously accepted, well-received proposal."[7,8] Sadly, as we commented, this submission was "more concerned with 'appropriate terminology' than with preventing harm to gender-dysphoric children and adolescents in the first place."[9] We are glad to note that it has been removed from ASPHO's website.[10]

This example, however, does not come in isolation. Much in the way of DEI remains at ASPHO. For example, we note ASPHO's 2025 Annual Report, with its "DEI in Action" section and membership snapshot by race/ethnicity.[11] We see the DEI Special Interest Group hosted by ASPHO, with its call to "increasing diversity and inclusiveness … in the membership and leadership of ASPHO."[12] In response to a question about diversity and its role in the selection of board members, ASPHO states, "Diversity is a key value in ASPHO's Leadership Development work."[13] Additionally, the 2021 ASPHO Diversity Statement highlights "programming focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion."[14]

As noted on ASPHO's own DEI webpage, DEI has become "infused" into your association. Even a disease such as sickle cell anemia is now a "topic on DEI," according to ASPHO.[15] Framing a medical condition in this manner needlessly politicizes a hematologic disorder, which shouldn't need any relation to DEI to be pertinent to an organization like yours. Furthermore, DEI resources offered on the webpage include the "implicit association test," which has poor reliability and poor predictive validity.[16,17] Also included as a resource on the webpage is this article, "The time is now: Student-driven implementation of social justice and anti-racism focused curricula in medical scientist

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[6] American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. (n.d.). 2027 call for workshops. Captured July 17, 2026, https://perma.cc/AU4M-RFYW

[7] American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. (n.d.). Hematology consults in transgender medicine [Workshop proposal example]. Captured July 17, 2026, https://perma.cc/LN6R-ETXZ

[8] American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. (n.d.). 2027 call for workshops. Captured July 17, 2026, https://perma.cc/AU4M-RFYW

[9] Do No Harm Staff. (2026, July 17). Gender madness at the American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. Do No Harm. https://donoharmmedicine.org/2026/07/17/gender-madness-at-the-american-society-of-pediatric-hematology-oncology/

[10] American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. (n.d.). Hematology consults in transgender medicine [Workshop proposal example]. Captured August 18, 2026, https://perma.cc/JF9E-CCUW

[11] American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. (2025). 2025 annual report. Captured August 18, 2026, https://perma.cc/2LDH-HPXZ

[12] American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. (n.d.). Diversity, equity, and inclusion special interest group. Captured August 18, 2026, https://perma.cc/6R8W-B6LS

[13] American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. (n.d.). Nominating FAQs. Captured August 18, 2026, https://perma.cc/D6F2-8DWY

[14] American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. (2021). ASPHO diversity statement. Captured August 18, 2026, https://perma.cc/X878-QQWD

[15] American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. (n.d.). Diversity, equity, & inclusion at ASPHO. Captured August 18, 2026, https://perma.cc/HND8-NSFR

[16] Nagai, A. (2017, December 12). The Implicit Association Test: Flawed science tricks Americans into believing they are unconscious racists. The Heritage Foundation. https://www.heritage.org/science-policy/report/the-implicit-association-test-flawed-science-tricks-americans-believing-they

[17] Oswald, F. L., et al. (2015). Using the IAT to predict ethnic and racial discrimination: small effect sizes of unknown societal significance. Journal of personality and social psychology, 108(4), 562–571. https://doi.org/10.1037/pspa0000023

training program education," which perpetuates the notion of systemic racism within the profession and pushes political activism directly into medical education as its solution.[18]

One is left to wonder, are these truly the positions to which ASPHO continues to adhere? Will submissions to the 2027 ASPHO Conference be evaluated based on "how the session or speakers address ASPHO's core values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and health equity?"[19] Does ASPHO continue to run the DEI Special Interest Group, and for what purpose? What role will diversity play in the selection of candidates to fill the two vacancies on the 2027–2028 Board of Trustees? Is ASPHO planning on updating or removing its 2021 Diversity Statement? Does ASPHO think sickle cell disease is a DEI topic or a general patient issue? Why does ASPHO promote the discredited implicit association test? Does ASPHO believe physician-scientists need a supplemental curriculum on anti-racism?

I imagine you might be as concerned as we are that ASPHO has radically drifted from its core mission and has unfortunately subjected itself to the political whims of the day, all coming at an opportunity cost to science and clinical care. Fortunately, your role in leadership provides you with the ability to move the organization towards the vision it espouses: "improved health and a better future for children, adolescents, and young adults with cancer and blood disorders."[20]

We welcome your thoughtful consideration of the questions we have outlined above, as well as of the role excellence, as opposed to identity politics, should play at ASPHO. We trust you will agree that such ideological initiatives within medical associations must cease if we are to rebuild the confidence and trust of members and, even more critically, the public. As president of ASPHO, you are uniquely positioned to effect meaningful change, and we hope you will choose to do so. Certainly, there is no time like the present to end the misguided ideological adventures that have recently shaped ASPHO's direction in ways that warrant serious concern. It is more urgent than ever to restore excellence and merit in medicine. We welcome your response and your leadership in doing so.

Sincerely,

Kurt Miceli
Chief Medical Officer
Do No Harm

[18] Lemieux, M., et al. (2021). The time is now: Student-driven implementation of social justice and anti-racism focused curricula in medical scientist training program education. FASEB BioAdvances, 3: 439-448. https://doi.org/10.1096/fba.2020-00112
[19] American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. (n.d.). 2027 call for workshops. Captured July 17, 2026, https://perma.cc/AU4M-RFYW
[20] American Society of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology. (n.d.). About · ASPHO. Captured August 18, 2026, https://perma.cc/B7JT-242F