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Op-ed: I'm on the IU Health board. Dr. Susan Moore's death is a tragedy we can learn from.

Julius C. Trimble

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I am very troubled by the Indiana story, which has now become international, regarding the care and concerns of Dr. Susan Moore and her tragic death after being treated at Indiana University North Hospital for COVID-19.

I join IU Health's CEO, Dennis Murphy, and its board of directors in support of an independent, external review with diversity experts in regards to Dr. Moore's treatment and the ongoing commitment to improvements, transparency and sustaining attention to racial health disparities and trust in communities of color.

As bishop of the United Methodist Church of Indiana and an IU Health system board member, I am keenly aware and supportive of our stated commitment to high standards of providing excellent, high-quality care with compassion, absent of all bias. We must exhibit equal care for every person, regardless of color, age, sex or ethnicity.

Julius C. Trimble: IU Health board member calls for racial health equity following Dr. Susan Moore's death

Outside inquiry: IU Health CEO calls for external review after Black doctor alleges racist treatment

Trust is strengthened when we are who we say we are and do what we say we will do. There has been no greater time in history for the building of trust in regard to racial injustice in our city, county, state and the United States of America.

Dr. Moore's death was not merely another statistic when it comes to COVID-19. Her cries for justice were not in vain, and her video sounded an alarm that should not be dismissed as unrelated to the larger conversation of racial health disparities, systemic institutional

racism, and community health as it impacts communities of color.

This has been a difficult year for many families including over 7,800 deaths due to COVID-19 in Indiana and more than 330,000 in the United States. Families have been left without mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers.

I grieve their deaths, including the death of Dr. Moore, and pray for their families. I will continue to advocate for response, not simply research, into health care disparities, including greater investment in a workforce that has diversity, cultural humility, cultural competency and organizational response to community concerns in this present moment.

A USA Today article from November highlighted that the American Medical Association recently passed a policy that recognizes racism as a public health threat. We need to pay close attention to this article and others that augment what many Black voices have been shouting for years but has fallen on deaf ears.

I know how hard hospital workers (doctors, nurses, chaplains, respiratory therapists, etc.) are laboring, as I have family members among this group. As a brother to and father of a nurse, I know that people want to know that you care before they care how much you know. We need them, and they need us, especially in difficult times like these.

As a pastor, bishop and resident of Indiana, I grieve, though not as one without hope. As an African American, I stand on the shoulders of those who have advocated for justice and equity for all, as well as those who have fought for the dismantling of racism.

I work to remove all barriers that keep us from reaching our highest potential and experiencing beloved community.

Dr. Susan Moore will not be ignored or forgotten. Please join me in praying for her family and friends, for all who are ending this year with news of death. In this Christmastide season, we pray for peace with justice and for equality for all.

Be encouraged, even as we work to make things better today... because it will impact tomorrow.

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