

Equity – bias in healthcare

Bias can be both conscious/explicit or unconscious/implicit. Implicit or unconscious bias refers to a bias that we are unaware of. It is bias that happens automatically and is triggered by our brain making quick judgements and assessments of people and situations often influenced by our background, cultural environment and personal experiences.

Health Quality and Safety Commission put together three 15 minute videos around bias in New Zealand. *These are applicable to the New Zealand setting and contribute to both CME (for the videos) and CNE points.*

Activity

[Watch the equity learning and education modules.](#)

You can watch them together as a team in a team meeting, or watch separately, complete the quizzes and then come together and discuss as a practice team.

Module One: Understanding and addressing implicit bias

Having a bias means having preconceived ideas or attitudes about something or someone.

We might have bias toward people or groups of people due to their ethnicity, age, gender, appearance, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, religious beliefs, or for many other reasons. Bias can be both conscious/explicit or unconscious/implicit.

Becoming conscious of the biases that we hold and their potential impact on those we work with is a first step toward change.

This first module looks at what implicit bias is, and how to identify and address it.

- Introduction and purpose of module one (Anton Blank, bias expert).
- Clinician story of implicit bias (Kyle Eggleton, Northland GP).
- Clinician story of bias (Inia Tomas, emergency department consultant).
- What is implicit bias? (Carla Houkamau, associate professor, University of Auckland).
- Identifying and addressing implicit bias, individuals (Anton Blank).

Module Two: Te Tiriti o Waitangi, colonisation and racism

This module focuses on ethnic bias, particularly bias against Māori. Racial bias is important to address, as it can support and underpin racism, both personal and structural. This module provides a short overview of these issues. It touches on the role of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, as well as colonisation and racism and the ongoing impact these have on Māori health.

- Introduction and purpose of module two (Anton Blank).
- *A window on the quality of Aotearoa New Zealand's health care 2019* (Anton Blank).
- Māori consumer story (Tonia and Anthony Stevens).
- Access to health services, cultural safety in health care (David Tipene-Leach, GP, professor Māori and indigenous research).
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi, colonisation and racism (Matire Harwood, GP and associate professor general practice).
- Māori health outcomes (Inia Tomas, emergency department consultant).
- identifying and addressing implicit bias, organisations (Anton Blank).

Module three: Experiences of bias

This module looks at consumers and clinicians' real-life experiences of bias, both implicit and explicit.

- Introduction and purpose of module three (Anton Blank).
- Clinician story of implicit bias (John Bonning, emergency physician).
- Pacific consumer story (Bernadette Pereira).
- Implicit bias and Pacific peoples' health (Doana Fatuleai, Fanau Ola service manager and nurse lead).
- Addressing implicit bias, recap (Anton Blank).

What next?

After viewing the videos you could discuss them at a team meeting to discuss any key findings. Some suggested question prompts are listed here.

- What does it mean to you as a practice?
- Could you use any initiative you agree on for the Māori health plan, and ensure regular monitoring?
- Could your prescribers audit their prescribing for one area of care (as Dr Karl Eggleton did) and see if there is any difference. If there is a difference – what next?

Other resources you may find useful

- [Auckland University: Implicit Association Test and How privileged are you?](#)
- [Auckland University: What is an unconscious bias?](#)
- [New Zealand Medical Journal: Racism and health in Aotearoa New Zealand: a systematic review of quantitative studies](#) | Vol 133 No 1521: 4 September 2020
- [Mai Journal: What you can't see can hurt you: How do stereotyping, implicit bias and stereotype threat affect Māori health?](#)v | MAI Journal 2016: Volume 5 Issue 2