

What is it?

Thursday, April 7th, 2022

Our culture, background, personal experiences, and social media shape our worldview and the assumptions we have about the people around us. This perspective shapes our decisions and actions, sometimes without our awareness. Unconscious bias (also known as implicit bias) happens when our brains make snap judgments and assessments of people and situations without us realizing. We all have bias, and this can lead to microaggressions. A microaggression is a form of subtle, and still deeply hurtful, discrimination against members of historically marginalized groups. It can be verbal or nonverbal.

Why is it important?

Bias influences every aspect of our lives including healthcare. Even if we do not mean to, our lack of awareness of our biases can lead us to treat people differently based on how they appear, the color of their skin, their religion, or their gender. This can impact patient care and hiring practices.

What you can do

- Learn the subtle ways biases and microaggressions present within our clinical and learning environments
- Watch the language you use to avoid perpetuating bias and stigmatizing populations
- Speak up and out against microaggressions
 - If you notice a difference, or disparity, in outcomes for your patients, and need guidance on how to act to improve it, reach out to the Center for Health Equity Advancement for project support.

Learn more

- Learn More about your own Implicit Bias
- Reducing Racial Disparities in Health Care by Confronting Racism
- Online Module on Equity and Cultural Humility
- Hear a story from Penn Medicine faculty, staff or students related to this topic (begin listening at 45:51)

[Click here to learn more and see the full schedule of HEW events!](#)