

The University of Arizona College of Medicine

Implementing implicit bias training for healthcare providers



Patient-Provider
Communication

Clinical care teams all over the country have been working to improve care and address the unique needs of their most vulnerable and underserved patients. Despite their best efforts, research suggests that clinicians may continue to exhibit implicit bias, or prejudicial thoughts embedded into an individual's mind on a subconscious, perhaps hidden level. These automatic judgments can significantly affect the patient-provider relationship, including minority patients spending less time with clinicians than their white counterparts and feeling less involved in decision-making regarding treatment. The University of Arizona College of Medicine (COM) developed a curriculum to train medical students in recognizing and reducing the effects of implicit bias during interactions with patients. Successful results from the pilot program spurred administrators to embed implicit bias training in the school's curriculum, and require training for all students, faculty, and staff.



Effective Strategies



- ✓ Garnered support from Office of DEI leadership
- ✓ Leveraged previously established relationships with COM faculty to promote implicit bias training through presentations and outreach opportunities
- ✓ Earned the trust of COM leadership on approach to implicit bias education and incorporation into curriculum
- ✓ Established various committees and initiatives to increase access to and awareness of DEI programs



... It's become sustainable in a way that I never imagined. They are now requiring implicit bias training of pretty much everybody in the College of Medicine, you know, from the first year medical students all the way through the faculty. And all these different committees and initiatives that have grown up around it ...



I'm talking about a topic that can cause people to be pretty defensive ... A key to being able to have those conversations [was to] focus on what's positive about knowing [about implicit bias] rather than what's negative about knowing that. And I think that that's probably one of the keys to being able to do this kind of thing.



Health System and Policy Changes

- ✓ Unconscious/implicit bias training included as part of COM standard curriculum
- ✓ Diversity training required for all faculty, staff, administrative personnel of the COM
- ✓ "Diversity Champion" in each department to monitor compliance with new standards

