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For the Pharmacy Technician

6815 Winter Lake St

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Lecture 36 - Patient Safety

Implicit Bias for Pharmacy Technicians

3 hours

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Implicit Bias for Pharmacy Technician

Implicit bias refers to attitudes, prejudices, and judgments that we unconsciously hold about people or groups.

Unconscious Stereotyping

Implicit bias refers to the unconscious attitudes or stereotypes that affect our judgments and actions, often without our awareness. These biases are formed through repeated exposure to societal messages and cultural norms, resulting in automatic associations that influence our perceptions of others. While explicit biases are overt and conscious, implicit biases operate at a subconscious level, making them more difficult to recognize and address.



Unconscious stereotyping is a common manifestation of implicit bias. Our brains naturally categorize information as a way to simplify complex social environments. However, these mental shortcuts can lead to the formation of stereotypes based on race, gender, age, or other characteristics. For example, someone may unconsciously associate men with leadership roles or women with nurturing roles. Implicit biases can impact various aspects of life including education, healthcare, employment opportunities, and criminal justice proceedings.

They affect how we interpret information and make decisions about others without us even realizing it. Recognizing the existence of implicit biases is crucial in fostering a fairer society. Addressing implicit bias requires self-reflection and education. By becoming aware of our own prejudices and challenging them through conscious effort, we can mitigate their influence on our thoughts and actions.

How The Brain Works

Understanding the science behind implicit bias requires delving into the intricacies of how our brain functions.

At the core of implicit bias lies a fundamental aspect of human cognition known as heuristics. These mental shortcuts allow our brains to process vast amounts of information quickly, helping us make decisions efficiently. However, they can also lead to biases when applied inappropriately.

Research has shown that implicit biases are deeply rooted in various regions of the brain. The amygdala, responsible for processing emotions and threat detection, plays a crucial role in shaping these biases. It processes incoming sensory information rapidly and automatically categorizes individuals based on pre-existing stereotypes.

Furthermore, studies using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) have revealed that implicit biases can also be traced back to areas involved in memory formation and retrieval, such as the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex.

Understanding the science behind implicit bias also helps shed light on why these unconscious prejudices persist despite conscious efforts to override them. By unraveling how our brains work in relation to implicit bias, scientists are gaining insights into potential strategies for mitigating their impact on decision-making processes and promoting more equitable societies.

Implicit Bias In Everyday Life

Implicit biases can shape our perceptions, decisions, and actions, affecting our interactions with others on a daily basis. Recognizing implicit bias is crucial as it allows us to challenge and overcome these ingrained prejudices. One way to identify implicit bias is by examining our initial reactions or thoughts when encountering people from different backgrounds.

For example, do we automatically assume someone's competence based on their gender or race? Do we make snap judgments about their abilities or character without concrete evidence? Reflecting on these automatic responses can help uncover hidden biases. Additionally, paying attention to the language we use can reveal underlying biases. Do we use different terms or tones when describing individuals from different social or cultural groups? Are there certain words that evoke negative emotions or stereotypes?



Implicit Bias On Decision Making

Implicit bias can have a profound impact on decision making, shaping our perceptions and leading to unintended discriminatory outcomes.

One way in which implicit bias affects decision making is through its influence on perception. Research has shown that individuals with implicit biases may perceive ambiguous or neutral stimuli in a biased manner, favoring those that align with their preconceived notions. This biased perception can distort reality and result in flawed judgments.

Moreover, implicit bias can lead to differential treatment when making decisions. Whether it is hiring practices, criminal justice proceedings, or medical diagnoses, these biases can cause individuals to favor certain groups over others unconsciously. As a consequence, qualified candidates may be overlooked for job opportunities, innocent individuals may be wrongly convicted, and patients may receive suboptimal care based on their race or gender.

Understanding the impact of implicit bias on decision making is crucial for creating fairer and more equitable systems. By acknowledging these biases and implementing strategies such as diversity training and blind evaluations, we can work towards reducing the detrimental effects of implicit bias and promoting unbiased decision-making processes.

Under implicit bias, we are unaware that our biases (rather than objective facts) affect our decisions and judgments. For example, when most people hear the word “kindergarten teacher,” they are more likely to picture a female. This can happen without intention or awareness and may even contradict openly held beliefs.

Self-Reflection And Awareness

Implicit biases can influence our decisions without us even realizing it. However, by engaging in self-reflection and fostering awareness, we can uncover these hidden biases and work towards mitigating their impact. Self-reflection plays a crucial role in uncovering implicit biases.

It requires individuals to examine their own thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors critically. By actively questioning our assumptions and preconceived notions about



others, we can start to identify any hidden biases we may hold. This process demands honesty with oneself, acknowledging that everyone possesses some level of unconscious bias. Developing awareness is another essential step toward addressing implicit bias. Educating ourselves about different cultures, histories, experiences, and perspectives broadens our understanding of others' lived realities.

Implicit Bias In Education And Employment

Implicit bias can have significant consequences in the realms of education and employment. In education, implicit bias can result in unequal treatment, limiting opportunities for marginalized students. Teachers may inadvertently hold lower expectations for certain students based on their race, gender, or socio-economic status. This bias can lead to tracking students into lower-level courses or depriving them of challenging educational experiences, ultimately perpetuating the achievement gap.

Furthermore, implicit bias affects employment practices, leading to discriminatory hiring decisions and workplace inequalities. Job applicants from minority groups may face biased evaluations that undervalue their skills and qualifications. Similarly, promotions and career advancement opportunities may be unfairly distributed due to implicit biases held by employers or managers.

These consequences not only impact individuals but also contribute to systemic inequities within society. The perpetuation of implicit biases in education and employment reinforces social hierarchies and limits opportunities for marginalized communities. Addressing implicit bias is crucial for creating inclusive environments that foster equal access to quality education and fair employment practices for all individuals, regardless of their background or identity.

Implicit Bias Strategies For Change

Acknowledging and addressing implicit bias is crucial for fostering a more inclusive and equitable society. While it is challenging to completely eliminate implicit biases, there are strategies that individuals can employ to mitigate their impact. Education and awareness play fundamental roles in overcoming implicit bias. By learning about the various forms of bias and understanding how they manifest in our thoughts and actions, individuals can develop a heightened self-awareness.

This increased consciousness allows us to recognize when bias may be influencing our judgments or decisions. Another effective strategy is engaging in perspective-taking exercises. Actively seeking out diverse perspectives and experiences helps broaden our understanding of others' lived realities, dismantling stereotypes, and breaking down biases. Building empathy fosters connections with people from different backgrounds, leading to more inclusive attitudes. Creating diverse social networks is also vital for combating implicit biases and surrounding ourselves with individuals from varied backgrounds exposes us to different viewpoints, challenging any preconceived notions we may have held.

Myths About Implicit Bias

Implicit bias affects our judgments and actions towards others. As awareness of this concept grows, it is crucial to address some common misconceptions surrounding implicit bias.

Firstly, one myth suggests that only prejudiced individuals harbor implicit biases. However, research has shown that even well-intentioned individuals can possess implicit biases due to societal conditioning. Recognizing this fact allows us to focus on addressing and mitigating these biases rather than labeling individuals as inherently prejudiced.

Another common misconception is that implicit biases always lead to discriminatory behavior. While implicit biases can influence our actions, they do not inevitably translate into discriminatory behavior. By understanding our own biases and actively working against them, we can minimize their impact on our decisions and interactions with others.

Additionally, some argue that awareness of implicit bias is unnecessary if one genuinely believes in equality. However, research suggests that acknowledging and confronting our biases leads to more fair outcomes in various contexts such as education, healthcare, and employment.

By debunking these myths surrounding implicit bias, we can foster a more constructive dialogue about the subject and encourage proactive efforts to address these unconscious prejudices in ourselves and society as a whole.

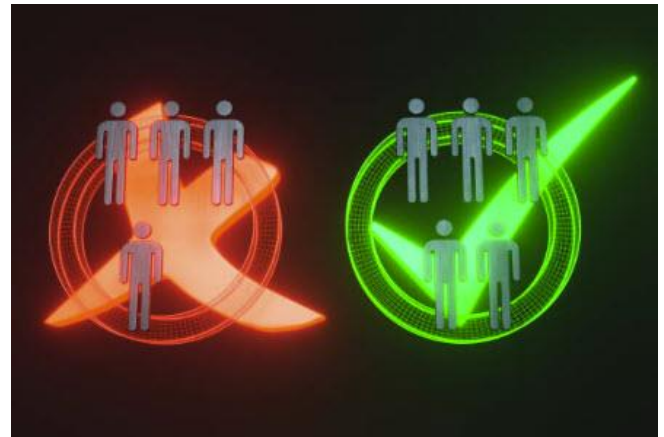
Steps Towards A Less Biased Future

Creating a more inclusive society requires acknowledging and addressing implicit biases that shape our attitudes, behaviors, and decisions. Recognizing that implicit biases are deeply ingrained and often unconscious is the first step towards promoting inclusivity. Education plays a vital role in this process, as individuals need to learn about the existence of implicit biases and their impact on marginalized communities. To foster inclusivity, organizations and institutions should implement comprehensive diversity training programs.

Moreover, implementing systems of checks and balances can reduce the influence of personal biases in decision-making processes. Lastly, fostering inclusivity requires continuous self-reflection at both individual and institutional levels. Encouraging individuals to examine their own biases regularly can lead to personal growth and increased empathy towards others.

Unconscious Prejudices

Implicit bias refers to the deeply ingrained, automatic associations and stereotypes that individuals hold towards certain groups, often without conscious awareness. These biases can be formed through years of exposure to societal messages, media portrayals, and personal experiences. While we may strive to be fair and unbiased in our decision-making, these hidden prejudices can subtly influence our judgments and actions. Research has shown that implicit biases can shape a wide range of decisions, from hiring choices to criminal justice outcomes.



For instance, studies have revealed that job applicants with traditionally ethnic-sounding names are less likely to receive callbacks compared to those with more mainstream names. Similarly, research has demonstrated racial disparities in the criminal justice system where people of color often face harsher sentences compared to their white counterparts for similar offenses. These unconscious biases operate outside of our conscious control and influence our perception and interpretation of information.

They can impact how we evaluate others' competence, trustworthiness, or even their innocence or guilt. By understanding the existence and impact of implicit bias on decision-making processes, we can begin to challenge these hidden prejudices within ourselves and work towards creating a more equitable society.

Fairness

Stereotypes, deeply ingrained within societies, play a significant role in shaping our decision-making processes. These preconceived notions, often unconscious and automatic, have the potential to influence our perceptions of others and subsequently impact fairness and objectivity. Unveiling the true extent of their impact unveils a complex web of biases that permeate various aspects of our lives. When stereotypes are utilized during decision-making, they can lead to unfair treatment based on characteristics such as race, gender, or age.

For instance, studies have demonstrated that hiring managers may unconsciously favor candidates who fit societal stereotypes associated with success or competence. This preference may result in talented individuals being overlooked simply because they do not conform to these expectations. Furthermore, stereotypes can hinder objectivity by clouding judgment and distorting reality. When we rely on preconceived notions instead of evaluating individuals based on their unique qualities and merits, we risk perpetuating unfairness and denying equal opportunities.

Recognition

Recognizing and addressing implicit biases is crucial to fostering a more inclusive and fair society. While it may be challenging to completely eradicate these hidden prejudices, there are strategies that can help minimize their impact on decision-making processes. Firstly, education and awareness are vital in combating implicit biases. Organizations should provide comprehensive training programs that raise consciousness about unconscious prejudices and their potential consequences.

By understanding the nature of bias, individuals can begin to question their own thought processes and challenge assumptions. Another effective approach is promoting diversity within decision-making bodies. Research has shown that diverse groups tend to make more objective decisions as they bring different perspectives to the table. By actively seeking out individuals from various backgrounds, organizations can reduce the influence of biased thinking.

Implementing clear evaluation criteria is equally important. When decision-makers have well-defined standards based on merit rather than subjective opinions or stereotypes, it becomes easier to identify and address any biases that may arise. Furthermore, establishing mechanisms for accountability is crucial in minimizing discrimination. Regular audits of decision-making processes can help identify patterns of bias and enable organizations to take corrective action if necessary.

Ultimately, addressing implicit biases requires a multifaceted approach involving education, diversity promotion, clear evaluation criteria, and accountability measures.

Decision-Making

In today's diverse and interconnected world, it is essential to acknowledge and address the presence of implicit bias that influences our decision-making processes. Implicit biases are deeply ingrained attitudes or stereotypes that affect our perception and judgment, often without our conscious awareness. While we may consider ourselves unbiased individuals, research has consistently shown that these hidden prejudices can significantly impact our choices, leading to unintended discriminatory outcomes.

Recognizing these biases is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, by uncovering and acknowledging their existence, we can begin to challenge and overcome them. Awareness allows us to take a step back from knee-jerk reactions and critically evaluate the factors influencing our decisions. Secondly, understanding how implicit biases shape our choices is vital for creating fairer systems in various domains such as education, employment, criminal justice, and healthcare.

By shining a light on this topic of bias in decision-making, we can foster a more inclusive society that values diversity and promotes equal opportunities for all individuals. Through education and open dialogue, we can encourage individuals to examine their own biases objectively and work towards making unbiased decisions. Ultimately, unveiling bias in decision-making requires introspection, empathy towards others' experiences, and an ongoing commitment to challenging entrenched prejudices.

Creating A More Equitable Society

Implicit biases, have long been recognized as significant barriers to achieving a truly equitable society. These hidden biases can shape our judgment and impact various aspects of our lives, including education, employment, criminal justice, and healthcare. To create a more equitable society, it is crucial to confront and address these biases head-on in decision-making processes.

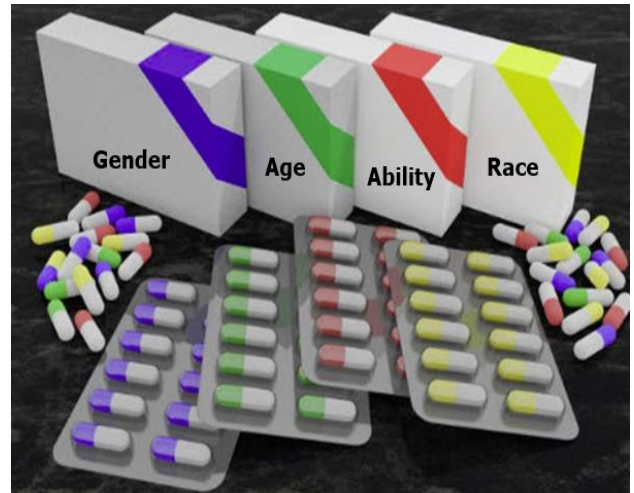
One approach is through awareness and education. By raising consciousness about implicit biases, individuals can become more self-aware and actively work towards minimizing their influence on their decisions. Furthermore, implementing comprehensive training programs for professionals across various fields can help them recognize their own biases and develop strategies to mitigate their impact on decision-making. This could involve techniques such as perspective-taking exercises or exposure to diverse perspectives.

Additionally, institutions should adopt policies that promote diversity and inclusion. By ensuring that decision-makers come from different backgrounds and experiences, organizations can reduce the likelihood of biased judgments. Furthermore, implementing standardized procedures that minimize subjectivity in decision-making processes can help eliminate discriminatory practices. Ultimately, confronting discrimination in decision-making requires a collective effort from individuals, organizations, and policymakers alike.

Implicit Bias In Pharmacy

Implicit bias In the context of pharmacy healthcare, implicit bias can have significant implications for patient outcomes and quality of care. Pharmacy Technicians, as healthcare providers, may unknowingly harbor biases that can affect how they interact with patients from diverse backgrounds. Recognizing the existence of implicit bias is crucial to address disparities in healthcare delivery.

By acknowledging these biases, Pharmacy Technicians can actively work towards mitigating their impact on patient care. Training programs and educational initiatives aimed at increasing awareness about implicit bias in pharmacy healthcare are essential tools for promoting equitable access to quality care for all patients. Understanding implicit bias is an ongoing process that requires self-reflection, open-mindedness, and a commitment to providing unbiased care.



Implicit Bias On Patient Care

Implicit bias has the potential to significantly impact patient care within the pharmacy healthcare system. Despite healthcare professionals' best intentions, implicit biases can inadvertently influence their decision-making processes and interactions with patients. Such biases may manifest in subtle ways, such as differences in communication styles or variations in treatment recommendations based on preconceived notions.

These biases can lead to disparities in patient outcomes and hinder equitable access to quality care. Research has shown that implicit biases are prevalent across various healthcare settings, including pharmacies, and can adversely affect marginalized groups. For instance, racial and ethnic minorities may be subjected to differential treatment due to implicit biases held by pharmacy professionals. Addressing implicit bias requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses education, awareness training, and institutional policies promoting cultural sensitivity.

Implicit Bias In Pharmacy Practice

Implicit bias allow individuals to hold towards certain groups of people, based on characteristics such as race, gender, or age. In the context of pharmacy practice, implicit bias can have significant implications for patient care and outcomes. It can affect medication adherence, patient-provider communication, treatment decisions, and overall health disparities. Recognizing and addressing implicit bias is crucial for Pharmacy Technicians to provide equitable care to all patients.

Pharmacy professionals must actively engage in self-reflection and education to identify their own biases and understand how they might impact their interactions with patients. This involves acknowledging that everyone has biases but striving to minimize their influence on decision-making

processes. Addressing implicit bias in pharmacy practice requires implementing strategies such as cultural competency training, diversity in healthcare teams, and promoting open dialogue about biases within the profession.

Addressing in Pharmacy Setting

Addressing implicit bias in pharmacy settings is crucial to ensure fair and equitable treatment for all patients. Several strategies can be implemented to mitigate the impact of implicit bias:

1. **Education and Awareness:** Providing comprehensive training programs for pharmacy professionals on the concept of implicit bias, its effects, and ways to recognize and address it. This will enhance awareness and promote a more conscious approach towards patient care.
2. **Standardized Protocols:** Implementing standardized protocols that emphasize unbiased decision-making processes, such as using validated tools for risk assessment or treatment plans, can help reduce the influence of implicit bias.
3. **Diverse Workforce:** Actively promoting diversity within pharmacy teams fosters a broader perspective and reduces the likelihood of biased decision-making. Encouraging a diverse workforce that reflects the patient population can enhance cultural competency among Pharmacy professionals.

Education To Counteract Implicit Bias

Addressing implicit bias in pharmacy professionals is crucial for ensuring equitable healthcare outcomes. Training and education play a pivotal role in identifying, understanding, and counteracting these biases. By implementing comprehensive programs, pharmacy professionals can develop the necessary skills to recognize their own biases and mitigate their impact on patient care. Training initiatives should encompass various aspects, including self-reflection exercises, interactive workshops, and case studies that highlight the consequences of implicit bias.

These programs should emphasize cultural competency, emphasizing the importance of respecting diverse backgrounds and perspectives. Additionally, incorporating real-world scenarios into training sessions can enable Pharmacy Technicians to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations. Education about implicit bias should not be limited to initial training but should be an ongoing process throughout a pharmacist's career. Continuous learning opportunities through conferences or online courses can keep professionals updated on research findings and new strategies for combating bias effectively.

In recent years, there has been an increasing recognition of the profound impact of implicit bias in healthcare, including within the pharmacy profession. Implicit bias refers to the unconscious attitudes and stereotypes that influence our decisions and actions, often leading to disparities in patient care. Addressing this issue is crucial for promoting equity and inclusion in pharmacy practice. To create a more equitable healthcare system, it is imperative for the pharmacy profession to take proactive steps towards dismantling implicit bias.

This requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses education, policy changes, and fostering a culture of inclusivity. Pharmacy schools and training programs should integrate robust curriculum on implicit bias awareness and mitigation strategies. Additionally, professional organizations must advocate for policies that promote diversity among pharmacy professionals. By actively engaging in these measures, Pharmacy Technicians can cultivate an environment where patients from all backgrounds receive equitable care without discrimination or biases.

Overcoming Barriers in Implicit Bias

Cultural competency (*see module 2 lesson 1 – Cultural Competency*) plays a critical role in addressing and reducing implicit bias within the context of pharmacy healthcare. Implicit biases are often deeply ingrained and unconscious, making them difficult to recognize and overcome. However, by promoting cultural competency among healthcare professionals, we can begin to dismantle these biases and provide more equitable care for all patients. Cultural competency involves understanding and valuing different cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and practices.

It requires healthcare providers to acknowledge their own biases and actively work towards overcoming them through education, self-reflection, and empathy. By doing so, Pharmacy Technicians can enhance their ability to deliver patient-centered care that respects individual differences. Moreover, cultural competency fosters better communication between Pharmacy Technicians and patients from diverse backgrounds. It enables healthcare professionals to establish trustful relationships with their patients by demonstrating respect and concern.



About the Author:

Joe Medina, CPhT, PharmD., has helped tens of thousands of Pharmacy Technicians with Tech Lectures in offering CE for PTCB and NHA CE recertification requirements and also in the passing of their respective Pharmacy Technician national exam. Mr. Medina is a former Program Director of a Pharmacy Technician Program at two community colleges in Colorado. Mr. Medina is a lifetime national advocate for the Pharmacy Technician Profession and well known on a national level through his company Tech Lectures®. Mr. Medina has helped produce several textbooks and co-authored the “Pharmacy Technician Workbook & Certification Review” through Morton Publishing and most recently “The Pharmacy Technician” through Learning Express Publications in 2018. Mr. Medina also has published over a dozen continuing education articles for national magazines. With fifteen years as a Pharmacy Technician and twenty plus years

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Lecture 36- Implicit Bias in for Pharmacy Technicians

Select the most correct answer

1. Of the following statements, which one is false?
 - a. Implicit biases are deeply ingrained attitudes and stereotypes that affect our perceptions
 - b. By raising consciousness about implicit biases, individuals can become more self-aware
 - c. Encouraging a diverse workforce that reflects the patient population can enhance cultural competency
 - d. Implicit bias refers to the conscious attitudes and stereotypes that influence decisions and actions.

2. Implicit biases always leads to discriminatory behavior?
 - a. True
 - b. False

3. What strategies can individuals employ to mitigate the impact of implicit bias?
 - a. Completely eliminating implicit biases
 - b. Engaging in perspective-taking exercises and building empathy
 - c. Labeling individuals as inherently prejudiced
 - d. Surrounding oneself with individuals from similar backgrounds

4. What is the first step towards promoting inclusivity and creating a less biased future?
 - a. Implementing systems of checks and balances
 - b. Encouraging individuals to examine their own biases regularly
 - c. Providing comprehensive diversity addressing implicit biases
 - d. Recognizing and addressing implicit biases

5. What is the potential impact of stereotypes on decision-making processes?
 - a. They can lead to unfair treatment on characteristics such as race, gender, or age
 - b. They can reduce the influence of personal biases in decision-making processes
 - c. They can foster inclusivity and create a more equitable society
 - d. They can challenge hidden prejudices within individuals

6. What strategies can be implemented to address implicit bias in pharmacy settings?
 - a. Education and awareness programs for pharmacy professionals
 - b. Implementing standardized protocols for unbiased decision-making processes
 - c. Promoting diversity within pharmacy teams
 - d. All of the above.

7. What area of the brain does not play a crucial role in shaping implicit biases?
 - a. Frontal lobe
 - b. Amygdala
 - c. Hippocampus
 - d. Prefrontal cortex

8. Awareness of implicit bias is unnecessary if one genuinely believes in equality.
 - a. True
 - b. False

9. How can implicit bias affect patient in the pharmacy setting?
 - a. It can lead to disparities in patient outcomes and hinder equitable access to quality care
 - b. It can result in differences in communication styles and variations in treatment recommendations
 - c. It can inadvertently influence decision-making processes and interactions with patients
 - d. All of the above

10. What are some strategies that can help minimize the impact of implicit biases on decision-making processes?
- a. Implementing clear evaluation criteria and promoting diversity within decision-making bodies
 - b. Encouraging individuals to examine their own biases regularly and providing comprehensive diversity training programs
 - c. Regular audits of decision-making processes and establishing mechanisms for accountability
 - d. All of the above

Submit answers online to the following URL:

<https://form.jotform.com/241496785768175>