

Microaggressions in Healthcare: Between Healthcare Providers

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CONTINUING THE DISCUSSION

Microaggressions can occur in a variety of ways in healthcare settings.



Goals of Presentation

- Continued understanding of how microaggressions present in healthcare
- Improved understanding of how microaggressions can impact maintaining a diverse workforce
- Changing the workforce to be more inclusive, including hiring practices
- Next Steps



Microaggressions: Definition

Commonplace behavioral indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, communicating hostile, derogatory or negative attitudes toward marginalized groups.

Not only can microaggressions affect one's access to power, resources, and opportunity, but they could also contribute to the persistent disparities faced by marginalized groups among healthcare professionals as well as patients.



Harmful Effects of Microaggression on Healthcare Providers

The following have been noted as effects of microaggressions on healthcare providers:

- Depression
- Low quality of life
- Job dissatisfaction
- Physician burnout

Workplace mistreatment, such as discrimination, can create harsh work environments that can lead to burnout and suicidality



Experiences from SW Staff of Color

- Often feel invisible to other team providers
- Are not consulted with as often as their white counterparts by physicians
- Do not feel included as part of the treatment team
- Often are the staff to raise concerns about discrimination and bias that they witness and experience when providers are discussing common patients of color



What can we do?

First, we must start with our institutions:

- Creating and supporting the work of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committees
- Institutional policy and codes of conduct:
 - Include ways to document microaggressions
 - Transparent about the frequency of such events
 - Approaches to address them
- Create systems of accountability to help mitigate such occurrences across student, resident, patient and faculty roles.
- Bystander to Upstander- develop skills to disrupt microaggressions



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- Leaders of academic medical centers need to prioritize and encourage all team members to consider issues of DEI across all strategy areas.
 - Including approaches on how to address microaggressions, bias and discrimination
 - Fund required resources for training and professional development of facilitators to develop responsive programming



Disarming Microaggressions

| Microintervention strategies | | |
|--|--|--|
| Directed Toward Perpetrator Microaggressions | Directed Toward Institutional Macroaggressions | Directed Toward Societal Macroaggressions |
| | Make the "Invisible" Visible | |
| communication | Keep a log of inequitable practices as you see them Run your observations by allies who can corroborate Solicit feedback from fellow coworkers/students Monitor trends around recruiting, hiring, retention, promotion | Create partnerships with academ institutions to analyze data relate to disparities in education, health care, employment Disseminate research on disparit trends to general public and med Organize peaceful demonstration |
| Disa | rm the Microaggression/Macroaggress | sion |
| State values and set limits Describe what is happening Use an exclamation Use non-verbal communication Interrupt and redirect | Boycott, strike, or protest the institution Request meetings with intermediary or senior leadership to share perspectives Exercise right to serve on boards to voice your concerns Delineate financial repercussions of continued macroaggressions Notify press or other media outlets | Protest political leaders who reinforce inequity and division/ support those who do not Revise and veto unjust communi- policies, practices, and laws Lobby to your congressmen or senators Attend televised town hall meetings to voice your concerns |
| | Educate the Offender | |
| Appeal to the offenders values | Describe the benefits of workforce diversity Institute long-term mandated training on cultural sensitivity for all levels Infuse multicultural principles into organizational mission and values | Raise children to understand concepts like prejudice, discrimination, and racism. Challenge silence/lack of response to macroaggression Identify shared mutual goals among people Increase community's exposure positive examples of diverse cultures to offset negative stereotypes and biases |
| | Seek External Intervention | |
| Report the act Seek therapy/counseling Seek support through spirituality/religion/community Set up a buddy system Attend support groups | Report inequitable practices to your union Create networking/mentoring opportunities for underrepresented employees/students Maintain an open, supportive, and responsive environment Call on consultants to conduct external assessments/cultural audits | Foster cooperation over competition Foster a sense of community belonging Create caucuses for allies and targets Participate in healing circles, vigils, memorials that remind us the consequences of hate |

Sue, Derald Wing; Alsaidi, Sarah; Awad, Michael N; Glaeser, Elizabeth; Calle, Cassandra Z; Mendez, Narolyn Disarming Racial Microaggression: Microintervention Strategies for Targets, White Allies and Bystanders. American Psychological Association 2019. Vol. 74 (1) 128-142



Racism impacts the health and well-being of patients, from the care we provide to the inequitable outcomes we see in the health disparities literature.

Despite efforts to diversify the workforce, POC continue to describe their work climate as hostile, invalidating and insulting because of the many microaggressions that assail their race, restrict their work options, and lower their productivity.



Discussion

- What are some ways that your organizations have made efforts to address institutional racism in healthcare?
- Is this a topic that your organization is addressing at all?
- What are some of the ways that you can move the conversation forward?



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