Implicit Bias Training in Nursing Education

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Topic: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Category: Quality Improvement/Evidence-Based Practice Project

Abstract

Background/Introduction
Implicit bias refers to unacknowledged attitudes, beliefs, or emotions which can lead to discriminatory actions. Implicit bias not only negatively impacts health outcomes, but also limits our ability to recognize and address the constraints that hinder healthcare delivery.

Purpose
Implicit bias training educates students about perpetuating discrimination, encourages students to confront biases, promotes inclusive excellence and equal treatment in nursing, and addresses the root causes of inequality. Implicit bias training teaches students strategies to reduce discriminatory thoughts and actions while providing actionable tools to mitigate bias. The training addresses the root causes of inequality through education on the historical, social, and structural contexts that perpetuate bias. Lastly, this training meets the new requirements for implicit bias training in nursing curricula and licensing mandated by State Boards of Nursing. Regulatory compliance provides an impetus for bias training.

Methods or Processes/Procedures
Incorporated implicit bias training into the nursing curriculum which was guided by current research and best practices from the ANA, AACN, and Future of Nursing report recommendations.

Results
Students reported increased awareness of personal implicit biases and being better able to identify biased assumptions in scenarios. Evaluations revealed a high satisfaction with training relevance to practice.

Limitations
None

Conclusions/Implications for Practice
Implicit bias training should be widely implemented in nursing programs as it can help meet emerging requirements mandated by State Boards of Nursing. Training nurses early in their education in recognizing and mitigating implicit bias is crucial for building bias awareness before they enter clinical practice. This can reduce biases negatively affecting patient care. Nurses trained in recognizing their own biases are better equipped to provide equitable, culturally competent care across diverse patient populations. Mitigating bias improves quality of care and sets up a culture of inclusive excellence in nursing education. implicit bias training has far-reaching implications for transforming nursing education and practice to be more equitable and socially-just.

Biography

Dr. Lois Lopez is a faculty development specialist for Chamberlain University, designing innovative and engaging nursing curricula for undergraduate and graduate nursing programs integrating social determinants of health, diversity, equity, and inclusion. Her continuing education course, "Addressing Implicit Bias: A Primer for Healthcare Providers," has reached thousands of nurses nationwide. Dr. Lopez has presented locally, nationally, and internationally on nursing topics including incivility, human trafficking, and implicit bias. She is an active member and subject matter expert for Nurses International, a nonprofit focused on eliminating barriers and empowering nurses in over 150 underserved countries.

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