

Addressing Positionality and Implicit Biases

Healthcare providers must be aware of their positionality. That is, their particular social location and how it shapes their access and power in society. Positionality is shaped by many factors; some viewed as generally more fixed (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, nationality) and others which are more subjective or contextual (e.g., life history, personal values).

A healthcare provider's positionality may impact their implicit biases—or their unconscious pre-conceived attitudes or stereotypes about groups of people. A common implicit bias is when healthcare providers assume all patients are heterosexual and cisgender. Other common implicit biases about LGBTQIA+ people include assuming they are sexually promiscuous, assuming any healthcare for transgender people relates to their gender identity, and using harsh and disapproving tones and body language toward LGBTQIA+ patients.

1. Implicit Bias Module Series

This series of modules provide a model by Ohio State's Kirwan Institute on implicit bias. The modules introduce you to insights about how our minds operate and help you to understand the origins of implicit bias. You will also examine your own biases and learn strategies to address them.

2. Guide on Implicit Biases and Case Scenarios

This guide by the National LGBT Health Education Center includes case scenario exercises can be used for self-learning or to teach health center staff how to identify and address implicit bias related to LGBTQ patients.

3. Systematic Review on Implicit Bias Toward LGBTQ+ Patients

This systematic review by Morris et al. (2019) examines the effectiveness of programs to reduce health care student or provider bias towards LGBTQ patients.