

# Unconscious Bias and the Decisions we Make

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# Unconscious Bias

An unconscious bias is an association or assumption held by an **individual or group** which affects attitudes and behaviours. Also known as implicit stereotypes, these biases are often displayed subtly and without premeditation or intention: through body language, mannerisms and conversation. Conscious bias is a wilful act to treat someone differently (+\-) because of a protected characteristic they have.



# The process....

Every second, we receive about 11 million pieces of information. Only 50 are captured by our brain with just 7 of those processed by our working memory. How does the brain manage this? To process this mass of information, our brain filters and orders incoming information extremely quickly by using mental shortcuts. Although these shortcuts can be useful to act quickly when exposed to information overload, they can also lead to poor or ineffective decisions and we can fall prey to unconscious bias.



# Unconscious bias

## Royal Society



# In Group/Out Group

- In-group perception – inherent positivity, creative, independent, individual, honest.
- Out-group – inherent negativity, members are similar to each other and subject to stereotypes



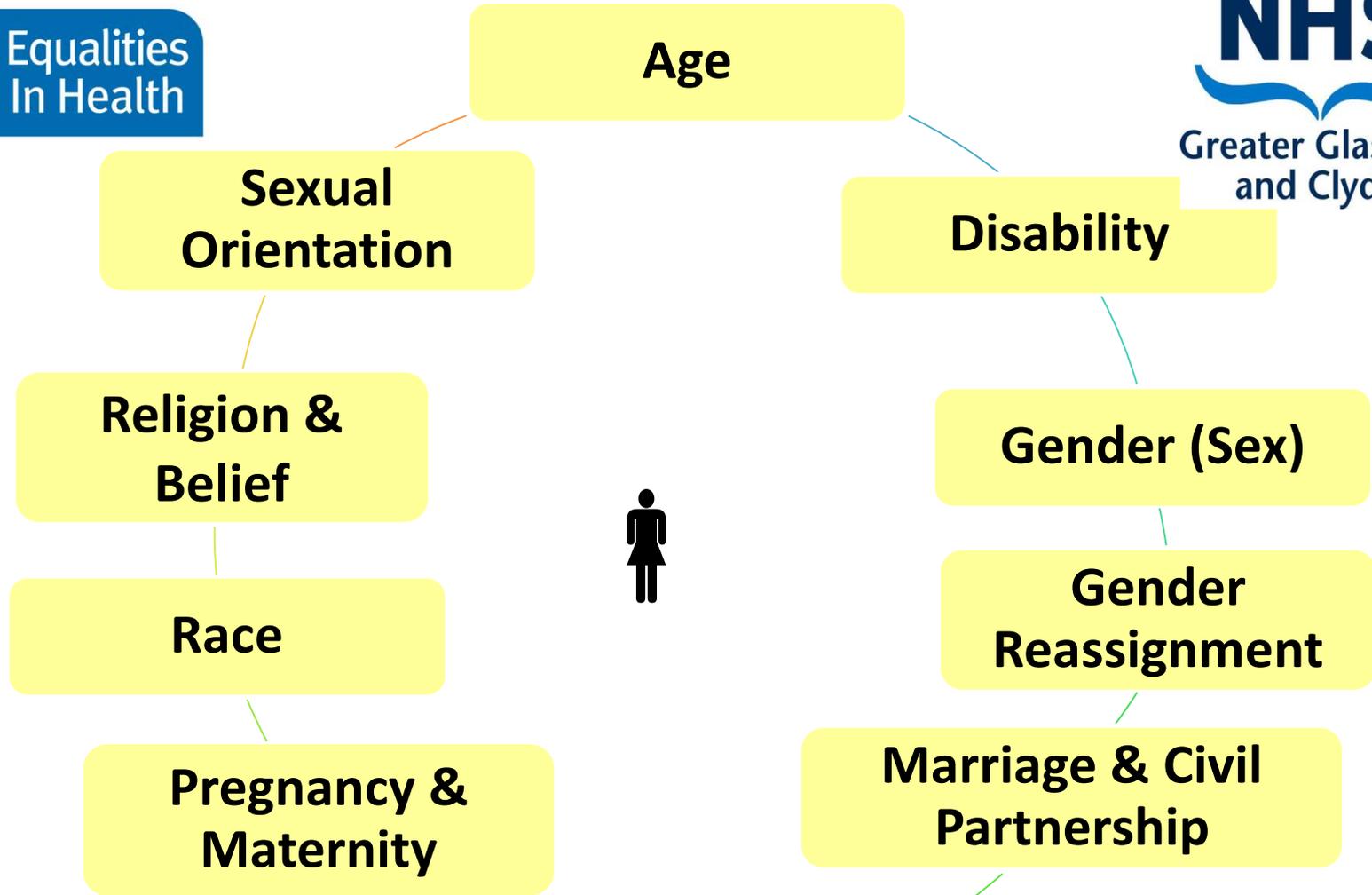
...so I just felt like I was the go to authority on working with BaME families. Colleagues would come to me regularly with questions about Chinese families or Roma families or Asian Families and I'm like...'how am I meant to know any more than you?'

BME Health Visitor



# Protected Characteristics





# How do you think unconscious bias might affect decision making in applying the Visiting Times Policy?



# Solutions?

- Slow down decision making and communication
- Reconsider reasons for decisions
- Question cultural stereotypes
- Monitor each other for unconscious bias
- Comply with legislation



<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

Implicit bias – social attitudes test



# Questions

