

Unconscious/Hidden Bias

Equality and Human Rights Team



Cover today

- Outline content delivered to staff groups
 - Examples/case studies
 - Steps to Challenge bias
 - Questions



Call to Action

In her 2017 review, 'Race in the Workplace', Baroness McGregor-Smith highlights 'structural, historical bias' that prevents ethnic minorities, women, disabled people and others from progressing in their careers. She recommended that the UK Government create a free, online unconscious bias training (UBT) resource to tackle the unconscious bias that she described as 'much more pervasive and more insidious than the overt racism that we associate with the 1970s' (McGregor-Smith, 2017).



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.



Understanding Unconscious Bias

Royal Society



A man and his son are involved in a serious car crash. The father dies at the scene and his son is rushed to hospital. He's wheeled into surgery where the surgeon says – 'I'm sorry I can't operate on him – he's my son'...



1991
3%



2019
12.9%





Ted Thornhill





Where do we get our assumptions from?

- Historical events/experiences
- Family
- Friends/colleagues (workplace)
- Representation of groups in the media
- Education



We group people by social categories and create 'in' groups and 'out' groups.



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



Is it relevant to NHSGGC?



“...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



‘When I walked in my manager was mimicking the accent of an Asian family member who had been asking questions. Colleagues were clustered around. I remember suddenly feeling really unsafe being in the space. I’m a confident person and a senior member in the team but I felt sick at the thought of challenging it. I just felt powerless’.

BME senior clinician



If left unchallenged...

'The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racial stereotyping'





- Slow down decision making and communication
- Reconsider reasons for decisions
- Question cultural stereotypes
- Monitor each other for unconscious bias
- Meet our legislative requirements in the Equality Act 2010 and the PSED



- Development of UB e-learning module
- L&E face to face training in key areas
- Deployment of Human Library resource
- Evaluation of learning into practice
- Creating Inclusive Workplaces Guidance
- Ongoing commitment to EQIA of policies and service redesign and equality outcomes



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

Implicit bias – social attitudes test



Thank you

