

Implicit Bias in Mental Health

Program Description

Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, that we may not be aware of, can influence our interactions with our clients; how we diagnose, screen, respond to crisis, and treat them. Mental health professionals work with diverse populations and understanding how implicit bias impacts our decision making is key to providing ethical services and quality client-centered care.

This workshop will explore several types of unconscious biases. Discussions and activities will assist participants in examining their own personal biases and how these biases impact everyday interactions in various settings (school, work, health care, justice system, etc.). Case studies will be utilized to increase participants awareness of the effects of implicit bias on our clients; and strategies to reduce unconscious bias will be discussed.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this workshop, participants should be able to:

1. Explain several types of unconscious biases.
2. Describe the effects of unconscious bias in everyday interactions with clients.
3. Identify personal biases and how they impact clients and services provided.
4. Develop and practice strategies for disrupting and reducing unconscious biases.

Target Audience

This workshop will be beneficial to social workers, counselors, mental health and health care providers, case managers, human service workers, and anyone who is interested in the topic.

Contact Hours

3.0 credit hours

Program Agenda

9:00 - 10:30 AM	Unconscious Bias, Stereotypes, and Microaggressions in Interactions with Clients/Patients; Mental Health Disparities and Barriers to Treatment
10:30 - 10:45 AM	Break
10:45- 12:00 Noon	Strategies for Disrupting and Reducing Unconscious Biases
12:00 - 12:15 PM	Discussion Q/As

Faculty

Andrea Murray-Lichtman, PhD, LCSW, MSW is a Clinical Associate Professor and the Interim Associate Dean of the MSW program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Social Work. She has a combined 21 years of physical health,

mental health, and substance misuse treatment experience within integrated healthcare and criminal-legal settings serving people living with comorbid mental health, substance misuse, and chronic physical health diagnoses. Andrea received the Dean's Excellence in MSW Advising Award in 2021 and 2018 and the Dean's Recognition of Teaching Excellence Award in 2015. Andrea's research interests include racial equity in access and outcomes across social systems, racial consciousness, and the differential occurrence and impact of traumatic experiences. She partners with the criminal-legal system to provide mental health and substance use clinical consultations. Andrea served on the Council on Social Work Education Task Force for Anti-racism. She has presented and consulted nationally and internationally on co-morbid mental health and substance use disorders and interventions within the criminal legal system, culturally relevant mentoring, trauma-informed care, equity-informed wellness practices, and spirituality and mental health.