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A study of cultural competence and implicit bias amongst healthcare students

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Cultural competence is defined as the ability of providers and organizations to effectively deliver equitable and unbiased health care that meet the social, cultural, and linguistic needs of a culturally diverse patient body. By 2050, minority populations will increase to 48 percent of the US population and Hispanics will represent 24.4 percent of the total population (US Census, 2010). This demographic shift brings challenges and opportunities to universities and organizations alike to create policies and curriculums that foster quality health care amongst students, while also contributing to the eradication of implicit biases that may unwittingly perpetuate healthcare disparities amongst racial and ethnic minority groups. Our research looks to answer the critical question of whether health care students are adequately prepared by their universities to deliver healthcare services that are culturally competent and sensitive? Are students aware of the importance of implicit biases and what measures can be taken on an institutional level to ensure that healthcare students are adequately prepared to deliver equitable healthcare to all minority groups? This study looks to gauge the understanding of cultural competence amongst a group of City Tech healthcare students by utilizing a cross-cultural survey of cultural competence questions dealing with poverty, age, stereotypes, illiteracy, homophobia, language, religion, and racism. Our data and research results suggest that many health care students are not able to properly define, nor fully implement cultural competence and sensitivity in their clinical settings. This data is significant because administrators and educators need to incorporate more learning strategies and relevant clinical training so that students may enter the work force better equipped to deliver the highest quality of care to all patients, regardless of race, ethnicity, cultural background, English proficiency or literacy.

Biography

Professor Zoya Vinokur is an alumn of New York City College of Technology. Professor Vinokur teaches Radiographic Procedures and Clinical Education. She received her Bachelor of Science degree from Long Island University, C.W. Post, her Master of Science degree in Health Services Management and Policy from New School University and holds advanced certification in mammography. With over 20 years of professional and teaching experience she has taught a variety of courses in the medical imaging discipline including, Radiographic Procedures and Positioning, Pediatric Radiography, Advanced Medical Imaging II in a baccalaureate degree program, and Clinical Education. Professor Vinokur worked in major Metropolitan Hospitals in New York and New Jersey she brings her extensive knowledge and background to the classroom as well as in to clinical settings. She is licensed to practice in both New York and New Jersey States.

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