Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Older Adult Health Care

JESS MAURER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MCOA
“Ageism pervades many institutions and sectors of society, including those providing health and social care, the workplace, the media and the legal system.”

“Ageism...is associated with a shorter lifespan, poorer physical and mental health, slower recovery from disability and cognitive decline.”

WHO Global Report on Ageism, March 2021
AGEISM

HEALTH IMPACT

Physical health

Mental health

Social well-being

REDUCED LONGEVITY

 PHYSICAL ILLNESS

RISKY HEALTH BEHAVIOURS

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

INAPPROPRIATE MEDICATION USE

MENTAL DISORDERS

COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT

GENERAL WELL-BEING

SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS

RESTRICTED SEXUALITY

FEAR OF CRIME

VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

POVERTY AND FINANCIAL INSECURITY

ECONOMIC BURDEN ON SOCIETY

ECONOMIC IMPACT
Power in Aging Project

Ending **ageism** through conversation and action. The formula is simple:

1. **Ageism is bad for us and bad for systemic change**
2. Awareness of age-bias reduces acts of ageism
3. Conversations that help people become aware of age-bias will lead to a more age-positive Maine and support for change!
Disrupting Ageism in Health Care

- Be intentional – acknowledge ageism is in your practice
- Include age in all equity discussions
- Examine your culture
- Identify ageist beliefs and practices
- Use the 4M framework to disrupt stereotypes about older patients
The Lightning Panel: Promising DEI Practices in Maine Organizations
Advancing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in the Delivery of Age Friendly Health Care

Panelist: Noël Bonam, Maine State Director, AARP, Portland, ME
Three Lessons: Organizational Equity Assessments

UMaine Geriatrics Colloquium
October 25, 2021

Jake Grindle
Senior Program Officer
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The Maine Health Access Foundation:

Our Story, in Short
Lesson 1:
Be explicit (not exclusive) about race
Lesson 2:
Get some external help to examine your programs, governance, and public voice
Lesson 3:

No Closure…
Embracing a Culture of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Marwa Hassanien, MS, M.Ed.
System Director of DEI
Tim Dentry’s Vision

• **Tim’s Vision**
  • Systemwide plan to eliminate racism and all forms of discrimination, promote a strong future for social and medical justice
  • Identify all explicit and implicit bias within NLH and embrace those ideals of social/medical justice
  • Difficult discussion is a productive one and should leave us with hope for what is to come (not sadness for past)
  • We should speak the words that are reflective of a supportive and affirming culture for all

• **System work**
  • System DEI Council and DEI Director
  • Review of policies, trainings, mandatory educational sessions, forums, disciplinary actions that back up vision of social/medical justice
  • TimTalk podcasts
  • Trans policy/changing Cerner EMR
  • Press Ganey survey to gauge staff and patient attitude and satisfaction on DEI issues (were needs based on culture, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity respected?)
Laying the groundwork...

• Maine is not a racially or ethnically diverse state
  • 96% of the population is white
• Celebrate diversity by creating organizational principles (no ‘color-blind’ approach)
  • Culturally literate and respectful of differences
  • Understanding DEI terms. Knowledge is power!
• What can you do as a leader? Self-reflection and awakening to the struggles of marginalized groups
  • Good start, more needs to be done for systemic change
  • Equity of care for all people is at the core of what you believe in as nurses
• Building empathy and having courage to do the internal work
  • Address difficult, uncomfortable issues rather than tip toe around them
Each of us play a role ...

- To be effective allies, leaders, mentors, and colleagues
  - Examine your own internal biases that inform your thoughts and actions
  - Interrupt bias and pushback on microaggressions
  - Understand how privilege and inequities create barriers
  - Breakdown barriers, confront challenges head on
  - Make sure everyone is seen, heard, and empowered

- Concept of cultural humility
  - Diversity means difference—different views, understandings, and values; when conflicts arise, think about your inclusiveness
  - Become more aware of and support colleagues who are experiencing marginalization
  - Essential to build trust among colleagues within organization
  - Sustains a culture of belonging and respect for all
  - Create an environment that is supportive of collegial collaboration
Each of us play a role ...

- All employees must be empowered
  - Horizontal violence is prevalent in workplaces today
  - Keep an eye on low self-esteem and self-hatred with internalization
  - Skills, knowledge, and resources necessary to take action against oppression
  - This can affect recruitment, retention, and also patient outcomes
- Solutions:
  - Acknowledging that a problem exists
  - Distress tolerance (feeling uncomfortable having these discussions is normal!)
  - Embed good practices and have accountability; call out culture
  - Not only do you welcome difference, but truly value it through adapting leadership style accordingly (rather than sticking to a one-size-fits-all model)