Title

Collegial Physician Weight Bias: A National Survey Project to Guide Implicit Bias Training

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Image 1. Sample Implicit Association Test words and images used to assess implicit physician weight bias.

Background: Implicit bias among physicians contributes to healthcare disparities. Prior investigations have described physician weight bias toward patients, but no literature exists regarding inter-physician or "collegial" weight bias (CWB). This is needed to guide training for more inclusive medical workplaces.

Objectives: Introduce a survey and present pilot results for use in implicit bias training guidance for more inclusive medical workplaces. This study describes the degree and nature of CWB. We anticipate that implicit (IWB) towards colleagues exists among physicians, and is related to explicit (EWB)and professional weight bias (PWB).

Methods: In this cross-sectional study, a survey was created to measure physician CWB. It included the investigator-developed Weight-Based Professionalism and Collaboration Scale, and adaptations of 2 previously validated measures: the Implicit Association Test (IAT) and the Crandall Antifat Attitudes Questionnaire. The IAT has users sort images (obese and average weight physician silhouettes) and words (good and bad physician adjectives) to make inferences about IWB. The other measures have users rate their bias on a Likert scale. The survey was distributed via medical society message boards, listservs, and social media.

Results: 617 physicians completed the survey, ages ranged 22-83 years (mean 44 years); 78% were EM specialists, 75% were Caucasian, 58% were female. Analyses revealed that 87% had some degree of IWB, and older, male, and non-overweight participants had increased bias on all measures. There were also positive associations between IWB andEWB/PWB.

Conclusions: Most participants had implicit CWB; and older, male, and non-overweight physicians had the most. There were direct, positive associations between IWB and EWB. Participants with high IWB reported negative views and decreased intents to collaborate with overweight colleagues. This knowledge highlights disparities faced by overweight physicians and can guide workplace bias training.

Table 1. Correlations among study variables.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. IWB	1					
2. EWB	0.24**	1				
3. PWB	0.16**	0.73**	1			
4. Age	0.15**	-0.10*	-0.02	1		
5. BMI	-0.10*	-0.10*	0.11*	0.19**	1	
6. Sex	0.10*	0.10*	0.06	0.20**	0.19**	1

* correlation significant at p<0.05
** correlation significant at p<0.01

IWB, implicit weight bias; *EWB*, explicit weight bias; *PWB*, professionalism & collaboration weight bias.