File #: Res 0512-2018, **Version:** *

Res. No. 512

Resolution calling on New York State to require medical schools to train all students about "implicit bias".

By Council Members Rosenthal, Rivera, Ayala, Reynoso, Lander, Cornegy, Dromm, Chin, Ampry-Samuel, Cumbo, Adams, Rose, Barron and the Public Advocate (Mr. Williams)

Whereas, In recent years, the health care community has shifted its focus to further address health inequity and its impact on individuals from traditionally marginalized communities, including people of color, people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, and/or gender non-conforming (LGBTQ/TGNC), and those who are female; and

Whereas, According to Cornell University, implicit bias is defined as an unconscious, unintentional bias that, unlike explicit bias, exists when an individual does not have direct control or understanding of their perceptions and motivations; and

Whereas, Research has shown that people have implicit attitudes towards many different topics, such as race, gender, age, disability, and sexual orientation, and several general patterns of bias have repeatedly been shown in the research, such as socially-dominant groups often having implicit bias against subordinate groups; and

Whereas, Research shows that racial disparities can have an impact on a person's health outcomes and care in New York City, which is illustrated by the City's maternal mortality and morbidity rates; and

Whereas, Statistics show that about 30 women in the City die each year of a pregnancy-related cause and approximately 3,000 women "almost die" or experience morbidity during childbirth; and

Whereas, Black, non-Latina women are the most likely to experience maternal mortality or maternal morbidity; and

Whereas, According to the Brookings Institution, childbirth-related deaths disproportionately affect Black women, regardless of their income or education; and

Whereas, There are many other examples of health inequities potentially resulting from implicit bias; and

Whereas, National surveys of individuals who are transgender reveal that one-third of those who saw a health care provider had at least one negative experience related to being transgender, and nearly one-quarter reported that they did not seek the health care they needed due to fear of being mistreated as a transgender person; and

Whereas, According to the Gay Men's Health Crisis, despite the declining rate of new infections per year, New York leads the nation in the number of new HIV cases, and 20% of people do not know they are infected; and

Whereas, In 2016, 77 percent of new HIV diagnoses and AIDS-related deaths in NYC were among African Americans and Hispanics; and

Whereas, As of now, not all medical students in the state of New York receive implicit bias training, which could hamper the goal of health equity for all; and

Whereas, All implicit bias trainings must include an explicit bias component, because medical professionals may also possess explicit biases which can result in the harm of a patient; and

Whereas, It is critical to have well-trained and culturally competent providers who are educated about implicit bias to ensure the fairer treatment of all individuals, and to ensure medical outcomes are not skewed because of bias, whether implicit or explicit; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, The Council of the City of New York calls on New York State to require medical schools to train all students about "implicit bias"

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08/03/2018