

Racism in Healthcare Clinical Education: An Educators Perspective

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Where It Began

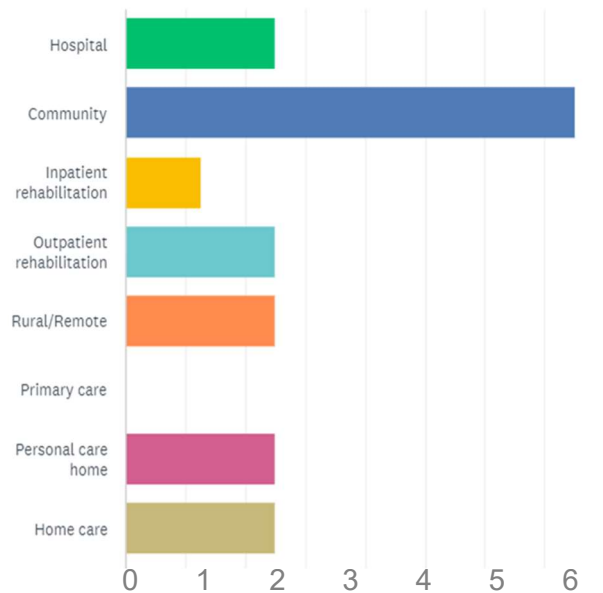
Racism is ingrained within the Canadian healthcare system and contributes to health injustices and inequalities for Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC). Racism affects patients, healthcare workers, and students alike. However, the literature is limited when examining the impact of racism during fieldwork placements for occupational therapy (OT) students.

We aimed to understand the current experience of fieldwork educators in relation to supporting students who may be witnessing or experiencing racism in fieldwork placements. Specifically, we wanted to understand how:

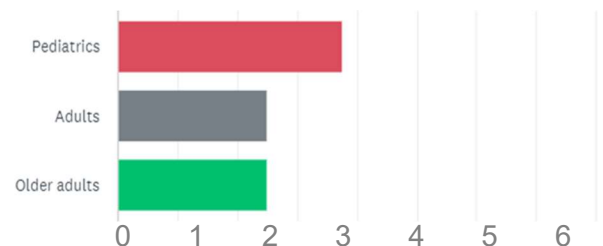
- racism influences student fieldwork education,
- how fieldwork educators support and would like to support students in relation to witnessing or experiencing racism in the fieldwork setting, and
- what resources or support the educators need to continue to support students witnessing or experiencing racism in the fieldwork setting.

We used an interpretive description research design, conducting one individual interview and two group interviews with a total of 9 OT fieldwork educators with a minimum of two years' experience. Three of the 9 participants identified as BIPOC. The

Practice Settings of Participants



Population Ages within the Practice Settings of Participants



individuals were de-identified and data analysis was completed using inductive thematic analysis.

What We Found

This study does not encompass all perspectives but is able to highlight some strengths and gaps of current anti-racist practices and the educators' ability to



MICRO:
INDIVIDUAL



MESO: PRACTICE
SETTING



MACRO:
SYSTEMIC

support occupational therapy students who witness or experience racism in fieldwork education. Although the educators were comfortable at some level in addressing racism with their students and aware of their own limitations, it was clear that the participants were in different places in their journey toward an anti-racist practice. Our findings indicated that fieldwork educators are aware of and were able to cite examples of racism that affects OT fieldwork education at micro, meso, and macro levels. Here we summarize the strengths and challenges they identified in addressing racism in fieldwork education.

Micro Level: Individual

Educators are currently using strategies to address racism with OT students at the individual level, such as raising awareness, creating open dialogues, and debriefing witnessed incidents of racism. However, they feel like they are acting alone, with

little collegial connection and support for this work. They appreciated the opportunity to discuss the topic in the focus groups.

Meso Level: The practice setting

Educators expressed a need for support within their practice settings from administration. They thought that education is key to becoming an anti-racist practitioner, but their organizations limit their access to educational opportunities due to workplace scheduling policies and lack of funding.

Macro Level: The Institutions

Participants are eager for leadership and commitment from institutions like COTM, the University of Manitoba, and higher-level healthcare administration for making anti-racist education mandatory for all health care workers. Educators felt that “being an anti-racist practitioner” would be a beneficial component for fieldwork evaluations that would advance the profession’s efforts in anti-racism.

Where To From Here?

The following recommendations can provide guidance for other fieldwork educators, the University of Manitoba, and the College of Occupational Therapists of Manitoba (COTM) on how to promote anti-racist practice in relation to fieldwork education.

Table - Recommendations and strategies for advancing anti-racist fieldwork education

The following recommendations were developed using previous literature in combination with the findings of this study.

Micro level: clinician-level action

- Engaging in ongoing personal/professional learning about anti-racist practices and cultural humility including:
 - learning strategies for being open to, inviting and facilitating dialogue related to racism in fieldwork, including debriefing witnessed incidents of racism, raising awareness, and encouraging the ongoing reflective activities such as regular journaling
- Create opportunities for formal and informal discussions about anti-racism with other professionals and colleagues
- Finding and surrounding yourself with supportive people (i.e., Elders, knowledge keepers, supervisors, colleagues, students)
- Advocating for change at meso and macro levels

Meso/ Macro level: practice setting and system level/ universities /COTM actions

- Diverse workforce initiatives
- Commitment to and implementation of anti-racist education for all healthcare professionals
- Develop and implement a Continuing Competency module on anti-racist practice
- Support fieldwork educators in developing their anti-racist practice by including resources in their fieldwork preparation packages and sample objectives to addressing racism for the competency-based fieldwork evaluation
- Update the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences *Disruption of all forms of Racism Policy* to include a statement to ensure visual representation of diversity in all educational resources