

Dr. Javeed Sukhera

Visiting Professor Seminars

April 2, 2020
2:00-4:00pm
O1500 Health Sciences Centre



Stigma in the Mirror: A Critical Look at Wellness Initiatives in Health Professions Education

While institutional wellness programs have been implemented for clinicians and health professions trainees for many years, they have not been largely effective in addressing the needs of individual members of the profession. One of the challenges to existing wellness programs relates to how stigma against help-seeking limits prevention and early identification of distress.

When experiencing the warning signs of psychological distress, health professionals often do not seek support due to self-stigma which relates to fears of retribution, or appearing vulnerable or weak to others. Common approaches to reduce self-stigma involve increasing explicit knowledge to challenge implicit prejudicial biases towards mental illness. These findings dovetail with emerging models on implicit bias and recognition, which challenge individuals to solicit feedback on their biases, and role model new behaviours within a culture of safety and shared vulnerability.

This session provides participants with a background on the issue of stigma and leverages empirically derived research on implicit bias recognition and management to advance innovative approaches to transforming how we implement wellness programs for physicians and trainees.

April 3, 2020
9:30-11:30am
O1500 Health Sciences Centre



Bias and the Educator: Recognizing and Managing Implicit Bias in Health Professions Education

Bias is everywhere. In contrast to explicit biases, implicit biases exist outside our awareness and influence us despite our best intentions. This workshop will start with introduction to the concept of implicit bias, and describe examples of how bias influences teaching and learning in the context of health professions education. Next, we describe an empirically-derived framework for recognizing and managing biases for health professionals. Previous research found that bias-related conversations evoke significant tension and psychological distress for health professionals. The session emphasizes how meaningful approaches towards implicit bias training must address unintended psychological distress for learners, and consider how bias is embedded within organizational policies, and societal norms.

April 3, 2020
12:00-12:50pm
G500 Health Sciences Centre



O'Brien Institute for Public Health

Department of Community Health Sciences

Stigma Deconstructed: Exploring, Understanding, and Addressing Structural Stigma in Canada

Stigma is a longstanding and well documented concept that disproportionately impacts vulnerable and marginalized groups within healthcare, often resulting in inequitable outcomes. Although there are several approaches to reducing stigma, existing strategies have several limitations. For example, anti-stigma interventions that exclusively focus on changing behaviour at an individual level are unlikely to produce sustainable and meaningful change, unless they consider that stigma can only grow if it is rooted in social structures and embedded within policy and practice within organizations. Therefore, addressing stigma requires attention to structural stigma, defined as societal-level conditions, cultural norms, and institutional policies that influence how stigma is enacted in practice. Unfortunately, the complexity of structural stigma is difficult to untangle for numerous reasons, and therefore structural stigma is vastly under explored. In this presentation, we describe how structural stigma manifests within the Canadian healthcare system, and outline strategies to address structural stigma that have potential to advance health equity.



Dr. Sukhera is an Associate Professor of Psychiatry and is cross-appointed to the Department of Paediatrics at the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry, Western University, in London, Ontario, Canada. He is also a Scientist at the Centre for Education Research and Innovation at Western University. His interdisciplinary research program explores novel approaches to stigma reduction and implicit bias recognition and management in health professionals. Since 2012, he has secured over 2 million dollars in grant funding and over 60 conference presentations. His research has been published in high impact journals and he is routinely interviewed by local and national media for his expertise. He teaches in all four years of Western's Undergraduate Medical Program. He also teaches psychiatry, child and adolescent psychiatry, and paediatrics residents, and led the psychiatry residency's ethics portfolio from 2013-2018. He practices as a child and

adolescent psychiatrist in the paediatric chronic pain program and child and adolescent mental healthcare program at London Health Sciences Centre.