

Terminology

Institutional Racism

Racial inequity embedded as normal practice within institutions and systems of power, such as places of employment, government agencies, and social services. It can take the form of unfair policies and practices, discriminatory treatment and inequitable opportunities and outcomes. It is most prominent within school systems.

Structural Racism

Racial bias across institutions and society. It describes the cumulative and compounding effects of institutional, historical, cultural, and interpersonal practices that systematically put one ethnic group in a better position to succeed while at the same time disadvantages other groups.

Implicit Bias

Unconscious attitudes and stereotypes that influences our thoughts, actions, and decision-making.

BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

Structural Competence

The ability to discern how diseases, attitudes toward patients, populations, and health systems are influenced by social determinants of health.

Call to Action:

ASAM Public Policy Statement on Advancing Racial Justice in Addiction Medicine

“The overcriminalization of drug use by BIPOC and disparate policing of BIPOC who use drugs is well documented. The effects of this discrimination are devastating and lasting. Addiction medicine professionals are too often silent and accepting of a system that mandates inappropriate treatment.

Both racism and criminal-legal system involvement are traumatizing. Addiction medicine professionals have the opportunity to counteract that trauma in their practices through trauma-informed care. The principles and practice of trauma-informed care – a strengths-based care delivery approach to engaging people with histories of trauma that recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role that trauma has played in their lives – can promote a culture of safety, empowerment, and healing. Increasing the diversity of the addiction medicine workforce and staff of addiction medicine programs and practices can also help improve patient care, satisfaction, and outcomes and alleviate health disparities.”