

RCW 28B.10.698 Schools of medicine—Health equity curriculum.

(1) Within existing resources, by January 1, 2023, the school of medicine at the University of Washington, established under chapter 28B.20 RCW, and the school of medicine at Washington State University, established under chapter 28B.30 RCW, shall each develop curriculum on health equity for medical students. The curriculum must teach attitudes, knowledge, and skills that enable students to care effectively for patients from diverse cultures, groups, and communities. The objectives of the curriculum must be to provide tools for eliminating structural racism in health care systems and to build cultural safety. A person may not graduate with a degree from either medical school without completing a course, or courses, that include curriculum on health equity for medical students.

(2) Course topics on health equity may include, but are not limited to:

(a) Strategies for recognizing patterns of health care disparities and eliminating factors that influence them;

(b) Intercultural communication skills training, including how to work effectively with an interpreter and how communication styles differ across cultures;

(c) Historical examples of medical and public health racism and how racism may manifest itself in a student's field of medicine;

(d) Cultural safety training that requires examination of each student's culture and potential impacts on clinical interactions and health care service delivery;

(e) Structural competency training that gives attention to forces influencing health outcomes at levels above individual interactions;

(f) Methods of evaluating health care systems; and

(g) Implicit bias training to identify strategies to reduce bias during assessment and diagnosis. [2021 c 96 § 2.]

Finding—Purpose—2021 c 96: "The legislature finds that inequities in health outcomes exist in the state of Washington and that future generations of health care professionals have an important role to play in mitigating these disparate outcomes. Because the schools of medicine at the University of Washington and Washington State University are tasked with the formative role of educating medical professionals, the legislature sees fit to ensure students leaving these institutions are prepared to care effectively for the people of diverse cultures, groups, and communities that will become their patients. By equipping them with the tools to serve diverse communities around our state and our nation, students of medicine will become practitioners of medicine with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to understand and counteract racism and implicit bias in health care. The purpose of this act is to serve medical students, medical professionals, and patients in communities in which these professionals work, and to undo structural racism in the systems through which they navigate. To that end, this act establishes opportunities for education that provide tools to students of medicine to build a better, more equitable health care system." [2021 c 96 § 1.]