

Speaker 1: Diversity is about recognizing that everybody is unique. When it comes to embracing diversity, an important step is to understand our own biases and prejudices, because we all have them.

Have you ever spoken a little louder to someone who appears older? Have you ever spoken a little slower to someone who appears to come from a different country, or made assumptions about someone's relationships? As healthcare professionals, rather than treating everyone equally, we should treat people fairly.

It's important to understand the context of a person's situation as well as their perspective. It may be different to your own.

You must make sure you are conscious and respectful of how people wish to interact, including whether to shake hands or make eye contact. Use inclusive language. For example, rather than saying, "Do you suffer depression?" why don't you say, "Are you living with depression?" placing the person, importantly, before the condition and removing any negative connotations?

Challenge your assumptions. Remember, many older people can use modern technology. If someone isn't engaging with you, don't assume them to be rude, as they may just not be able to hear you, or perhaps eye contact is not appropriate.

Questioning your assumptions is not always easy. We all have unconscious biases. It's natural for our brain to categorize our first impressions of someone based on characteristics like their age, weight, gender, or skin colour, which can sometimes lead to incorrect assumptions. It's important to remember that individual characteristics do not define a person. Rather, it is the combination of these traits that makes each person unique and special. Let's work together to raise awareness of bias and prejudice to celebrate diversity in its broadest sense, remembering always that we are more alike than we are different. Visit our website to learn more about diversity.