



Our Words Matter - Microaggressions video and ORE pilot project

To all members of the McGill School of Medicine,

In September, I sent a Faculty-wide [message](#) about a priority I introduced in 2022 called *Our Words Matter*. The initiative aims to actively cultivate and provide an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcomed, respected and safe.

Our mission and values require that we, as a McGill healthcare community, work collaboratively and respectfully to meet the needs of patients, their families and society. We must do this regardless of our backgrounds or views. We may sometimes disagree, but our roles as healers, medical students, residents, fellows and Faculty members take precedence. Mistreatment of any kind has no place in our community.

Microaggressions video: What they are and how to avoid them

We have launched several projects in support of the *Our Words Matter* initiative. Because this topic will remain a priority throughout 2023 and beyond, you will receive more communications, beginning with this [short video about microaggressions](#). *Please note that the scenarios in this video could cause an emotional response. They represent several types of microaggressions and are in no way exhaustive.*

Microaggressions are indirect, subtle and often unintentional acts of harassment or discrimination. They are a form of mistreatment that may occur in our clinical and other learning environments, most often directed at students, but also at residents or fellows, staff and faculty. The above awareness video shows what microaggressions can look like for us, and how we can avoid them.

You will see this video again as part of a mandatory micro-learning activity, which I will send in a follow-up message in a few weeks. Complementary [outreach activities](#) for departments are also available through the Faculty Development Office. Additionally, the Equity at McGill team recently launched a series of related [workshops](#), and offers customized sessions as well.

Reporting concerns about mistreatment

It is important that everyone is aware of the Faculty's [Office for Respectful Environments](#) (ORE), to which our medical students and trainees are referred should they have concerns about mistreatment in one of our clinical learning environments. It is very important we all know about this key resource when issues arise, and immediately direct students, residents and fellows there.

In 2022, based on feedback and extensive consultation, the ORE introduced a [pilot project for medical students](#) to improve the reporting and follow-up of reports of mistreatment. We created the position of Academic Director (ORE) so that students may consult in confidence with a person who is independent of the UGME Office and not involved in academic assessments. The pilot project, now in place for two months, has been well received. It is described on the ORE website at the link above, where you will also find the pilot reporting process.

We would like to thank all students, faculty and staff who have provided feedback and contributed to the consultations that led to the pilot project. We continue to welcome feedback so that we can build on it and extend the pilot to residents and fellows, once it is field tested and refined.

Thank you, everyone, for supporting this effort to address mistreatment in our clinical learning environments, and for ensuring our Faculty provides an opportunity for us all to more fully enjoy learning and caring for patients. Thank you for leading by example.

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