

MAR 20, 2025



# MED EDI Q1 2025

## Meet our new Assistant Dean of EDI



## Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Dr. Rishi Kapur as the new Assistant Dean for the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Faculty of Medicine, effective October 1, 2024.

Dr. Kapur brings a wealth of experience and passion to this role. As a child and adolescent psychiatrist at CHEO, he has dedicated his career to medical education, staff and learner wellness, and health equity.

His clinical interests include working with rural and urban Indigenous communities, gender-diverse populations, and racialized children and families.

In addition to his professional achievements, Dr. Kapur is deeply committed to improving organizational health and enhancing systems and processes within institutions.

Outside of work, he enjoys yoga, cycling, playing the cello, and spending quality time with his family and their Samoyed.

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Kapur to his new role.

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# CALLING IN KINDNESS

Written by: Drs. Rishi Kapur and Solin Saleh

“EDI initiatives are divisive and discriminatory.” This is a common criticism of EDI, one that is unfortunately becoming more common in recent months and years. The current political landscape is becoming more polarized every day, with EDI being a main target. Efforts to recognize and promote equity, diversity and inclusion are under threat both south of the border and within Canada. These threats risk undoing years of crucial work that has been put toward understanding the role of equity, the value of diverse thinking, and supporting more heterogeneity in our workplaces and teams. Regardless of one’s personal stance on EDI initiatives, research has shown that racialized communities experience worse health outcomes than their white counterparts and that gender-based pay and workplace inequities exist within most systems. As doubt is sewn about this evidence-backed concepts, we can expect more fixed mindsets and divisiveness. Naturally, we gravitate toward individuals and groups that mirror and support our beliefs, share our mindset and “confirm we are right”, further insulating us from differing viewpoints and evidence that are the backbone of critical discourse and growth.

I believe that children often teach and remind us of lessons we may forget as adults. What I see in our current state of debate over EDI is a degradation of the roots of basic kindness. When we feel threatened, we naturally become defensive. When we experience moral distress or injury, we can feel more helpless, hopeless and tired. We try to work harder to fight for what holds meaning or value to us. This inherently leads to disconnection which can in turn make it challenging to lead with empathy and kindness. However, we regularly teach our children to manage conflict, show compassion toward others and learn from those around us because we know these are important skills and characteristics in a healthy society. Sometimes, in even the most accomplished of teams, I wonder if we are optimally using some of these core skills.

This brings me to a few critical questions: are we training kind clinicians? Are we treating team members with kindness? Are our internal emotional states rooted in channelling kindness or anger? Regardless of your political views on the role and value of EDI, I wish to invite you to perform a simple exercise. Try to pay attention to whether your work, your leadership, and your daily communications are channelling kindness. See if there is one thing you can do in a day that promotes understanding and compassion within your workplace. We can incorporate these conscious actions not only to help foster healthier working environments, but to teach our trainees by example and through role modelling.

These basic actions may help ensure someone on your team or with whom you work is being seen or heard. They may help support mutual respect. They may lead us to come together in more ways than we may expect.

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# EDI SEMINAR SERIES



## **A History of Violence: The Legacy of Environmental Racism in Canada**

**Thursday, January 30, 2025  
12 p.m. to 1 p.m.**

Led by Dr. Ingrid Waldron, HOPE Chair in Peace and Health in the Global Peace and Social Justice Program in the Faculty of Humanities at McMaster University, and co-founder and co-director of the Canadian Coalition for Environmental and Climate Justice.

Dr. Waldron examined the legacy of environmental racism in Canada and the health effects of environmental racism and outlined what I have done to address environmental racism since 2012.

[For the recording of this seminar, please visit our website.](#)



## **From eugenics and institutionalization to meaningful participation in biomedical and medical research**

**Thursday, March 27, 2025  
12 p.m. to 1 p.m.**

Led by Dr. Emilio Alarcon, Associate Professor & Director, Biochemistry Graduate Program, Faculty of Medicine.

Dr. Alarcon will present some of the barriers that prevent the participation of persons with disabilities in biomedical and medical research not only as patients but also as individuals doing research.

[Link to register for the seminar.](#)

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# MENTORING PROGRAMS



## **Mentoring Program for Black MD Students**

The uOttawa Black Medical Students Association (BMSA), in collaboration with the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion of the Faculty of Medicine offer group mentoring sessions for medical students within the Faculty of Medicine.

In addition to the group mentoring activities, learners are paired one-on-one with Black physician mentors from the Faculty and affiliated hospitals. The goal of the program is to raise awareness about Black Canadian health disparities and to foster a community of inclusion that will promote the academic and personal success of Black learners.

Student members associated with the program also facilitate workshops and mock interview practice sessions to Black undergraduate students interested in a career in medicine. Students, residents and faculty interested in participating in the program can contact the [Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#)



## **Sexual and Gender Minority Students, Residents and Faculty Members (SGM)**

In collaboration with the Medical Diversity and LGBTQ2SA+ Advocacy Group (MDAG) within the Aesculapian Society, the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion has established a group/peer mentoring program for all SGM members within the Faculty of Medicine. Meetings are held monthly to connect SGM learners with one another and with SGM faculty.

Whether you are an experienced faculty member or new to the Faculty of Medicine, if you would like to find out more about the mentoring process, are considering becoming a mentor/mentee, and/or would like to get together and network with other colleagues and faculty members from the SGM community, please contact the [Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#)





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# MENTORING PROGRAMS



## Kuwait Mentoring Program (KMP)

The Kuwait Mentoring Program (KMP) was launched in October 2019 through the partnership with the Ministry of Higher Education of Kuwait. The primary objective of the Kuwait Mentoring Program is for the Faculty of Medicine to provide individualized support and resources aimed at encouraging the Kuwait students at the Faculty of Science to choose (clinical or scientific) Medicine as a career path.

Mentoring groups meet several times a year, either for a workshop or in a social setting. The focus of the gatherings is to provide an opportunity to exchange with experienced professionals and students.

Discussions will include topics related to career planning, rewards and challenges of medical school and health related research careers.

For additional information, please contact [IGHOmed@uottawa.ca](mailto:IGHOmed@uottawa.ca)



## Indigenous Medical Student Mentorship Program

The uOttawa Indigenous Medical Student Mentorship Program helps to connect Indigenous post-secondary students with an interest in medicine with Indigenous medical students at Ottawa.

Prospective students get the benefit of being connected with a mentor to provide advice on applying to medical school, what life as a medical student is like as well as any other questions they may have about a career in medicine.

For additional information or to register, please contact the [Indigenous Program!](#)

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# OBSERVANCES

## January

*Alzheimer's Awareness Month (Canada)*  
*Tamil Heritage Month (Canada)*

## February

*Black History Month (Canada)*  
*African Heritage Month (Nova Scotia)*

## March

*Women's History Month (International)*  
*Irish Heritage Month (Canada)*  
*Bangladeshi Heritage Month (Ontario)*  
*Multiculturalism Month (Newfoundland and Labrador)*  
*Epilepsy Awareness Month Canada*

***For more observances, please see the [CCDI calendar](#).***



## Health Equity CME

Check out this article on data bias:

[Data Bias and Health Care](#)



**Faculté de médecine | Faculty of Medicine**

Bureau d'équité, de diversité et d'inclusion / Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

613-562-5211

edifom@uOttawa.ca

med.uOttawa.ca

