How can doctors protect their patients from state violence?

MAR 9, 2022

Staff News Writer

State violence against Black Americans and other people from historically marginalized racial and ethnic groups isn’t just a law-enforcement problem. It’s sometimes legitimized—and even amplified—by partnerships with the health care system.

The fledgling effort to counter this by making medical practice more equitable has come to be called “abolition medicine.” But when and how exactly should its approaches inform practice and policy in health professions education, clinical care and medical research?

The March issue of AMA Journal of Ethics® (@JournalofEthics) explores answers to this question by collecting perspectives that look to history for lessons about how to make the U.S. health sector more just.

Articles include:

“Toward Abolitionist Approaches in Medicine.”
Anti-Blackness—as articulated by law enforcement and other state institutions—does not happen on its own or in isolation, but is often given life and legitimacy through partnerships with medicine.

“Why Add ‘Abolition’ to the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine’s Social Care Framework?”

URL: https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/health-equity/how-can-doctors-protect-their-patients-state-violence
Copyright 1995 - 2021 American Medical Association. All rights reserved.
Abundant evidence demonstrates that enduring, endemic racism plays an important role in determining patient health.

"Community Mental Health Centers’ Roles in Depolicing Medicine."
Violence perpetrated against unarmed patients is common in health care, and evidence-based safety measures are needed to acknowledge and eradicate clinical violence.

“How Should Educators and Publishers Eliminate Racial Essentialism?”
Health professions educators should reform pedagogy on race, when clinically relevant, to emphasize racism as the root cause of health inequity.

Find out more about the AMA’s strategic plan to embed racial justice and advance health equity.

Listen and learn
The journal’s March "Ethics Talk" podcast features guests Sayantani DasGupta, MD, MPH, and Zahra H. Khan, MS, of Columbia University, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill medical student Yoshiko Iwai, MS. They outlined how abolition medicine can motivate critical responses to racialized exercises of state authority.

The March issue also features six author-interview podcasts. Listen to previous episodes of the “Ethics Talk” podcast or subscribe in iTunes or other services.

Earn CME
These AMA Journal of Ethics CME modules are each designated by the AMA for a maximum of 1 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™:

- An Abolitionist Approach to Antiracist Medical Education.
- How Should Educators and Publishers Eliminate Racial Essentialism?

URL: https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/health-equity/how-can-doctors-protect-their-patients-state-violence
Copyright 1995 - 2021 American Medical Association. All rights reserved.
Community Mental Health Centers' Roles in Depolicing Medicine.

Additionally, the CME module “Ethics Talk: The Generative Power of Abolition” is designated by the AMA for a maximum of 0.5 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit.