



PRACTITIONER CASE STUDY #3

Based on Experiences Shared During the AOTA 2020 Be Heard, We're Listening Sessions

BACKGROUND

Demographic information: New occupational therapist; Black woman

Themes: Overt discrimination (less pay, higher expectations)

PRIMARY SCENARIO

Bethany just graduated from OT school (MOT) and has been hired at a local pediatric clinic. One day while on her lunch break, Bethany overhears her White colleagues discussing salaries and realizes that one of them has the same work experience as she does but is making \$10,000 more.

Bethany has attempted to be a team player and a major contributor to her department within the short time she has been employed, but at times, her efforts are met with great resistance. Bethany is considering speaking to HR to see whether her salary can be adjusted moving forward.

CONNECTIONS

Themes Presented in Case Study

- Lack of diversity and representation
- Experienced racialized trauma, stress, and fatigue
- Implicit bias
- Equity

AT A GLANCE

Recommended Actions

Employer:

- Assess pay gaps across the organizations.
- Develop fair anti-discriminatory hiring processes, including transparent and fair pay scales.
- Base performance reviews on objective criteria in which practitioner and reviewer will be given written documentation, and input can be provided by both parties.
- Self-reflection and assessments.
- Consider compensating an internal staff subject matter expert (SME) for DEI issues and training.

Practitioner:

- Clarify performance review process, including termination and promotion requirements.
- Maintain an ongoing record of achievements, contributions, client compliments, and reviews.
- Be your own advocate.

Additional Consideration:

- When seeking the assistance of an internal staff subject matter expert (SME), consider compensating for DEI issues and training.

Analysis and Strategies

Now that you have reviewed the case, review the AOTA DEI Toolkit evidence-based resources and address the following questions:

- How was the person impacted?
- How does this case impact the field of occupational therapy?
- What are the implications for clients and stakeholders as a result of these experiences?
- What strategies would you employ?



A White colleague with the same work experience is making \$10,000 more.