

How to Become a Culturally and Linguistically Competent Health Care Provider

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The Culturally and Linguistically Competent Health Care Provider

Appreciating how responsive, culturally proficient communication and services can enhance the therapeutic alliance with patients and how quality health care can only occur within a patient's cultural context.

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Learning Objectives

- Define culture and cultural competence
- Appreciate the benefits of respectful communication; how providing responsive, culturally proficient care increases the therapeutic alliance
- Understand that quality health care can only occur within the patient's cultural context.
- Understand how ignoring diversity and culturally incongruent health care can adversely affect patient outcomes and compromise patient safety
- How lack of cultural competence can result in patient dissatisfaction.
- Learn how to eliminate misunderstandings in diagnosis and treatment planning that may result from differences in language or culture.
- Identify your counterproductive assumption or biases that will negatively contaminate your relationship with the patient.

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What is Culture?

Culture refers to integrated patterns of behavior that includes the language, customs, attitudes, beliefs, values, religion/spirituality and institutions that unite a group of people.

- Culture is learned and transmitted in the family, includes an individualized world view, guides decision making and facilitates self-esteem and self-worth.
- Culture is a meaning making system; being culturally programmed to embrace a system which regulates one's behavior through honoring values, beliefs, customs, faith, rituals.
- Culture influences a patient's healthcare beliefs, practices attitudes toward care, and trust in the system and its providers.
- Cultural differences affect how health information and healthcare services are received, understood and acted on.

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What is Cultural Sensitivity?

- ⇒ We see cultural sensitivity when neutral language is used in a way that reflects sensitivity and appreciation for the diversity we see in others.
- ⇒ We convey it when words, phrases are intentionally avoided so an individual doesn't interpret them as impolite or offensive.
- ⇒ We express it through behaviors that are polite and respectful.

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What is a Stereotype?

- Stereotyping is defined as a process by which people acquire and recall information about others based on sex, race, religion, etc.
- Prejudice is often associated with stereotyping and is defined as an unjustified negative attitude based on a person's group membership.
- It includes having an attitude, opinion or belief about a person.
- The beliefs/stereotypes expressed by these attitudes can contribute to disparities in health care.
- Stereotypes help us simplify the world and leads to social categorization.
- They are fixed and oversimplified images of people.
- They cause us to ignore differences about people.

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Definition of Cultural Humility

- Due to the increasing diversity of our world and the intermixing of different cultures, the importance of cultural competence in the professional world has become very important.
- Cultural humility is a humble and respectful attitude toward other cultures that pushes one to challenge their own cultural biases.
- You realize you cannot possibly know everything about other cultures, so you commit yourself to learning about other cultures as a lifelong process.

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Cultural Humility Principles

1. Lifelong commitment to learning and critical self-reflection
2. Desire to fix power imbalances within provider-client dynamic
3. Institutional accountability & mutual respectful partnership based on trust

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- The term "cultural humility" was introduced in 1998 as a dynamic and lifelong process of self-reflection and doing a self-analysis to identify your biases.
- You understand the value of being curious about other cultures and begin to educate yourself about these cultures.
- Cultural humility involves understanding the complexity of identities — that even in sameness there is difference — and that a clinician will never be fully competent about the evolving and dynamic nature of a patient's experiences.

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How to Develop Cultural Humility

- At its base, cultural humility means opening up a conversation in a way that genuinely attempts to understand a person's identities related to race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, social needs, and others.
- An awareness of the self is central to the notion of cultural humility — who a person is informs how they see another.
- Awareness may stem from self-reflective questions such as:
 - Which parts of my identity am I aware of?
 - Which are most salient?

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- Which parts of my identity are privileged and/or marginalized?
- How does my sense of identity shift based on context and settings?
- What might be my own blind spots and biases?
- With this awareness, a provider can ask questions about how they receive the patient:
 - Who is this person?
 - How do I make sense of them?
 - What knowledge and awareness do I have about their culture?
 - What thoughts and feelings emerge from me about them?

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Cultural competence and cultural humility together

- A "culturally competent" provider needs to have knowledge and awareness of:
 - health-related beliefs, practices, and cultural values of diverse populations;
 - illness and diagnostic incidence and prevalence among culturally and ethnically diverse populations;
 - treatment efficacy data (if any) of culturally and ethnically diverse populations.
- A provider operating with cultural humility must listen with interest and curiosity,
- Have an awareness of their own possible biases and attempt a non-judgmental stance about what they hear
- Recognize their possible inherent status of privilege as a provider and be willing to be taught by their patient.

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Culture shapes appraisal of emotions

- We learn to recognize and experience emotions in certain ways.
 - We don't all appraise emotions in the same way.
 - Does threat always lead to fear?
 - Does threat mean the same thing to all people?
- Appraisal gives meaning and it differs from culture to culture
- How groups appraise emotions depends on their values
- Example: Individualistic cultures foster more assertive and outspoken behavior
- In the West, shame is perceived as potentially damaging a relationship and in other cultures it is a sign of modesty.
- In the West, when we feel shame, we withdraw in silence and in other cultures, they reach out to others to repair the relationship.
- We learn prescriptive norms that include rules about when to have what emotions. What we call an emotion, how we regulate emotions

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Does Language Influence Thought?

- The Japanese tend to suppress and inhibit their emotions in the presence of others
- Americans display and express their emotions
- In the West we like high arousal; happy, elated, excited
- In the East, they value peaceful emotions, calmness, serenity and low arousal
- Sometimes culture influences words we use:
- Polish have no word for disgust
- Indonesians have no word for embarrassment
- Tahitians have no word for sadness

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What Does Cultural Awareness Mean?

It means being knowledgeable about one's thoughts and feelings and the ability to reflect on how these can affect one's interactions with others.

Why is Cultural Competence Important?

Culturally responsive services will provide a greater sense of safety from the patient's perspective, supporting the belief that culture is essential to healing.

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What Does Diversity Mean?

Diversity is an all inclusive concept that includes:

differences in race	
ethnicity	
immigration status such as refugee or immigrant	
religion	
age	
gender	occupation
sexual orientation	spirituality
ability/disability	marital status
socioeconomic status	

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What Does Cultural Competence Mean?

- Cultural competence or cultural proficiency is possessing the capability of effectively interacting with people from different cultures/race

It is the attitudes, knowledge, skills necessary for providing quality care to diverse populations.

Competence is an ongoing process that involves accepting and respecting differences and not letting one's personal beliefs have a negative influence on another with a different worldview.

- The increasing diversity in the U.S. creates challenges on our health care delivery system to deliver culturally competent services that meet the social, cultural and linguistic needs of our patients.

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One's values, beliefs, and ideas about health care and well-being are shaped by factors such as race, culture, ethnicity, language, gender, SES, physical and mental abilities, sexual orientation and occupation.

- Cultural Competence in health care is defined as the ability of providers and organizations to understand integrate these factors into the delivery of health care services.

The goal of cultural competent health care services is to provide the highest quality care to every patient regardless of their race, culture and other variables.

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Are you aware that:

- 20% of people in the U.S. speak a language other than English at home
- The Latino population has grown by 43% in the U.S. between 2000 and 2010
- One out of two adult patients has difficulty understanding basic health information
- The average time it takes for a physician to interrupt a patient is in the first 20 seconds

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