

# *Cultural Competency: Improving Patient Outcomes"*



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# Objectives

- ▶ Identify how the beliefs, attitudes and behaviors of major American cultural groups impact public health.
- ▶ Describe how cultural competence improves communication with patients and families.
- ▶ Explain how cultural biases negatively impact patient outcomes.
- ▶ Identify strategies for enhancing cultural competency in healthcare.

# Basic Diversity Terminology

**Culture**: An integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting, roles, relationships and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group.



# Culture Defined Broadly

- ▶ Term culture inclusive of:
  - Race
  - Language
  - Ethnicity
  - Gender
  - Sexual Orientation
  - Shared Experiences (i.e. poverty, mental illness, addiction, homelessness, etc.)

# What Culture is Not:

## ► Culture is not:

- Race
- Stereotypic generalizations about the behaviors, emotions and values of a group of people.
- A laundry list of values behaviors and facts related to a group of people.
- Rigid or static categorizations of people without a deep and fundamental awareness of their differences.
- Superficial adoption of customs, language, dress or behavior in a patronizing manner.

**“What is Cultural Competence?”, Family Resource Coalition Report, Fall/  
Winter 1995-96**

# Basic Terminology

- ▶ **Cultural awareness**: Being cognizant, observant and conscious of similarities and differences among cultural groups
- ▶ **Cultural sensitivity**: Understanding the needs and emotions of your own culture and the culture of others.
- ▶ **Cultural Competence**: Has many definitions!

# Definitions of Cultural Competence

## **Cross et al, 1989**

- ▶ Cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals and enable that system, agency or those professions to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.



# Definitions of Cultural Competence

## **Denboba, MCHB, 1993**

... a set of values, behaviors, attitudes, and practices within a system, organization, program or among individuals and which enables them to work effectively cross culturally.

... the ability to honor and respect the beliefs, language, interpersonal styles and behaviors of individuals and families receiving services, as well as staff who are providing such services.

# Definitions of Cultural Competence

## Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Primary Health Care

- ▶ Cultural and linguistic competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals that **enables effective work in cross-cultural situations**. "Culture" refers to integrated patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious or social groups. "Competence" implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors and needs presented by consumers and their communities

**Cultural Competence is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period.**

**Both individuals and organizations are at various levels of awareness, knowledge and skills along the cultural competence continuum**

*(adapted from Cross et al., 1989)*

## **Cultural competence requires that health care facilities have the capacity to:**

- ▶ Value diversity
- ▶ Conduct self-assessment
- ▶ Manage the dynamics of difference
- ▶ Acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge of persons with disabilities and
- ▶ Adapt to diversity and the diverse cultural contexts of the persons with disabilities

# Conceptual Model

**Culturally  
Congruent  
Behaviors**

**Cultural  
Competence**

**Appreciation &  
Respect for  
Cultural  
Differences**

**Core  
Fundamental  
Beliefs:  
Warmth, Empathy  
& Genuineness**



# Cultural Competency Assessment

Organizational level: policies – formal committees, community representation, clinical level and understanding bias, training curriculum, sensitivity awareness

Personal level: personal values, mindful of differences, ability to reflect on actions, behaviors and bias.



# Cultural Competence at the Facility Level

Culturally competent health care facilities are characterized by acceptance and respect for difference, continuing self-assessment regarding culture, careful attention to dynamics of difference, continuous expansion of cultural knowledge and resources, and a variety of adaptations to service models in order to better meet the needs of persons with disabilities.





# Cultural Competence Within the Health Care System Requires:

- ▶ Culturally Competent Care: Administered with sensitivity for a patient's culture and health-related beliefs.
- ▶ Culturally Competent Staff: That reflect the ethnic communities they serve with understanding and respect for the beliefs, attitudes, interpersonal styles and health-related beliefs of their patients.
- ▶ Organizational Management: Who develop policy, procedures and processes that assure uniform patient care.

# Changing National Demographics

Changing demographics result in an increased need to medical delivery responsive to multicultural populations:

## *Population Size and Composition: 2003*

- Approximately 33.5 million foreign-born people live in the United States.
- The foreign born represent 11.7 percent of the U.S. population.
- Source: US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2003

# Minority Groupings

- ▶ People with disabilities comprise the largest minority numbering over 54 million

19% people with disabilities

15.8% Latino

12.9% African American

4.6% Asian

# Different Customs, Beliefs and Practices

## AMERICAN/WESTERN CULTURES

- Health is absence of Disease
- Seeks traditional health care providers (i.e. physicians, nurses, surgeons, psychiatrists)
- Seeks medical system to prevent and treat illness
- Values independence and freedom
- Future oriented
- Gestures have universal meaning
- Individual interests are valued and encouraged

## NONWESTERN CULTURES

- Health is a state of harmony within body, mind, spirit
- Seeks alternative medical practitioners (i.e. herbalists, shamans, midwives etc.)
- Seeks medical system when in acute stage of illness
- Values interdependence with family and community
- Present oriented: here and now
- Gestures have taboo meanings, depending on culture
- Individual interests are subordinate to family needs

# Why be Culturally Competent?

- ▶ Because many cultures populate our country:
  - Culture inclusive of many factors
  - Changing national demographics.
  - Vast array of customs, beliefs, practices

- ▶ **Because it's the law!**



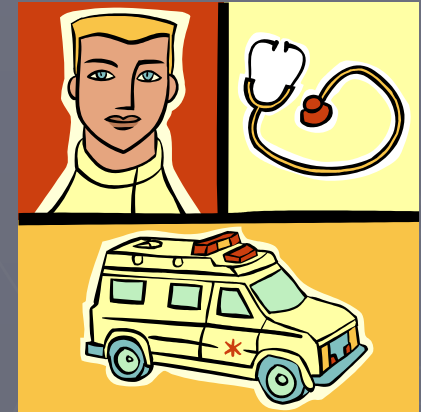
# Why be Culturally Competent?

## ▶ *The Civil Right's Act of 1964: Title VI*

"No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color or national-origin, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."



# It's the Law



## ► *Emergency Medical*

### *Treatment and Active Labor Act:*

Also known as the Patient Anti-dumping Act, requires hospitals that participate in the Medicare program that have emergency departments to treat all patients (including women in labor) in an emergency without regard to their ability to pay.

# It's the Law

## ► *Medicaid:*



Medicaid regulations require Medicaid providers and participating agencies, including long-term care facilities, to render culturally and linguistically appropriate services.



# It's the Law

## ► *Medicare:*

Medicare addresses linguistic access in its reimbursement and outreach education policies. “Medicare providers are encouraged to make bilingual services available to patients wherever the services are necessary to adequately serve a multilingual populations.”