Developing Cultural Competence

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Developing Cultural Competence

Caring for patients from many cultures is an important part of health care today!

• What are cultural competencies?

They are the skills you use to work well with patients of all cultures. These skills involve:
• Considering every patient’s culture when giving care (values, beliefs, and practices shared by a group)
• Treating every patient as an individual (avoid stereotyping, learn about each patient’s unique views on health care)

Why learn about cultural competencies?

Because developing cultural competencies benefits everyone. You can:
• Help patients receive more effective care
• Help your facility meet standards of The Joint Commission
• Improve your job performance

Cultural Competence and Communication Committee
1. Responsible to support culturally competent clinical practice related to effective communication and patient- and family-centered care.
2. To review, revise, develop and implement culturally competent clinical policies.
3. Provide input to hospital strategic planning to develop goals for cultural competence.
4. Identify cultural competence performance improvement opportunities.
5. Implement The Joint Commission cultural competence recommendations and requirements.

Members:
- Chelsie Bakken, RN Quality & Patient Safety
- Roberta Basol, RN, Co-Chair ICSC & Clinical Practice
- Patricia Blonigen-Heinen ETC
- Jenna Czech, RN Neuroscience/Spine
- Adriana DeVos, PCE ETC
- Rodessa Feldverd, RN Telemetry
- Michelle Herrensch Information Systems
- Ayanti Jana, RT Respiratory
- Andrea Koshir, RN Surgical Care 1
- Mary Loecken, RN Patient Care Support
- Michele Meyer, RN Digestive Center
- Rosemond Owens, Co-Chair Health Literacy/Cultural Competency Specialist
- Kathleen Pfleuger, RN Center for Surgical Care
- Susan Putzke Spiritual Care
- Katherine (Katie) Schulz, RN Medical One Educator
- Theresa Tanoshid Admissions
- Holly Zeilhofer-Taci, RN Family Birthing Center

References
St. Cloud Hospital Cultural Competence and Communication Committee.

Effective communication is the cornerstone to ensuring you reach the community you serve, providing the highest quality of care and services and advancing health equity at every point of contact.

What are cultural competencies?

Developing cultural competencies does not mean knowing everything about every cultural group you work with. It does mean:
• Being aware of cultural factors
• Taking appropriate steps to learn about each patient, such as asking questions.

Developing the cultural competencies needed for your job means you can help patients of all cultures feel better about their care.

Being Culturally Competent

Cultural Factors

• Country of origin – how long a person has lived in the US may affect views toward health
• Preferred language – patients should be encouraged to use their own language
• Communication style – culture may affect nonverbal and verbal responses
• Views of health – illness may not be viewed as best treated with Western medicine
• Relationships – family and friend involvement may depend on their culture
• Religion – religion may affect consents, schedules, room arrangement, birth and death practices
• Food preferences – cultural practices may affect foods a patient may eat or avoid

Communicate effectively.

• Listen to how the patient talks about his or her condition.
• Ask indirect questions, if needed.
• Look for clues
• Ask how the patient prefers to receive information.
• Talk with others who know the patient.
• Ask for the patient’s views on treatment.
• Use interpreters effectively.

Consider other factors that may affect care.

• Age
• Gender
• Sexual orientation
• Socio-economic status
• Presence of a physical or mental disability

Take time to learn about each patient.

• Ask questions to avoid cultural stereotypes.
• Learn the patient’s views about health.
• Learn about accepted ways to show respect.
• Understand relationships.
• Consider privacy needs.

Poster Developed by: Patty Blonigen-Heinen LSW and Roberta Basol MA, RN, NE-BC