

CULTURALLY RELATIVE & TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

- A person's beliefs, values, and practices should be understood based on that person's own culture, rather than be judged against the criteria of others
- Key aspects of cultural relativity:
 - People are internally logical, to understand a behavior, you need to understand the logic behind it
 - There is no 'better' or 'worse' culture. Instead, "it's not good, it's not bad, it's just different"



Culturally relative health services are respectful of, and responsive to the health beliefs, practices, and needs of diverse clients. They can help close the gap in health outcomes among individuals by providing:

- Equitable, rather than equal, care
- Understandable care based on a clear exchange of information
- Respectful care where clients feel comfortable discussing their needs and expectations

Healthcare problems often result from hidden misunderstandings between clients and their providers. The first step in culturally relative care is to create a shared understanding.

HOW TO CREATE A SHARED UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN A CLIENT AND PROVIDER - QUESTIONS TO ASK AND ANSWER

1. Ask your client questions
2. Provide your answers to these questions too
3. Use this information to create a shared understanding and treatment plan
4. Talk about, and plan for, the client's social needs

1. What do you need to feel most comfortable and supported in your care here?
2. What do you think caused your concern?
3. Why do you think it started when it did?
4. What do you think your concern does to you? (How does it work?)
5. How severe is your concern? (Will it have a short or long course?)
6. What kind of treatment do you think you should receive?
7. What are the most important results you hope to receive from the treatment?
8. What are you most worried about?
9. What do you fear most about your concern?

Questions based on: Kleinman, A. (1978) Concepts and a model for the comparison of medical systems as cultural systems. *Social Science & Medicine. Part B: Medical Anthropology*. 1978. Vol. 12, pp. 85-93.

OTHER ACTIONS TO ENSURE CULTURALLY RELATIVE & TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES

- Provide care in the client's preferred language. Clear and easy to understand information should be given to help clients request language assistance.
 - Children should never be used as interpreters
 - Language assistance should include interpreters, translated written materials, signage and wayfinding, and auxiliary aids and services
 - Staff are fully aware of, and trained in, the use of language assistance services
 - Language assistance should be provided free of charge to clients. Clients should be aware of this when informed of assistance available.
- Patient should be seen alone for at least part of their appointment (if culturally acceptable). If they're experiencing harm, it could be by the person accompanying them and/or they may not feel comfortable discussing a concern in front of anyone else.
- Acknowledge cultural, gender and other differences. It may be against someone's cultural/religious beliefs to be touched or treated by a provider of another gender, etc. See what might be possible to meet their needs in the best way with the staff and resources available to the agency.
- Recruit/retain a diverse workforce at all levels that reflects the demographics of the populations served
 - Advertise job opportunities using media that will reach diverse audiences
- Develop a system for gathering and incorporating feedback and suggestions from clients
 - Strategies to gather feedback should use communication methods clients are most comfortable with
 - Strategies should ensure client anonymity. Clients should be aware of this.
 - Provide notice in signage, translated materials, and other media about the rights of each individual to provide feedback, including the right to file a complaint or grievance
 - Develop a clear process to address instance of conflict or grievance that includes follow-up and ensures that the individual is contacted with a resolution and next steps
- Partner with local culturally diverse media to promote better understanding of available care and services, and how to access them

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

PEOPLE ARE EXPERTS IN THEIR OWN STORY

THIS IS ABOUT DOING WHAT WE ALREADY DO, BETTER

THIS CAN FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE, BUT IT IS IMPORTANT

THERE WILL BE MISTAKES AND MISSTEPS. OWN THE MESS-UPS AND WORK TO DO BETTER NEXT TIME

THERE IS NO 'ONE SIZE FITS ALL'

IF YOU'RE TRYING, YOU ARE ON THE RIGHT TRACK

RESOURCES:

National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health and Health Care: <https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas>

A Blueprint for Advancing and Sustaining CLAS Policy and Practice:

<https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/assets/pdfs/EnhancedCLASStandardsBlueprint.pdf>

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation: Patient-Centered Care:

<https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/collections/patient-centered-care.html>

Culturally Specific Programs for Crime Victims in Iowa:

https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/media/cms/5_Culturally_Specific_Programs_FY20_BDB65DEDAD92E.pdf

Futures without Violence National Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence:

https://secure3.convio.net/fvvpf/site/Ecommerce/567623699?FOLDER=1043&store_id=1241

A Health Care Guide for Survivors of Domestic & Sexual Violence:

<https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/new-resource-survivor-brochure/>

