

Cultural Sensitivity



Superior places great emphasis on the wellness of its members. A large part of quality health care delivery is treating the whole patient and not just the medical condition. Sensitivity to differing cultural influences, beliefs and backgrounds, can improve a provider's relationship with patients and, in the long run, the health and wellness of the patients themselves.

The following is a list of principles for health care providers, to include knowledge, skills and attitudes related to cultural competency in the delivery of health care services to Superior's members.

Knowledge

- Provider's self-understanding of race, ethnicity and influence.
- Understanding of the historical factors which impact the health of minority populations, such as racism and immigration patterns.
- Understanding of the particular psycho-social stressors relevant to minority patients including war trauma, migration, acculturation stress and socioeconomic status.
- Understanding of the cultural differences within minority groups.
- Understanding of the minority patient within a family life cycle and intergenerational conceptual framework in addition to a personal developmental network.
- Understanding of the differences between culturally acceptable behavior of psycho-pathological characteristics of different minority groups.
- Understanding indigenous healing practices and the role of religion in the treatment of minority patients.
- Understanding of the cultural beliefs of health and help seeking patterns of minority patients.
- Understanding of the health service resources for minority patients.
- Understanding of the public health policies and its impact on minority patients and communities.

Skills

- Ability to interview and assess minority patients based on a psychological, social, biological, cultural, political or spiritual model.
- Ability to communicate effectively with the use of cross-cultural interpreters.
- Ability to diagnose minority patients with an understanding of cultural differences in pathology.
- Ability to avoid under diagnosis or over diagnosis.
- Ability to formulate treatment plans that are culturally sensitive to the patient and family's concept of health and illness.
- Ability to utilize community resources (church, community based organizations (CBOs), self-help groups).
- Ability to provide therapeutic and pharmacological interventions with an understanding of the cultural differences in treatment expectations and biological response to medication.
- Ability to ask for consultation.

Attitudes

- Respect the "survival merits" of immigrants and refugees.
- Respect the importance of cultural forces.
- Respect the holistic view of health and illness.
- Respect the importance of spiritual beliefs.
- Respect and appreciate the skills and contributions of other professional and paraprofessional disciplines.
- Be aware of transference and counter transference issues.