



Handling Multiculturality in Care kicked off with our first partnership meeting in Aarhus January 2015. This first issue explores the principles of providing culturally sensitive care, what involves and how this works in practice.

Handling Multiculturality in Care

Celebrating multiculturalism in care

Issue 1st March 2015

Universal principles for culturally sensitive care!

These universal principles can apply to any patient in any setting!

1. *Patients own their culture.* A patient needs to be allowed and encouraged to describe his or her culture.
2. *Patients own their bodies.* In every culture, patients have the right to make their care decisions.
3. *Patients own their care plans.* We need to help patients design their own care plans. Let them suggest ideas for how to follow the recommended plan of care.
4. *Patients are their own best advocates.* Teach patients the hows and whys of diabetic care, not just the "shoulds" and "musts."
5. *Honesty is always the best policy.* We are sometimes tempted to tell less than the "whole truth" in the name of cultural sensitivity.



Culturally Sensitive

I need my care providers to be culturally sensitive to my needs and those of my family

More inside!

pg. 3

cont.

A Guide to Nurses for Providing Culturally Sensitive Care

This is a useful guide for nurses caring for someone. The scenarios in the guide are used only to illustrate the concepts and approaches associated with providing culturally sensitive care. The examples are not meant to generalise, stereotype or exclude any particular cultural group(s). Use the three steps as a general approach to caring for someone from another culture

To care for someone, I must know who I am.
To care for someone, I must know who the other is.
To care for someone, I must be able to bridge the gap between myself and the other. Link to the guide here:
http://www.cno.org/globalassets/docs/prac/41040_culturallysens.pdf

Assumptions

The following assumptions are the core principles of providing care that is culturally appropriate.

- Everyone has a culture.
- Culture is individual. Individual assessments are necessary to identify relevant cultural factors within the context of each situation for each client.
 - An individual's culture is influenced by many factors, such as race, gender, religion, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation and life experience. The extent to which particular factors influence a person will vary.
- Culture is dynamic. It changes and evolves over time as individuals change over time.
- Reactions to cultural differences are automatic, often subconscious and influence the dynamics of the nurse-client relationship.
- A nurse's culture is influenced by personal beliefs as well as by nursing's professional values. The values of the nursing profession are upheld by all nurses. (See the College's Ethics practice standard.)
- The nurse is responsible for assessing and responding appropriately to the client's cultural expectations and needs.

Self-reflection

Everyone has a culture

To provide appropriate client care nurses must understand her/his culture and that of the nursing profession.

Many people say they do not have a culture, but this is false. Each person has particular beliefs, values, biases, etc. that he/she has learned, and these elements affect the way people view and respond to their world and other people in it.

Self-reflection assists nurses in identifying the values and biases that underscore her/his approach and interventions, and their impact on the client.

Nurses need to examine honestly their reactions to different situations to discover why they responded in a particular way. In some circumstances, a nurse may seek help from others to assist in reflection.

Acquiring cultural knowledge

It is unrealistic to expect nurses to have in-depth knowledge of all cultures, but it is possible to obtain a broad understanding of how culture can affect beliefs and behaviours.

Acquiring cultural knowledge begins with the recognition that behaviours and responses that are viewed one way in one cultural context may be viewed in another way, or have a different meaning, in another cultural context.



What is culture?

There are many sources of cultural knowledge, including books, articles colleagues and friends, workplace resources, community, church groups, clients themselves and the list goes on. Remember facilitating client choice is important because clients differ in their definitions of health, well-being and quality of life, as well as their goals for treatment and who they consider appropriate providers of care.

