

Vulnerable Populations: The Amish Community

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“I have neither given nor receive, nor will I tolerate others’ use of unauthorized aid”.

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When it comes to cultural competence, a nurse must be willing to provide judgment-free care and become culturally aware of the patient's culture. *Cultural competence* is "A developmental process that builds continuous increases in knowledge and skill development in the areas of cultural awareness, knowledge, understanding, sensitivity, interaction, and skills" (Hood, 2022). Being culturally competent is particularly important in nursing. Nurses must understand their values, beliefs, and biases before caring for patients (Hood, 2022). When a nurse can understand how their cultural beliefs can affect a patient's care, the nurse must be willing to change their behavior when caring for a patient with a different culture (Hood, 2022). When nurses are aware of cultural differences, they can develop communication skills to break down barriers and provide cultural care to patients (Hood, 2022). Communication is essential when delivering care to a patient with a different culture. The nurse needs to know how to foster communication with patients from diverse cultures and approach them respectfully and empathetically (Hood, 2022). Respect, empathy, and taking the time to learn about the patient's preferences can foster trust between the nurse and the patient. Being culturally competent is vital to ensure the patient's safety, respect the patient's preferences, and becoming aware of a patient's culture. Nurses must also acknowledge mistakes made when delivering care to a patient with a different culture. Nurses should apologize to the patient and take the opportunity to learn from the mistake, so it does not happen again with another patient in the same culture (Hood,2022). Having cultural competency is one of the essential things in nursing and is valuable to learn about to make sure the patient is getting biased-free and safe care.

In the Amish culture, the Amish do not believe in receiving health care insurance and prefer holistic treatments and remedies (Anderson & Potts, 2020). The Amish believe in using spiritual practice and folk medicine when sick (Anderson & Potts, 2020). When sick, the Amish

will rely on advice from friends or family and the use of their religion to heal them (Anderson & Potts, 2020). The Amish emphasize the importance of prayer and God-given-natural remedies to heal their sicknesses (Anderson & Potts, 2020). In the Amish culture, vitamins, minerals, and herbs are commonly used to better their health (Anderson & Potts, 2020). The Amish will use modern medicine only when they require care from a specialist or surgeon or with obstetrical needs during birth (Anderson & Potts, 2020). Amish believe in caring for one another and not using government insurance (Anderson & Potts, 2020).

Not only do Amish not believe in modern medicine, but they also have limited access to health care services. In specific Amish communities, technology is not used or found in their households. Amish rely on written letters or phone services outside the home to communicate (Anderson & Potts, 2020). This can be limiting when accessing health care services and finding out information because health care services today rely solely on the internet and phone services. The Amish also do not use modern medicine due to the cost (Anderson & Potts, 2020). The Amish do not have health insurance, so it would be costly if they sought to use modern medical services. Amish communities are also sensitive and hesitant when building trust and respect when seeking modern medical care (Anderson & Potts, 2020). The Amish must establish a trusting relationship to use a modern medical service. When they find that trust, they tend to spread the provider's good reputation to other fellow Amish members and seek that specialty care (Anderson & Potts, 2020). When caring for an Amish patient, it is imperative that the nurse is culturally aware and acknowledges the different beliefs the Amish follow when providing health care services to them.

When caring for an Amish patient, this student nurse has biases on how they view the Amish population. This student nurse thinks Amish people are mean and have harsh opinions of

others who do not follow Amish practices. This student nurse also believes that women should be able to speak about their feelings and not have their husbands speak for them. This student nurse does not understand and is not educated about their culture.

The roles of nurses and the nursing profession in promoting care to the Amish are to become culturally competent and learn about the Amish culture. Nurses need to know vital factors when delivering care to Amish patients. For example, when caring for a female Amish patient, nurses must discuss the health issue with the husband or the person in leadership concerning the patient (Anderson & Potts, 2020). Nurses should also try to include holistic care and remedies when providing care to the Amish, as this is what they prefer instead of modern medicine (Anderson & Potts, 2020). Nurses should establish a trusting relationship with the patient by asking questions to determine what the patient is comfortable with when receiving care. The nurse should always respect the client and their wishes and be sure not to over cross their boundaries as it could go against their beliefs and practices. The nurse should be willing to be free of judgment and help the patient with anything the patient needs if it is safe for the nurse and the patient.

References

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