

**N314 Vulnerable Populations APA Paper**

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## **What is Cultural Competence?**

Cultural competence is having the ability to treat everyone equally, no matter what their cultural background or beliefs are. Cultural competence is critical whether you are working with someone, caring for someone, or even just casually talking to someone. "'Culture' refers to integrated patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups. 'Competence' implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by consumers and their communities" (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, n.d.). Everyone should be treated with respect and free of judgment, regardless of how another person feels about their beliefs.

## **Importance of Cultural Competence in Healthcare**

It is essential to have this attribute, especially when working in the healthcare field. Before caring for a patient, looking on their chart for cultural backgrounds or asking them about their culture to understand their beliefs is appropriate. Ensuring the person being cared for feels like their views are important is essential when assessing them and receiving all the information. If someone feels like their beliefs and cultural background are not cared about, they may not express their health issues to the full extent because they may not be able to trust you. It could also give a bad reputation to the facility the person is working at due to the patient talking poorly. Even if someone has a different belief than the person they are caring for, it is still imperative to keep it to themselves and provide the best care without judgment as much as possible.

## **Vulnerable Population**

For my vulnerable population, I am choosing inmates. I find this very interesting to find out information about. Veilleux et al. (n.d.) stated that "implicit bias affects the care of incarcerated and detained individuals, especially for those experiencing neurological diseases." Making your patients feel like they are the top priority is always essential, especially for incarcerated people with neurological disorders. No matter the crime that they have committed, it is essential to treat them as if they are as innocent as anyone else. The prisoners are used to feeling like they are not a top priority when caring for their health (Veilleux et al., n.d.). Feeling unimportant could make the incarcerated people feel like they can not be trusted. It would be hard for them to express their health issues and feelings to a healthcare worker if they feel judged. Therefore, working like you are treating any other person is essential. It is also important to make them feel special because most prisoners have acute injuries and chronic disorders such as depression (Veilleux et al., n.d.). Chronic depression is prevalent for prisoners since they are away from their loved ones and are dealing with their problems (Veilleux et al., n.d.). A lot of times, they may just want someone to talk to without feeling any judgments.

### **My Biases or Judgments**

I could have biases or judgments about a prisoner depending on the crime. I would have to put my thoughts aside and focus on the patient's needs to help them feel better. If I knew that I was caring for a person who murdered many innocent people, although I would care for them just like any other person, I would have a hard time not having any judgments on them. It would make me question why I should provide this person with my help to make them healthy when they took many healthy, innocent people's lives. I would also likely have judgments on a person who is incarcerated because of being a pedophile. It would be hard for me to want to treat them after knowing what they have done to little children. Another bias I would have will be if

someone is a drug addict. I would wonder why I am helping them if they continue harming their bodies. It would be challenging to care for some people, but as a nurse, I would have to keep my judgments and biases to myself and give the best care possible.

### **Question**

I chose to answer the question: 'Do you want to know the crime of the prisoner to whom you have been assigned to deliver care?' It depends on the circumstances for me. Overall, I would not want to know the person's crime. I do not wish to know because then I would not have any judgments about them. It would help me to assess them to the best of my ability without showing any biases against them. In some cases, it would not bother me to know what crime they committed as long as it was minor. For example, I would not feel any judgment against a person if they got arrested for speeding. Although it is against the law and should not be done, the person did not harm other people or themselves, so I would not feel any need to have judgments about them. One of the reasons that I would want to know the crime is if they were a murderer so I could be extra careful around them. I would watch my surroundings more when caring for them. Although I could see both sides to this question, I would not want to know the person's crime.

## Reference Page

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). *Cultural competence in health and human services*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://npin.cdc.gov/pages/cultural-competence>

Veilleux, C., Roach, P., Cooke, L. J., Pfeffer, G., Johnson, N. A., & Ganesh, A. (n.d.). *Implicit bias and health disparities in the incarcerated population: A review with a focus on neurological care and the Canadian perspective*. Journal of Neurology Research. <https://www.neurores.org/index.php/neurores/article/view/733/699#:~:text=Factors%20other%20than%20implicit%20bias%20found%20to%20affect,systemic%20barriers%20to%20adequate%20follow-up%20in%20this%20population.>