

Vulnerable Populations

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Cultural Competence

Cultural competency is the ability to respect and value different groups and people who have beliefs, cultures, and ethnic backgrounds different from your own. Cultural competency in health care means delivering quality and effective care to patients with these diverse backgrounds (How to Improve, 2021). Cultural competency is important in all areas of life, but it is extremely important to have while working in healthcare. As a nurse, we are going to constantly have patients who have different beliefs and cultures from our own, so it is very important to be able to respect and learn about different cultures in a nonjudgemental manner. As a healthcare professional, it is also vital that the cultural and social needs of a patient are met; along with taking your patient cultural preferences into consideration when making the care plan for your patient. A patient's culture or socioeconomic background may also impact how they perceive healthcare and their willingness to do certain things for their health (How to Improve, 2021). The doctor may be telling them they need to do one thing for their health, but because of the way they grew up, they may believe something else is best, so it is important to speak with them to find this out.

Vulnerable Population

I decided to choose the homeless/impooverished population due to the fact that it is a big problem throughout the world, and many struggle to receive the appropriate health care that they need due to many different barriers. One aspect that makes this population vulnerable is the greater difficulty of receiving healthcare. Most homeless people do not have a primary care provider from which they can receive regular checkups because they do not have any insurance that will cover these visits. Some may also not have the resources to get them to any healthcare services that would be available to them, such as the emergency room, especially if they are not

living in an area that is near an ER. If a homeless person was able to get to an emergency room and get treatment, it is unlikely that they would be able to keep up on any treatment that would be needed due to lack of funds or difficulty being able to receive and keep a supply of medications while living on the street. Homeless or impoverished people may also be more susceptible to different diseases or infections because of their lack of a clean, safe, warm area to live in, especially during the cold winter months, where they would be more likely to develop illnesses. Many homeless people also struggle with different mental illnesses. It is estimated that a total of one-third of the homeless community suffers from mental illnesses that are left untreated (Healthcare and Medical, 2020).

Biases or Judgement

I try my best not to have any judgment towards homeless people. I try not to feel this way because they are not homeless because they want to be, and more likely because it was their last option. There are many different reasons a person may be homeless, and it is not always because they did something bad to ruin their life. Although there are some times a person may be homeless due to something bad like drug or alcohol addiction, many times it is because of other reasons such as lack of affordable health care or housing, unemployment, or struggles due to mental health issues or other disabilities. I do my best not to judge people who are homeless, though it is sometimes hard. I try to think about the fact that these people probably wish they could go back and change the fact that they got addicted to any substance and that their addiction got so bad that they are now homeless. There are many different reasons that a person may abuse substances as a coping mechanism, and some people don't have a good support system that would be able to help them with this problem.

Delivering Care to Homeless/Impoverished Populations

I would have no problem with treating a person who is homeless or impoverished. This population of people deserves to receive quality and effective healthcare just as much as anybody else does, and many of them probably need a large amount of care due to not being seen by a provider very often. I think that there should be more healthcare services that are attainable for people who do not have any income or a stable living situation, that way, even if they may not have a stable environment to live in, they can feel a little bit of reassurance by the fact that if they get sick, they have a place to be treated.

Resources

Healthcare and Medical Resources for the Homeless. (2020, March 10). Western Governors University. Retrieved October 12, 2023, from <https://www.wgu.edu/blog/healthcare-medical-resources-homeless2003.html>

How to Improve Cultural Competence in Health Care. (2021, March 1). Tulane University. Retrieved October 12, 2023, from <https://publichealth.tulane.edu/blog/cultural-competence-in-health-care/>