

**The Domestic Violence Population**

Hazelyn Hunter

Lakeview College of Nursing

N314: Introduction to Professional Nursing

Professor Travis Whisman

2025 March 9

**The Domestic Violence Population**

Cultural competence is an important skill to have when working with the domestic violence population. With the growing diverse population, knowledge and having a sense of awareness is imperative especially in the healthcare profession. According to the American Psychological Association, “cultural competence is the ability to understand, respect, and interact with people from different cultures” (paragraph 1). Cultural competence is involved when an individual is aware of self-values and how they affect communication with yourself and others. Cultural competence consists of cultural awareness, knowledge, skills, and sensitivity. Each culture should be treated as a whole with no judgement or bias. It includes the recognition and appreciation of the diverse differences and similarities among cultures (CultureAlly, paragraph 10). A culture represents the background of an individual and in some cases an individual’s culture can lead them to make decisions that some others may not agree with (National Library of Medicine, paragraph 20). It also helps gain respect and a generalized understanding for the diverse human groups.

### **Cultural Nursing**

It is important to be culturally competent while providing nursing care to others. Factors of cultural competence can include developing a sense of self-awareness, providing a thorough understanding of a client's culture, accepting cultural differences, and being open and comfortable with cultural differences. It is important to learn each client’s culture as if it were your own. Showing interest in one's culture and lifestyle will lead to confidence in the care that is about to be received as well as a positive nurse to client relationship. Having cultural competence allows nurses to impact a patient’s cultural beliefs, heritage and traditions (Nevada State University, paragraph 4). Being culturally competent in the nursing profession allows improvement of holistic care as well as educating clients on care options.

### **Vulnerable Population**

Domestic violence includes a large section of the population in the United States. According to the National Domestic Violence Hotline, about twenty-four people per minute are victims of rape, physical violence or being stalked by an intimate partner. In total, about twelve million men and women suffer per year which means that one in three women will experience some sort of violence during their lifetime. Some individuals have opinions that only a male figure is able to be the domestic abuser; however, twenty-eight percent of men are victims. Statistically, “seventy-seven percent of women ages eighteen to twenty-four and seventy-six percent of twenty-five to thirty-four have some of the highest numbers of violence between an intimate partner relationship (paragraph 9).

Some of these victims do not seek help either because they feel like they cannot or that they believe that the abuse is their own fault. They may even struggle with the factor of not being able to let go of the relationship or that they do not want to be alone. For example, young women can feel the need to stay in a violent relationship because they have been repeatedly told that nobody will love them other than the abuser. This is an example of psychological abuse however, in these types of relationships an abuser can also “reward” or give “gifts” to a young woman to make them feel loved and appreciated and to allow them to block out the bad components of a relationship (*Manipulation is abuse*, paragraph 39). This tactic is used far too often in the young female population. Children can also affect the victim's perspective of domestic violence. There are many cases of women staying in a “toxic” relationship for the financial stability and physical safety of their children (Florida State University, paragraph 7). However, in the end if the child/children were to see the active violence it can cause lifetime stress and psychological harm (Office on Women’s Health, paragraph 1). Each one of these

examples can be seen from a male perspective as well. Even though the women's domestic violence rates are higher than male, it does not mean that it does not happen.

Domestic violence can occur everywhere but that does not mean that it can be seen by everyone. These individual abusers are smart and have a skill that one may not be able to comprehend. They can simply manipulate another person with ease in a way that others may not be able to see without knowing the signs to watch for. These signs can include the act of being controlling or forceful and are often signs that are seen in public. According to the National Domestic Violence Hotline, “one feature shared by most abusive relationships is that the abusive partner tries to establish or gain power and control through many different methods at different moments” (paragraph 1).

### **Needs of victims**

There is an endless amount of need that an individual who is suffering from domestic violence should have. Most of these individuals in our population suffer in silence because of the fear and violence they have endured. Some things that victims of domestic violence should have include safety and personal protection, psychological treatment and support, financial stability, and physical healthcare if needed. Some victims may not have any idea what to do before or after they escape a violent relationship. A good place to start is to call the National Domestic Violence Hotline number. This hotline has specialists who are trained to help work through situations and guide individuals in a better direction in life. They can also lead you to further help like getting physical and or mental help (National Domestic Violence Hotline, paragraph 1). The need to acquire a location or personal safety or even receive personal protection from an abusive relationship can be difficult for someone who has been hurt. It may be difficult to trust another person or person of the same gender as the abuser, however, the need

to find safety is a priority. Types of documentation like a restraining order may be necessary depending on the severity of the situation. Programs such as therapy and support groups may also be a good idea to help restore confidence and to help work through the past (Thriveworks, section 6). There are also programs to help restore financial stability and physical healthcare when needed (National Domestic Violence Hotline, paragraph 1).

In the nursing profession it is imperative to be able to pick out the suspected domestic violence relationships. A domestic violence screening tool should also be used on every client who is admitted receiving any type of medical care. The screening tool is effective in some situations, however if the abuser is in the same room, it may be more difficult to have the client admit to the violence. An example used to privately confirm this violence is to prepare a urine sample room with two different colored markers and have the client write their name in the color that indicates their situation (Family Justice Center Alliance). This tactic can discreetly inform the caregiver of a situation and allow a new plan of care to be established as fast as possible. It is also important to be discreet to not raise the alert of the abuser. In some cases, a victim of domestic violence could be at the point in their life where they want to end their life in order to escape the violence (Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, paragraph 2). This situation is extreme and needs to be a priority. It is first important to have the client discuss how they feel in a secure and safe environment. Being empathetic is a key factor as well as showing validation. The next step is to collaborate with other healthcare providers to create a team that works best for this client's situation. If the client explains their situation to you as the nurse, it is important to stay with them the entire time since they have instilled their trust in you by explaining their situation. This trust shows that they feel safe around you so you must show support and provide hope for the client at risk.

### **Reflection of Domestic Violence**

There are assumptions and judgements that individuals commonly make about domestic violent relationships. The most common assumption is that why do they not just simply leave the situation? Well, this is also a question of mine as well and in my opinion, each situation is different and may require different actions. I believe that it all starts out with how someone is raised. Parents should raise their children to be strong, independent and have the ability to stand up for oneself. However, it is still possible to find someone in a violent situation even if they are strong and independent. They could simply not see what was happening to them until it was too late. As stated above, these abusers are smart and manipulative. Other than the question of why the victims do not run, I do not have any judgments towards this population. Domestic violence can happen to anyone, and it is important to report any noticed violence because you always must ask yourself; what if it was you? For example, if I was working as a nurse on a floor and a known domestic abuser got admitted. I would treat them as if I would treat any other individual because that is the job. It does not matter who walks into the door, each individual should be treated in a good manar. However, if I was for sure this person is a domestic abuser I would make a report for the safety of other individuals. These steps should be taken in a discrete way to not raise the alarm of the abuser.

### **Conclusion**

To wrap it all up, cultural competence is a development of self-awareness, and it is important to never assume, manage any prejudices as well as being open to discussion about any cultural questions. These factors are especially important when providing holistic client care. Domestic violence can be a sensitive topic to some individuals, and some believe that it is an

overreaction of someone. However, this topic statically shows that it is a problem that needs to be addressed more often. Even though there is a hotline that can be contacted in case of domestic violence, this is not always what occurs. Depending on the situation, it may be challenging for victims to accept the need for help. For this reason, it is important to watch for signs of domestic violence. By knowing the signs of a violent relationship, there is a higher possibility to improve the life of another individual.

## **References**

Browning, B. (2020). *A clinic's ingenious way to help domestic violence victims is sweeping the web*. Family Justice Center. [A clinic's ingenious way to help domestic violence victims is sweeping the web](#).

DeAngelis, T. (2015). *In search of cultural competence*. American Psychological Association.. [American Psychological Association webpage](#).

Lupcho, T. (2023). *Healing from domestic violence through therapy*. Thriveworks. <https://thriveworks.com/therapy/domestic-violence-therapy/> .

CultureAlly. *What is Cultural Awareness?* CultureAlly. [What is Cultural Awareness?](#).

Florida State University. *Why Victims Stay*. Florida State University. <https://knowmore.fsu.edu/helping-healing/why-victims-stay>.

Harris County Domestic Violence Coordinating Council, (2024). *The Silent Link between Suicidal and Domestic Violence*. [The Silent Link Between Suicide and Domestic Violence](#).

National Domestic Violence Hotline. *Domestic violence statistics*. National Domestic Violence Hotline. <https://www.thehotline.org/stakeholders/domestic-violence-statistics/#::~:~:text=Over%201%20in%203%20women,intimate%20partner%20in%20their%20lifetime>.

National Domestic Violence Hotline. *Local Resources Help where you need it*. National Domestic Violence Hotline. <https://www.thehotline.org/get-help/domestic-violence-local-resources/> .

National Domestic Violence Hotline. *Warning signs of abuse, know what to look for.*

National Domestic Violence Hotline. [Warning Signs of Abuse - The Hotline](#) .

Nevada State University, (2024). *Cultural Competence in Nursing: A Pathway to*

*Patient-Centered Care.* Nevada State University. [Cultural Competence in](#)

[Nursing: A Pathway to Patient-Centered Care | Nevada State University](#) .

Office on Women's Health, (2024). *Effects of domestic violence on children.* U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services. [Effects of domestic violence on](#)

[children | Office on Women's Health.](#)

Patient Educ Couns. (2016). *Cultural Challenges to Engaging Patients in Shared*

*Decision Making.* National Library of Medicine.

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5164843/> .