

Cultural Implications
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Cultural Implications

Cultural competence is a life long journey that one can only acquire when you realize that your beliefs and values are not what's best. This world is full of diverse people from many different cultural social and educational backgrounds, so it is important that we treat everyone equally with dignity and respect especially when it comes to healthcare. I grew up in a single parent home where we didn't have a lot but my mom made sure we had a nice home, food and all the necessities we needed as children growing up. My mother explained to us the importance of being kind and showing love and sympathy to your fellow man, so when I see a homeless person or someone who's mentally ill, I look for ways that I can help without being judgmental. How should we treat a patient coming into the emergency room who is homeless, mentally ill or who are working but can't afford healthcare? Are they entitled to the same level of healthcare as everyone else?

Healthcare today society is so expensive, and you don't get a lot of return for the premiums and co-pays that you put into it so it's no surprise that a lot of Americans don't have healthcare. I personally know some of my friends at work that say the cost of healthcare cost more than what they earn in a month so they would rather visit the urgent aid or make a quick trip to the emergency room instead of paying for healthcare. They feel that they pay their taxes but get little to nothing in return when it comes to being able to provide a simple yet very important element to their household. Then you have the mentally ill who either can't afford the cost of their

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medications, aren't diagnosed because they don't have health care or simply believe nothing is wrong with them. If they even go to the hospital would they be able to receive treatment or be turned away because they are unable to pay?

Working in an environment that requires direct contact and interactions with people of different cultures are a step in the right direction. The first step to battling this enormous issue is to become culturally competent but what does it mean to become culturally competent? 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 skill. There are six steps for nurses to follow to acquire this skill. First step is examining personal values, beliefs, biases and prejudices. The second step is to build cultural awareness. The third step is learning specific communication strategies. The fourth step involves interacting with people from different cultures. The fifth step is to identify and acknowledge mistakes and the six step is to remediate cultural mistakes.

The first step to becoming culturally competent is an examination of attitudes from judgments that may stem from early childhood or personal experience. There are a variety of self-reports that can be used to measure culture sensitivity. The only way that self-report tools will work is to be honest about your own values, beliefs and self-prejudices. The second step is to build cultural

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awareness for the staff working in healthcare. By providing inpatient client care to people of different cultures, you will understand the differences between what you view as the norm versus learning about other cultures and that will make you more knowledgeable when providing care. This can also begin in the classroom. As I look over my classmates, I see a variety of different cultures that I can learn from which will help me become more comfortable when caring for clients who are of a different culture.

The third step is learning to implement culturally specific communication strategies that affirm respect for diversity which includes verbal and nonverbal communication patterns that plays a key role in of understanding cultural nuances when serving clients of different backgrounds. The fourth step is simply interacting with people of different cultures. This can be quite difficult for someone who isn't outgoing or comfortable interacting with people who are different then they are but is vital in growth. The fifth step is identifying and acknowledging mistakes. People may assume things based on racial profiling or physical appearance so the best way to avoid these mistakes is to make perform a detailed individual focused assessment. The six step is remediation for cultural mistakes that involves correcting mistakes by wat of communication between people as well as groups. It all stems back to treating people the way you would like to be treated. When members of a cultural group receive quality sensitive care, they share their

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experiences with other members of their culture. The last and final step of providing cultural competent care is making health care affordable for everyone which sounds easy enough, but it is one of the most expensive and stressful things to deal with and is a necessity as well.

If everyone plays their part, we can work together to build a more culturally competent environment in the healthcare system by first realizing our own prejudices attitudes and being honest with ourselves about how we feel about other cultures. Treating everyone with dignity and respect and not see others as what they look like on the outside and providing affordable healthcare. Building cultural awareness by providing inpatient client care for people who are from different cultural backgrounds, learning and implementing cultural and specific communication strategies, and interacting with people from different cultures. Identifying and acknowledging mistakes and having a general dialogue that results for ideas for cultural accommodations and perspectives.

References: Hood, L. J. (2018). *Leddy & Peppers professional nursing*. Philadelphia: Wolters Kluwer.