



Culturally Sensitive Care MODULE 03

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Elements of Providing Culturally Sensitive Care

The goal of this learning module is to identify elements of providing culturally sensitive care.

What Will I Learn?

By completing this learning module on Self-Reflection you will learn to:

- Identify that everyone has a culture
- Understand the importance of your own culture and that of the nursing profession
- Understand the importance of self-reflection in identifying values and biases

How Will I Learn?

- By reviewing the concepts of self-reflection that are essential in providing culturally appropriate care
- By reviewing the case study
- By analyzing the case study and reflecting on your values and beliefs
- By building on your nursing knowledge, experience and expertise
- By applying what you have learned to your nursing practice.

Self-Reflection

As individuals and professionals, it is important to understand that each of us has a core set of values, beliefs, biases and levels of understanding. As a result, the manner in which we view, respond and approach people may be very different in any given situation or circumstance to an individual's world and those that share this world with them.

We know from Module Two, everyone has a culture! Our role as professionals is to understand our own values and beliefs and that of our nursing culture.

Self-reflection is so fundamentally important in assisting us as nurses to identify the values and biases that underscore our approach and interventions to care we provide, and their impact on our clients and families.

Do you recall a situation in your nursing career, where you wish you had responded differently to a client situation?

If so, jot it down in your notebook

1. What was this issue?
2. Why did it bother you?
3. What would you do differently today?

Cultural Biases

Cultural biases can be challenging to identify when the nurse and client are of a similar cultural background. When we know a culture, we often think we know what is right for the client, and thus may impose our own values on the client by assuming our values are their values. Recognizing differences presents an opportunity not only to know the other, but also to help gain a greater sense of self.

Our nursing profession also has a culture. Values such as;

- **Caring**
- **Empathy**
- **Truthfulness**
- **Promoting health and autonomy**
- **Respecting client choices**

All of these values influence how we as nurses interact with our clients.

An example of such is in some families, other members of the family may make decisions for the client. Nurses may not agree with this decision because client consent and autonomy is strongly valued by the nursing profession in Ontario.

Culture may also influence client perceptions of a caregiver's behaviour. For example, a client may have an existing belief about nurses from a different cultural background or gender. The nurse must be sensitive to the biases each client may bring to the relationship.

Keep a notebook to write down your ideas and answers to the questions in this Case Study

Case Study

A RPN working on a pediatric unit was caring for an infant with severe physical and developmental delays. The nurse explained to the parents that with their consent, she would be very happy to refer their child to physiotherapy and occupational therapy while in hospital and she would be pleased to arrange this for them when their child returned home as this would hopefully help with the child's independence.

The parents refused this offer. They explained to the nurse that it was their duty to care for their child because their child's condition is punishment for having conceived before they were married. The parents were not at all supportive of this suggestion to improve their child's independence. The nurse was most upset and felt that the parents were not acting in the child's best interest.

Reflection

Based on the information presented in this case study:

1. What are some assumptions this nurse has made?
2. What are some potential strategies to assist this nurse with this situation?
3. Does this nurse have a culturally sensitive practice issue or the potential for a problem?
4. In your analysis, identify the Professional Standards that are not being met in this situation.
5. Review this case with a colleague and discuss your results. Consider the following when determining if a culturally sensitive situation is a problem.

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The following worksheet allows you to capture your ideas!

The nurse did not clearly understand the family's initial refusal of treatment. After reflection and discussion with colleagues, she realized her personal and professional values of independence were causing her to feel upset with the parents' refusal.

The nurse decided to explore this further with the parents to gain a better understanding of their goals for their child. By doing so, she learned that the parents wanted their child to become stronger and have fewer infections to avoid future hospitalization.

When the nurse explained the proposed therapies, the parents were very interested and decided to participate. The nurse had a better understanding of her values and the importance of ensuring she understood the parents' values.

1. What are the potential or actual risks to the patient if this situation does not get resolved?

2. How does this issue conflict with CNO's Standard of Practice? Which Standards?

3. What practice setting or unit policies/procedures are you unable to meet?

4. Who else is affected by this issue/problem?

5. How could you resolve this issue or problem? If you are not able to, who would you go to?

6. What resources might give direction to resolve the issue/problem?

7. What ideas or suggestions can you offer to resolve the problem?