

Moving Toward Cultural Competency in Palliative Care

In the dynamic landscape of palliative care, cultural competency is essential in providing a safe atmosphere for patients and their families who may have troubling experiences within the healthcare system. Traumatic experiences can negatively impact one's willingness to seek healthcare. Drawing from recent research and advancements, here are some contemporary tips to bolster cultural competence in palliative care:

Embrace Intersectionality

Acknowledge that individuals possess multifaceted identities shaped by factors such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and more. Understanding these intersecting identities is essential for providing culturally sensitive care¹.

Through reviewing articles and videos, you can learn about the [origins of Intersectionality](#)

Utilize Technology for Cultural Understanding

Leverage technological tools and resources to deepen your understanding of diverse cultures. Online platforms, webinars, and virtual training modules can offer insights into cultural nuances and facilitate cross-cultural communication².

Utilize technology through cellphone application such as [Google's translator](#) apps for when there is a communication barrier

Cultivate Cultural Humility

Embrace a stance of cultural humility characterized by openness, curiosity, and a willingness to learn from patients and their communities. Recognize that cultural competence is an ongoing journey rather than a static achievement².

One can alter their approach to care by [treating the patient, and not the illness](#)

Integrate Trauma-Informed Care

Understand the impact of historical trauma and systemic injustices on patient experiences of illness and end-of-life care. Incorporate trauma-informed approaches that prioritize safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment³.

Increase your understanding of the negative impact inequality in healthcare has caused various ethnicities and cultural groups through reviewing these Trauma Informed resources:

- [CAPC.org](#)
- [Pallium.ca](#)

Engage in Reflective Practice

Regularly engage in reflective practice to examine your own biases, assumptions, and privileges. Cultivate self-awareness and humility by exploring how your cultural background influences your interactions with patients and families³.

You can take steps in the right direction by reviewing the following:

- [5 questions to ensure you are providing culturally appropriate end-of-life-care](#)
- [Becoming Reflexive Practitioners](#)

References:

1. National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization. (2023). Diversity, equity, and inclusion. Retrieved March 7th, 2024 from https://www.nhpco.org/wp-content/uploads/Culturally_Sensitive_Communications.pdf
2. De Santis, K. K., Mergenthal, L., Christianson, L., Busskamp, A., Vonstein, C., & Zeeb, H. (2023). Digital technologies for health promotion and disease prevention in older people: Scoping review. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 25, e43542. Retrieved on March 7th, 2024 from <https://www.jmir.org/2023/1/e43542/PDF>
3. de Groot, J. M., Fehon, D. C., Calman, L., Miller, D. S., & Feldstain, A. (2023). Trauma-informed palliative care is needed: A call for implementation and research. *Palliative Medicine*, 37(10), 1470–1473. Retrieved March 7th 2024 from <https://doi.org/10.1177/02692163231206998>