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The Four A's of Cultural Diversity for Health Care Providers

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Racial/ethnic disparities within the United States (US) healthcare system have been well researched and documented. Cultural competence has emerged as one strategy to address healthcare disparities. Cultural competence describes the ability of healthcare providers to interact effectively with people of different cultures. To produce positive change, healthcare practitioners must understand the cultural context of their target community and have the willingness and skills to work within this context. This means drawing on community-based values, traditions and customs and working with knowledgeable persons of and from the community to plan, implement and evaluate prevention activities. Providing healthcare in today's multicultural environment it is essential that the healthcare providers are prepared to function effectively with patients from different cultural background. This preparation allows healthcare providers to fulfill their roles which will increase patient satisfaction and improve patient outcome. Scenario: A 38-year-old married Lebanese Muslim woman accompanied by her husband presented to community clinic with complaints of foul smelling vaginal discharge×2 weeks. The healthcare provider suspects the possibility of a vaginal infection and informed the patient that a pelvic exam would be performed to determine what is causing the vaginal discharge. The healthcare provider that is currently available to see this patient is a male and the husband refuses to allow them to examine his wife. The medical assistant excuse the husband from the room to sign some insurance papers and the male healthcare provider proceeded with the exam despite the patient's obvious humiliation.

Biography

Linda Darnell completed a Masters in Nursing Education in 2009 and is currently completing a PhD in Nursing Education from Capella University. She is a full time instructor in nursing fundamentals at a baccalaureate nursing program. In 2015 she was the lead author of a chapter published in Elsevier's Transformational Tool Kit for Front Line Nurses. The chapter is titled Cultural Competent Patient-Centered Nursing Care. Her other interest include nursing history, perioperative nursing and health care revision

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