

Development of Learning Strategies and Resources to Teach Health Care Students Cross-Cultural Interviewing Skills.

Tricia McCabe, Lyndal Sheepway, Susan Morrison, Adrian Miller, Louise Brown, Tania Gerzina, Belinda Kenny, Lilon Bandler, Alan Cass, Lisa Pont, Sally Farrington

Introduction/Background:

The delivery of health services most often occurs as an interaction between a health professional and a patient. The effectiveness of this communication can often determine the quality of service delivery (Cass, 2007). Sociocultural differences between students and their patients in education, family structures, language skills, socioeconomic status and perceptions of health and illness can be barriers to effective communication. If these barriers are overlooked, miscommunication may result and lead to serious health consequences for patients and their families (Woodward-Kron et al, 2002).

Students need to learn to interview patients in a culturally appropriate way as a vital component of the safe practice of patient care. Faculties of Health around Australia should make it a priority to provide pre-clinical and clinical learning experiences which facilitate students' development of these communication skills in a manner which is safe and effective for both student and patient.

The presenters are part of the project team for The Byalawa Project, funded by an Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) Competitive Grant. The Byalawa Project brings together academics from a wide range of disciplines across two universities. The project aims to develop high-quality, research-based teaching and learning materials to facilitate the acquisition of appropriate, culturally-safe interviewing and case-history taking skills of health practitioners. The materials will be designed for use by academics and clinical teachers in a broad range of health professions either in single-profession or interprofessional learning contexts.

Purpose/Objectives

Participants will:

- Explore issues associated with cross cultural health interviewing
- Explore their own assumptions about the purposes of an interview in their clinical setting
- Understand some of the assumptions patients make in an interview or case history taking situation.
- Discuss approaches to teaching and assessment of cross-cultural interviewing.
- Develop strategies which will be used towards creating free learning and teaching materials funded by an ALTC grant.

Issues/Questions for exploration or ideas for discussion

- What assumptions and values do students and clinicians bring to interviews? How do these differ from those that the patient brings?
- What are our learning objectives/expectations when we teach students about cross cultural interviewing (eg. knowledge, behaviours, attitudes)?

- What techniques have participants used to achieve these objectives and what have they found to be useful or not so useful? How are best practice resources selected and developed?
- What materials do participants want to help students learn about these issues in both classroom and clinical settings?
- How would participants use these materials in teaching students? Could these materials have a place in assessment?