Cultural Aspects and Faith Matters in Nursing Care

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PRESENTER
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Presented by Nurses Christian Fellowship
AIM:

The intent of this workshop is to provide a deeper understanding of aspects of culture that underscore the complexity of “cultural diversity”. Diversity is shown in every nursing and/or health care encounter. This is because Australia has become such a multicultural country and every health care worker differs in cultural backgrounds and experience and every patient comes with different cultural backgrounds, different needs and different expectations.

These differences allow us to see ourselves as unique, created in God’s image. In the midst of “diversity” we can learn and understand the tapestry that integrate the aspects of culture, is a way that God reveals His plan and purpose for us.

In this workshop, the word nursing care will not only focus on the nursing needs of individuals but extends to examine how groups of nursing professionals can pro-actively organize the care to incorporate strategies the address cultural matters.

A few definitions:

*Cultural competence* is sometimes used interchangeably as ‘*cultural awareness*’, ‘*cultural sensitivity*’, ‘*cultural appropriateness*’ and more recently, ‘*cultural responsiveness*’. However, Rodriguez (in Diversit-e issue 2, 2011, pg 3) explains that “*Cultural competence* is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals and enable that system, agency or those professions to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.” This means that cultural aspects should be considered in service planning, resourcing, implementation and evaluation.

*Culture*, in this context, is seen as the conglomeration of beliefs, values, practice, customs and behaviours of groups of people. In such cases culture is used synonymously as ethnicity.

*Ethnicity* has been defined “by cultural aspects such as shared language, religion, customs and beliefs.” (Short, Sharman and Speedy, 1998:163).

In a few words write down your understanding of culture and what you intend to get out of this workshop.
ASPECTS OF CULTURE

Symbols

“Something that represents or stands for something else”.

Give some examples of symbols that you are familiar with.

Language

A system of chosen symbols or words that allow groups of people to communicate

There are more than 200 languages spoken in Australia. How many languages do you speak? What is essential to include in our patient management models to promote accurate assessments patients needs?

Values and Beliefs

Perceptions of what is good or bad. These perceptions support our ideas of ethics and morality.

In what ways does your culture influence you on matters of right and wrong?

What resources are available to us when we need to provide quality end-of-life care?
**Norms**

Guidelines of behaviour expected from a group of people.

Describe a behaviour that is deemed acceptable by your relatives and friends when you dine with them.

What challenges do you face when you discuss the placement of nursing home care for older Asian patient/client with their relatives?

**Material Culture**

These include tangible things such as food and clothing.

Discuss how you can successfully incorporate the patient’s preferences in your management of his/her care.

In relation to the five aspects of culture list, several questions that we should ask to enhance the health and nursing care of people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.
FAITH MATTERS

To many sociologists, religion is “a matter of faith”. As Christians we know that faith is “being sure of what we hope for [being] certain of what we do not see”.

Hebrews 11:1

In other words faith is grounded in evidence of convictions rather than scientific ‘validity’ of truths. The apostle Paul exhorts us “to walk by faith and not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7). In this world of ours, matters of faith vary greatly.

There are four characteristics of religion (matters of faith):

1) Beliefs and Believers
2) Sacred texts and writings
3) Ethics
4) Rituals and ceremonies

Within these religions there are two (2) worldviews –

Immanent

Transcendent

Billions of people in different ethnic/cultural groups organize themselves in profoundly different ways to demonstrate how their faith matters to them. Identify some of the issues relating matters of faith that are reflected in the five different aspects of culture. These issues need to be carefully addressed in the assessment approaches that nurses use.
Test your knowledge and see if you can demonstrate how the following religions satisfy the 4 characteristics and 2 worldviews.

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From a biblical perspective what is a Christian’s perspective to how faith matters?

Christ’s love extends beyond cultural influences and our Christian faith truly matters. What can you do to prepare yourself for dealing with different matters of faith while presenting the love of Christ?