

Cultural Competency for Healthcare Service Providers



Identifying and ameliorating gaps in cultural competency and anti-oppression training programs for front line healthcare workers.

Introduction

- Aiming to improve the quality of healthcare access for recent immigrants, refugees.
- Recognition that a multicultural society requires its healthcare providers to have an understanding of the needs and experiences of its various peoples.
- A lack of such understanding or discrimination may constitute a serious barrier to healthcare for newcomers.
- While we recognize that institutions have taken steps to bridge cultural gaps and reduce discrimination, we also recognize that gaps in available competency trainings exist and must be improved.

What is cultural competence?

- ▶ According to the SickKids Hospital “Train the Trainer Manuel”, a sound cultural competence education program functions by “setting the context for change, having a strong foundational knowledge of culture and cultural competence, and leveraging existing tools, policies and individuals to develop and sustain culturally competent care.”
- ▶ In short, cultural competence aims to adapt medical care to a variety of contexts and situations that may be different than the status quo. It aims to ready care providers to work with their patients in a way which meets their specific needs and experiences.
- ▶ Some elements of cultural competence according to SickKids include providing translation services, cultural sensitivity training, and a focus on socio-economic barriers to healthcare or outright forms of ethno-racial discrimination.

Why does it matter?

SickKids
THE HOSPITAL FOR
SICK CHILDREN
New Immigrant
Support Network

Reducing Health Disparities Through Culturally Competent Care



(Brach & Fraser, 2002)



Goals

- First, to recognize the nature of barriers to healthcare faced by newcomers. What forms of discrimination, oppression, or cultural misunderstanding have created barriers to healthcare for Canadian immigrants?
- To survey various cultural competency trainings that are currently available in the city of Toronto and GTA. What programs are currently being offered, what do they offer, and how can they be improved?
- To provide recommendations to agencies who currently offer, or are looking to offer, cultural competency training based on identified gaps.

Our Methodology

- First, we created a survey that has been circulated to the various Toronto LIPs and its members inquiring into barriers to healthcare and forms of discrimination in the healthcare system faced by newcomers. In addition, participants were asked to identify cultural competency training that they were aware of, or had personally taken.
- As part of this project, we are also building a directory of all available cultural competency training in the Toronto area that would be suitable for the healthcare sector. The initial draft of this directory has already been circulated past the settlement services working group, though the final copy will be made available to healthcare service providers more generally.