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For the Pharmacy Technician

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Module Two Lesson 1

Cultural Competency for Pharmacy Technicians

3 hours

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Cultural Competency

Cultural competency is about treating people with dignity and respect, regardless of their race, religion, physical or learning ability, gender, gender reassignment, sexuality, health status or how they choose to live.



What Is Cultural Competency?

Cultural competency refers to the ability of individuals and organizations to interact effectively with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. It involves understanding and respecting cultural differences, as well as being able to adapt one's communication style and behavior in order to avoid misunderstandings or offense. Cultural competency is particularly important in fields such as healthcare, education, social services, and business, where interactions with people from diverse backgrounds are common.

It requires a willingness to learn about different cultures, beliefs, values, and practices; an awareness of one's own biases and assumptions; and the ability to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries. Cultural competency can help improve outcomes for clients or customers from diverse backgrounds by reducing disparities in care or service delivery. It can also lead to greater understanding, empathy, and respect among individuals from different cultural groups.

Cultural Competency In The Pharmacy Setting

The key components of cultural competency in the pharmacy setting encompass various elements that contribute to providing effective healthcare services to diverse patient populations. Firstly, it involves developing an awareness and understanding of different

cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and practices. This includes recognizing the impact of culture on health behaviors, medication adherence, and treatment outcomes. Secondly, it entails being respectful and non-judgmental towards patients' cultural values and preferences, while ensuring unbiased care delivery.

Effective communication is also vital, involving the ability to overcome language barriers and utilize appropriate interpreters when necessary. Moreover, Pharmacy Technicians need to be knowledgeable about culturally specific health practices or traditional medicine that patients may incorporate alongside conventional treatments. Lastly, fostering a culturally inclusive environment within the pharmacy promotes trust-building and enhances patient engagement in their own healthcare journey.

Culture is learned, from our families, communities, religions, schools and many other aspects of our lives. Culture is learned over the course of our lives through activities we participate in and practice. Culture is also normative, setting the standard for speech, behavior, writing, etc. When we process these standards over time, they become our culture.

Implementing Cultural Competency In Healthcare Pharmacy

One of the significant challenges to implementing cultural competency in healthcare pharmacy is the lack of awareness and understanding among healthcare professionals. Many Pharmacy Technicians may not possess adequate knowledge about different cultures, resulting in a limited ability to address diverse patients' needs effectively. Additionally, the **absence** of standardized cultural competency training programs for pharmacy professionals further contributes to this barrier. Another challenge is language barriers, particularly when patients speak languages other than English.

Communication difficulties hinder effective patient-pharmacy technician interactions and can lead to medication errors or misunderstandings. Moreover, cultural biases and stereotypes held by healthcare professionals can impede their ability to provide equitable care for all patients. These challenges highlight the importance of addressing cultural competency in healthcare pharmacy education and practice to ensure optimal patient outcomes.

Enhancing Cultural Competency In Pharmacy Practice

One strategy for enhancing cultural competency in pharmacy practice is to provide ongoing education and training for Pharmacy Technicians and pharmacy staff. This can include workshops, seminars, or online modules that focus on cultural sensitivity, understanding diverse health beliefs and practices, and effective communication with patients from different cultural backgrounds. Another strategy is to promote the use of professional interpreters or bilingual staff members who can effectively communicate with patients whose first language may not be English.

Additionally, pharmacies can implement policies that encourage the hiring of a diverse workforce to better reflect the cultural diversity of the patient population they serve. Finally, fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment where patients feel comfortable discussing their cultural beliefs and healthcare needs is crucial in promoting culturally competent pharmacy practice.



Steps to Cultural Proficiency involves understanding of Cultural Destructiveness, Cultural Incapacity, Cultural Blindness, Cultural Sensitivity and Cultural Competence.

Cultural Destructiveness

Cultural destructiveness in healthcare has far-reaching consequences, negatively impacting both patients and healthcare providers. One significant impact is the erosion of trust between patients and providers. When healthcare professionals fail to recognize and respect the cultural beliefs, values, and practices of their patients, it creates a barrier to effective communication and understanding. This can lead to misdiagnosis, inadequate treatment plans, and ultimately poorer health outcomes for individuals from diverse backgrounds.

Cultural Destructiveness: negating, disparaging, or purging cultures that are different from your own.

Moreover, cultural destructiveness perpetuates health disparities among marginalized populations. By disregarding cultural norms or imposing one's own beliefs onto patients, healthcare systems inadvertently contribute to unequal access to quality care. This exacerbates existing health inequities experienced by racial and ethnic minorities, immigrants, LGBTQ+ individuals, and other vulnerable communities. Furthermore, cultural destructiveness undermines the overall effectiveness of healthcare delivery.

Examples Of Cultural Destructiveness In The Healthcare System

Cultural destructiveness within the healthcare system manifests in various forms, often resulting in negative outcomes for patients from diverse cultural backgrounds. One example is the failure to provide interpreters or language services, which hinders effective communication and understanding between healthcare providers and patients with limited English proficiency. This disregard for linguistic diversity can lead to misdiagnoses, inadequate treatment, and compromised patient safety.

Another example is the lack of cultural competency training among healthcare professionals. Without proper education on different cultural beliefs, practices, and health disparities, providers may unknowingly perpetuate stereotypes or exhibit bias towards certain groups. This can result in substandard care or even discriminatory treatment. Additionally, cultural destructiveness can be observed through the underrepresentation of minority populations in clinical trials and research studies.

1. Cultural competency training: Healthcare professionals should undergo comprehensive cultural competency training to develop awareness, knowledge, and skills necessary to provide culturally sensitive care. This includes understanding cultural beliefs, values, practices, and communication styles of diverse populations.
2. Language services: Accessible language services are crucial for effective communication with patients who have limited English proficiency. Healthcare facilities should provide professional interpreters or translators to ensure accurate understanding of medical information and patient preferences.
3. Culturally appropriate care plans: Individualized care plans should be developed by considering patients' cultural beliefs, traditions, and preferences. This promotes patient autonomy and respects their cultural identity.
4. Community engagement: Collaborating with community organizations can help healthcare providers gain insights into the specific needs of diverse populations.

Cultural Incapacity

Cultural incapacity refers to the inability of healthcare providers, including Pharmacy Technicians, to effectively meet the diverse needs of patients from different cultural backgrounds. It occurs when healthcare systems fail to recognize and address the unique cultural factors that impact patients' health outcomes. In today's increasingly multicultural society, cultural competency is essential for providing quality care and ensuring patient satisfaction. Pharmacy Technicians play a crucial role in medication management and patient education, making it imperative for them to understand the cultural beliefs, practices, and communication styles of their patients.

Cultural Incapacity: elevating the superiority of your own cultural values and beliefs and suppressing cultures that are different from your own.

Prejudice In Cultural Incapacity

Stereotypes and prejudice play a significant role in perpetuating cultural incapacity within societies. When individuals hold preconceived notions about certain cultural groups, they tend to make assumptions based on limited knowledge or biased beliefs. These stereotypes can lead to misunderstandings, discrimination, and ultimately hinder the ability to embrace diversity. Prejudice further exacerbates cultural incapacity by deepening negative attitudes towards different cultures.



It involves pre-judging individuals based on their cultural background, leading to exclusion, marginalization, and unequal treatment. Such biases prevent genuine engagement with diverse cultures and hinder the development of empathy and understanding. Moreover, stereotypes and prejudice reinforce existing power dynamics within societies by maintaining dominant cultural norms while marginalizing others. This perpetuates a cycle of cultural incapacity where marginalized cultures struggle to have their voices heard or valued.

Incapacity On Patient Care

Cultural incapacity within the healthcare system poses significant challenges to patient care. When healthcare providers lack cultural competency, patients from diverse backgrounds may face disparities in their treatment and overall health outcomes. The impact of cultural incapacity extends beyond language barriers or traditional customs; it encompasses a failure to acknowledge and address implicit biases, stereotypes, and discrimination that can undermine trust and rapport with patients.

This often leads to miscommunication, misdiagnosis, or inadequate treatment plans. Moreover, cultural incapacity can perpetuate health disparities among marginalized communities, as their unique needs and perspectives are overlooked or misunderstood. By recognizing the profound impact of cultural incapacity on patient care, healthcare professionals can strive for inclusivity and work towards providing equitable healthcare services for all individuals.

Incapacity In Pharmacy Practice

To effectively address cultural incapacity in pharmacy practice, several strategies can be implemented. Firstly, Pharmacy Technicians should undergo comprehensive cultural competency training to enhance their understanding and appreciation of different cultures, beliefs, and practices. This training should encompass topics such as communication skills, cultural humility, and awareness of implicit biases. Pharmacy Technicians should also prioritize building trust and establishing rapport with patients from diverse backgrounds by actively listening to their concerns and incorporating their perspectives into treatment plans.

Secondly, Foster diversity in decision-making processes: Actively involve individuals from diverse backgrounds in decision-making roles to ensure multiple perspectives are considered. Encourage open dialogue and create an inclusive environment where all voices are valued.

Additionally, pharmacies can develop culturally sensitive educational materials that are accessible to patients with limited English proficiency or low health literacy levels. Collaboration with community organizations and cultural mediators can further promote inclusivity in pharmacy practice.

Cultural Blindness

Cultural Blindness: acting as if differences among cultures do not exist

Cultural blindness occurs when people fail to acknowledge that their own cultural beliefs and values may differ significantly from those of others. This lack of awareness can result in misunderstandings, biases, and even discrimination

Cultural blindness refers to the inability of healthcare professionals, including Pharmacy Technicians, to recognize and respond to the diverse cultural needs of patients. In a multicultural society, it is imperative for healthcare providers to understand and respect different cultural beliefs, practices, and values. Failure to do so can result in miscommunication, inadequate care, and compromised patient outcomes.

It explores the consequences of overlooking cultural differences and emphasizes the need for Pharmacy Technicians to develop cultural competency. By enhancing their understanding of diverse cultures, Pharmacy Technicians can provide more personalized care that respects patients' values and preferences.

Impact Of Cultural Blindness On Pharmacy Practice

Cultural blindness refers to the inability or unwillingness to recognize and understand cultural differences, leading to a narrow perspective and limited appreciation for diverse societies. This phenomenon has far-reaching consequences on both individuals and communities

Cultural blindness in healthcare pharmacy is a significant issue that has far-reaching consequences. When healthcare professionals, including Pharmacy Technicians, lack cultural competency and are unaware of the diverse needs and beliefs of their patients, it can adversely affect the quality of care provided. Cultural blindness can lead to miscommunication, misunderstandings, and compromised patient outcomes. Pharmacy Technicians who are culturally blind may fail to recognize the unique health needs of different populations or overlook important factors such as dietary restrictions or religious practices.

This ignorance can result in inappropriate medication choices or dosages that may be ineffective or even harmful for certain individuals. Furthermore, cultural blindness perpetuates health disparities and inequities by hindering access to appropriate care for marginalized communities.

Overcoming Cultural Blindness

In order to provide culturally competent care in healthcare pharmacy, it is essential to overcome cultural blindness and develop strategies that promote understanding and respect for diverse patient populations. Firstly, healthcare professionals must acknowledge their own biases and stereotypes, actively seeking to challenge and unlearn them. This can be achieved through self-reflection, education, and exposure to different cultures. Additionally, effective communication is paramount in bridging cultural gaps.

Healthcare providers should strive to learn about their patients' cultural beliefs, values, and practices, ensuring that they are able to effectively communicate treatment plans and medication instructions in a manner that is culturally appropriate. Building trust with patients through open dialogue and active listening further promotes culturally competent care within the pharmacy setting.

Cultural Awareness

In order to address the issue of cultural blindness in healthcare pharmacy, it is essential to prioritize cultural awareness within pharmacy training programs. By integrating cultural competency into the curriculum, future Pharmacy Technicians can develop an understanding and appreciation for diverse patient populations. This can be achieved through incorporating case studies, role-playing exercises, and interactive workshops that explore various cultural perspectives on health and medication use.

Cultural Awareness: the ability to recognize the different beliefs, values, and customs that someone has based on that person's origins, and it allows a person to build more successful personal and professional relationships in a diverse environment.

Additionally, pharmacy technicians should have exposure to real-world experiences with diverse patients during their clinical rotations. By promoting cultural awareness at an early stage of their education, Pharmacy Technicians will be better equipped to provide patient-centered care that respects individual values, beliefs, and preferences. Ultimately, this emphasis on cultural competency will help reduce health disparities and improve patient outcomes in culturally diverse communities.

Cultural Sensitivity

Cultural sensitivity is a crucial aspect of providing effective healthcare, particularly in the field of pharmacy. It involves acknowledging and respecting the cultural beliefs, values, and practices that shape an individual's health-related decisions. A lack of cultural sensitivity can lead to miscommunication, misunderstandings, and even inadequate care for patients from diverse backgrounds. By understanding the importance of cultural sensitivity, healthcare professionals can better address barriers to care and improve patient outcomes.

Cultural Sensitivity: being aware that cultural differences and similarities between people exist without assigning them a value – positive or negative, better or worse, right or wrong.

Cultural factors influence various aspects of healthcare, including medication adherence, treatment preferences, and health-seeking behaviors. Being culturally sensitive allows Pharmacy Technicians to tailor their approach by considering patients' cultural backgrounds when providing education or counseling. This not only enhances patient satisfaction but also promotes trust between healthcare providers and patients.

Cultural Sensitivity In Pharmacy Practice

Cultural sensitivity plays a crucial role in pharmacy practice, ensuring the delivery of quality healthcare to diverse patient populations. Pharmacy Technicians who possess cultural sensitivity skills are better equipped to understand and respect the unique needs, beliefs, and values of patients from various cultural backgrounds. By appreciating cultural differences, Pharmacy Technicians can establish effective communication with patients, fostering trust and promoting patient-centered care.

Moreover, cultural sensitivity enables Pharmacy Technicians to identify potential barriers that may hinder medication adherence or understanding among patients. This awareness allows them to tailor healthcare interventions accordingly, providing culturally appropriate advice and education. Ultimately, incorporating cultural sensitivity into pharmacy practice not only enhances patient outcomes but also contributes to the provision of equitable and inclusive healthcare services for all individuals.

Tips For Developing Cultural Sensitivity Skills

1. **Educate Yourself:** Take the time to learn about different cultures, their values, traditions, and customs. Read books, watch documentaries, and engage in conversations with people from diverse backgrounds.
2. **Listen and Observe:** Actively listen to others' experiences and perspectives without judgment or assumptions. Pay attention to non-verbal cues such as body language and facial expressions to better understand cultural nuances.
3. **Be Open-Minded:** Challenge your own preconceived notions and biases by embracing new ideas and perspectives. Avoid making hasty judgments or generalizations about individuals based on their cultural background.
4. **Practice Empathy:** Put yourself in others' shoes to develop a deeper understanding of their feelings, experiences, and challenges they may face due to cultural differences.
5. **Engage in Cross-Cultural Interactions:** Participate in activities or events that promote diversity and multiculturalism.

Strategies For Cultural Sensitivity Into Pharmacy Services

1. **Cultural Competency Training:** Provide comprehensive training programs that educate pharmacy staff on diverse cultural practices, beliefs, and healthcare needs. This will enhance their understanding of different cultures and enable them to deliver culturally sensitive care.
2. **Language Services:** Offer language interpretation services or employ bilingual staff members to bridge communication gaps between Pharmacy Technicians and patients who have limited English proficiency. This ensures accurate medication patient education.
3. **Culturally Appropriate Medication Information:** Develop culturally tailored medication information materials that consider the literacy levels, health literacy, and cultural preferences of diverse patient populations. This will improve medication adherence and overall health outcomes.

Promoting Cultural Sensitivity

1. Define cultural sensitivity: Begin by clarifying the concept of cultural sensitivity in healthcare pharmacy. Emphasize the importance of understanding and respecting diverse cultural beliefs, values, and practices to provide optimal care for patients from different backgrounds.
2. Acknowledge biases: Encourage healthcare pharmacy professionals to reflect on their own biases and preconceptions that may hinder effective communication with patients from diverse cultures. Stress the need for self-awareness to ensure unbiased and equitable treatment.
3. Cultural competency training: Advocate for mandatory cultural competency training programs that equip healthcare pharmacy professionals with knowledge about various cultures, including language barriers, health beliefs, dietary restrictions, and religious practices.

Cultural Proficiency

Cultural proficiency goes beyond mere tolerance or awareness of different cultures, aiming instead to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural differences. Cultural proficiency encompasses knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable individuals to navigate cultural complexities respectfully and inclusively.

At its core, cultural proficiency seeks to dismantle biases, stereotypes, and prejudices that hinder meaningful connections between people of different backgrounds. It encourages individuals to recognize their own cultural assumptions and biases while actively seeking to understand the perspectives of others. By developing cultural proficiency, individuals are better equipped to communicate effectively, resolve conflicts peacefully, and build authentic relationships across cultures.

Cultural proficiency is not about becoming an expert in every culture but rather about cultivating a mindset that values diversity and promotes equity for all. It requires ongoing self-reflection, learning, and a commitment to challenging one's own assumptions in order to create inclusive environments where everyone can thrive.

Cultural Proficiency In Pharmacy

In today's diverse society, healthcare providers face the challenge of delivering culturally sensitive care to patients from various backgrounds. Pharmacy Technicians play a critical role in patient care, ensuring safe and effective medication therapy. However, providing culturally proficient pharmacy services requires more than just technical knowledge; it necessitates a deep understanding of different cultural values, beliefs, and practices.

By embracing cultural diversity and actively engaging with patients' unique needs, Pharmacy Technicians can build trust, enhance communication, and promote health equity within their communities.

Principles Of Cultural Proficiency

1. **Self-reflection:** Cultural proficiency begins with an individual's willingness to critically examine their own cultural beliefs, biases, and assumptions. It requires recognizing one's own limitations and committing to personal growth.
2. **Valuing diversity:** Embracing the richness of diverse cultures is essential for cultural proficiency. This principle involves appreciating different perspectives, experiences, and traditions, fostering inclusivity, and challenging stereotypes or prejudices.
3. **Continuous learning:** Culturally proficient individuals understand that learning about various cultures is an ongoing process. They actively seek knowledge about different customs, languages, histories, and worldviews to enhance their understanding.
4. **Building relationships:** Developing authentic relationships with individuals from diverse backgrounds is crucial for cultural proficiency. This principle emphasizes listening actively, respecting others' experiences and opinions, and engaging in meaningful dialogue that promotes mutual understanding.

Implementing Cultural Proficiency In Pharmacy Practice

The implementation of cultural proficiency in pharmacy practice is crucial for ensuring equitable and patient-centered care. By recognizing the diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and values of patients, Pharmacy Technicians can better understand their unique healthcare needs. Culturally proficient Pharmacy Technicians actively seek to enhance their knowledge of different cultures and customs, allowing them to communicate effectively and respectfully with patients from various ethnicities and backgrounds.

This includes learning about cultural practices related to medication use, dietary habits, and traditional healing methods. Furthermore, incorporating cultural proficiency into pharmacy practice involves promoting inclusivity within the profession itself by fostering a diverse workforce that reflects the communities being served. Overall, integrating cultural proficiency

into pharmacy practice enhances patient satisfaction, strengthens healthcare outcomes, and promotes health equity for all individuals.

The Role Of Cultural Competency

Cultural competency plays a crucial role in creating a more inclusive society. It involves understanding and respecting cultural differences, as well as being able to effectively communicate and engage with individuals from diverse backgrounds. By developing cultural competency skills, individuals can better serve and support people from different cultures, religions, races, and ethnicities. This leads to increased access to resources, services, and opportunities for marginalized communities.

In addition to promoting inclusivity on an individual level, cultural competency is also essential in creating more equitable systems and institutions. It helps identify and address disparities in healthcare, education, employment, housing, and other areas that disproportionately affect certain groups. By incorporating cultural competency into policies and practices within organizations and institutions, we can promote social justice for all. Overall, developing cultural competency is crucial for building a society where diversity is celebrated rather than feared or excluded.

Importance Of Cultural Competency

The field of pharmacy, in particular, must recognize the significance of understanding and respecting patients' diverse cultural backgrounds. Cultural competency in pharmacy practice involves acknowledging and appreciating the impact that culture has on patients' beliefs, values, and healthcare decisions. By developing cultural proficiency, Pharmacy Technicians can enhance patient engagement, improve health outcomes, and reduce healthcare disparities.

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About the Author:

Joe Medina, CPhT, PharmD., has helped tens of thousands of Pharmacy Technicians with Tech Lectures in offering CE for PTCB and NHA CE recertification requirements and also in the passing of their respective Pharmacy Technician national exam. Mr. Medina is a former Program Director of a Pharmacy Technician Program at two community colleges in Colorado. Mr. Medina is a lifetime national advocate for the Pharmacy Technician Profession and well known on a national level through his company Tech Lectures®. Mr. Medina has helped produce several textbooks and co-authored *the "Pharmacy Technician Workbook & Certification Review"* through Morton Publishing and most recently *"The Pharmacy Technician"* through Learning Express Publications in 2018. Mr. Medina also has published over a dozen continuing education articles for national magazines. With fifteen years as a Pharmacy Technician and twenty plus years as a Pharmacist and Technician Educator, Mr. Medina understands the needs of the Pharmacy Technician and the important role they play in interacting with Pharmacists, Medical paraprofessionals and the community in the Pharmacy setting.

Module 2 Lesson 1 - Cultural Competency and Implicit Bias in Pharmacy

Select the most correct answer

1. Of the following statements, which one is false?
 - a. Culture is a learned behavior
 - b. One barrier of to developing cultural competency is fear of judgement and reprisal.
 - c. It is important to actively engage in self-reflection and education to identify their own biases and how they might impact their interactions with patients.
 - d. Implicit bias refers to the conscious attitudes and stereotypes that influence decisions and actions.

2. Training / education should involve the following: Cultural competency, Language services, Culturally appropriate care plans and Community engagement.
 - a. True
 - b. False

3. Cultural incapacity is defined as
 - a. Negating, disparaging, or purging cultures that are different than your own.
 - b. Elevating the superiority of your own cultural values and suppressing cultures that are different than your own.
 - c. Inability to understand a different cultures.
 - d. Acting as if differences among cultures do not exist.

4. Cultural competency in pharmacy practice involves acknowledging and appreciating the impact that culture has on patients' beliefs, values, and healthcare decisions.
 - a. True
 - b. False

5. Promoting cultural sensitivity involves which of the following:
 - a. Understanding and respecting diverse cultural beliefs
 - b. Reflect on your own biases and preconceptions that may hinder you
 - c. Advocate for mandatory cultural competency training programs
 - d. All of the above.

6. Barriers to developing Cultural Competency includes:
 - a. Lack of awareness and understanding of different cultures.
 - b. Fear of making mistakes or offending someone from a different culture.
 - c. Language barrier.
 - d. All of the above.

7. Cultural Incapacity is:
 - a. Elevating the superiority of your own cultural values and beliefs
 - b. Negating, disparaging, or purging cultures that are different than your own
 - c. Acting as if differences among cultures do not exist
 - d. Ability to recognize the different beliefs and customs of others

8. Which principle of cultural proficiency involves appreciating different perspectives, experiences, and traditions, and challenging stereotypes or prejudices:
 - a. Valuing diversity
 - b. Self-reflection
 - c. Building relationships
 - d. Continuous learning

9. Why is cultural sensitivity important in pharmacy practice?
 - a. To provide equitable and inclusive healthcare
 - b. To establish effective communication with patients
 - c. To identify potential barriers in medication adherence
 - d. All of the above

10. Developing Cultural Sensitivity involves:

- a. Educate yourself
- b. Listen and observe
- c. Be open-minded
- d. Practice empathy
- e. Engage in cross cultural interactions
- f. All of the above

To submit your answers online go to the following link:

<https://form.jotform.com/233035134165144>

