



Ethics, Diversity and Inclusion in the Health Care System

Tyro Setlhong - Coordinator, Diversity and Inclusion, IWK Health Centre

Mohamed Yaffa - Coordinator, Diversity and Inclusion, Nova Scotia Health Authority

The following discussion questions are provided as an additional educational tool to accompany this fireside chat video. Please feel free to select the questions that are most relevant to your committee or group, revise and adapt them as needed etc. As always, we welcome feedback on this or any other NSHEN resource.

1. Can there be differences in how health care providers, patients, employers interpret the meaning of diversity, cultural competence and inclusion? If so, what effect do these differences have in the health care system?
2. What is the relationship between individual cultural competence and organizational cultural competence?
3. Do organizational policies regarding diversity and inclusion aim to reduce disparities to level the playing field, or to diversify the playing field itself?
4. Cultures are complex, fluid and often have competing values within them. An individual may belong to more than one culture or community, each with conflicting values. How are these tensions reconciled when making health care decisions?
5. Are there some common values that we share as a society - or are there none?
 - If you believe there are common values, how are we as a community to both recognize common societal values and also respect the often-conflicting values of different cultural and ideological groups? When, where and how do we draw the line against values and practices that seem harmful or that violate the values we as a community feel are universally valid and socially imperative?
 - If you don't believe that there are common values, how do we prevent relativism in a multicultural society? Without shared values, do we define 'the right decision' as "the culturally approved decision" and believe that the decisions of various cultures should be evaluated exclusively by their own standards?
6. Is it appropriate in a pluralistic society for various cultures to comment on and criticize each other's values? Should our values be open to criticism, scrutiny, evaluation by others?
 - How do issues of power, inequality etc. between cultural groups play into this? i.e. can we have a true dialogue between groups when one is more "dominant/ mainstream" than the other – or, given potential power imbalances, do we risk these conversations being an attempt at assimilation?
7. Does recognizing cultural diversity in health care decision-making carry the risk of stereotyping cultures and neglecting to consider the many ways in which individuals relate to their cultures?

8. How useful are our ethical theories, tools and decision-making frameworks when dealing with difficult ethics issues related to diverse populations? Do they reflect Western values only?
9. Discuss clinical cases from your own experience that illustrate ethical issues related to diversity and inclusion.