

Job Aid

## Cultural Competency Framework

### Intercultural Concepts

- ❖ Culture is important in every patient's identity
- ❖ Communication of cultural understanding and respect is essential for establishing rapport and confidence
- ❖ Culture-related stresses and tensions can induce illness
- ❖ Culture-related behaviors (e.g., religion, diet) affect a patient's acceptance of and adherence to prescribed therapy
- ❖ Nonverbal and verbal communication may differ from culture to culture

### Intercultural Skills

(Should be specific for each culture represented and include the following)

- ❖ Communicate an understanding of patient's culture
- ❖ Elicit patient's understanding of patient's culture
- ❖ Recognize culture-related health problems
- ❖ Negotiate a culturally relevant care plan with patient as partner
- ❖ Interpret verbal and nonverbal behaviors in a culturally relevant manner
- ❖ Have basic or essential language proficiency
- ❖ Apply principles of clinical epidemiology to common illnesses

### Intercultural Attitudes

- ❖ Recognize the importance of the patient's cultural background and environment when constructing an approach to an illness
- ❖ Acknowledge the patient's role as an active participant in his or her care
- ❖ Accept responsibility for the patient who has few support systems; avoid the "what can I do?" attitude when facing a patient in abject poverty or with language barriers

### Knowledge

(Should be specific for each culture represented and include the following)

- ❖ Common dietary habits, foods, and their nutritional components
- ❖ Predominant cultural values, health practices, traditional health beliefs
- ❖ Family structure—patriarchal vs. matriarchal; nuclear vs. extended; role of individual members
- ❖ Effect of religion on health beliefs and practices
- ❖ Customs and attitudes surrounding death
- ❖ Significance of common verbal and nonverbal communication
- ❖ Awareness of the culture shock experienced by the very poor and immigrants on entering modern health centers
- ❖ Awareness of prevailing cross-cultural tensions and psychosocial issues

Resource: Excerpt from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health. *A Physician's Practical Guide to Culturally Competent Care*.