

Cultural Humility in Physician Communication

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Cultural humility is the “ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the [person]” (Hook et al., 2013, p. 2). By 2060, approximately 60% of the U.S. population will be members of underrepresented groups. Patient satisfaction & clinical outcomes benefit from physician consideration of social & cultural factors (Chang, Simon, & Dong, 2010).

Study Aim: Explore coaches’ views regarding the Coaching Program’s role in supporting hospital culture providing more equitable & effective care.

Participants: Communication coaches are medical educators who specialize in behavior change & observe physicians during patient interactions and provide feedback on communication behavior (McDaniel et al., 2020).

- N = 15 including faculty & postdoctoral fellows
- 87.5% female & Caucasian

Methods:

- All Communication Coaches were invited to 1 of 3 zoom recorded focus groups, facilitated using a semi-structured approach.
- Questions focused on: experiences observing physicians working with diverse patients & how the program could support education regarding cultural competence.
- Each focus group was later independently coded by two of the investigators.

Results:

- Interrater Reliability = 94.5%.
- Three themes were generated with several sub-themes noted.

Discussion:

There is a clear need for increased attention and explicit effort to address cultural competence in medical education. Coaches commented on their own process of observation and teaching (e.g., “Will I as a coach be more attuned now that we have had this conversation?”). Specific items to trial for coding were identified; future directions include piloting and evaluating these items.

