Ethical Concerns In Providing Behavioral Health Services To Immigrant Populations

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Learning Objectives

1. Understand current behavioral health status of immigrants

2. Identify ethical issues that arise when serving this population

3. Learn effective therapeutic strategies and interventions to serve this population
It takes less time to do things right than to explain why you did it wrong.

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*
Let’s chat...

• What has worked when working with different cultures/immigrants?

• What has been some challenges

• Why?
ETHICS
Ethics and Morality

• Ethics is a set of moral principles and a code for behavior that govern an individual’s actions with other individuals and within society.

• Morality is what people believe to be right and good, while ethics is a critical reflection about morality.
Ethical Dilemmas

• Value Conflict – ‘right’ thing to do

• Moral obligation – difficult to reconcile

• Choice between two usually undesirable alternatives

• Best case vs. Least harmful

• Short term impact vs. Long term
Two questions when faced with a dilemma

**Behavior:** What should I do?

**Motivation:** Why should I do it?
Ethical Issues in Behavioral Health

• Discharge due to finances if client is not clinically ready
• Provide priority admission to an individual due to personal favor, status, race, even though others are waiting for that spot.
• Use older medications on uninsured, poor clients even though they are not effective.
• Others?
What Are Ethical Principles, and How Do They Help With Decision Making?
Ethical Principles

Conflict is inevitable. Ethical principles provide the framework/tools which may facilitate individuals and society to resolve conflict in a fair, just and moral manner.
Ethical Principles

• Autonomy/Freedom/Respect for Persons
• Veracity
• Privacy/Confidentiality
• Beneficence/Nonmaleficence
• Fidelity
• Justice

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Respect for Persons/Autonomy

• The right to participate in and decide on a course of action without undue influence.

• Self-Determination: which is the freedom to act independently. Individual actions are directed toward goals that are exclusively one’s own.
Veracity

The duty to tell the truth. Truth-telling, honesty.

Privacy/Confidentiality

Respecting privileged knowledge. Respecting the “self” of others.
Beneficence/Nonmaleficence

• The principle and obligation of doing good and avoiding harm.

• This principle counsels a provider to relate to clients in a way that will always be in the best interest of the client, rather than the provider.
Fidelity

• Strict observance of promises or duties.

• This principle, as well as other principles, should be honored by both provider and client.
Justice

- The principle that deals with fairness, equity and equality and provides for an individual to claim that to which they are entitled.

- **Comparative Justice**: Making a decision based on criteria and outcomes. *ie*: How to determine who qualifies for last dose of Naloxone. 55 year old male with three children versus a 13 old girl.

- **Noncomparative Justice**: *ie*: a method of distributing scarce medications using a lottery system?
Immigrant

• One that immigrates;

• A person who comes to a country to take up permanent residence.
Today’s Immigration

• Voluntary
  • Individual or Family decide to move

• Involuntary
  • Familial - Slavery
  • Social - Human Trafficking
  • Political

• Refugees
• Asylees
• Documented
• Undocumented

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Reasons For Immigration

• Improve economic level
  • Make money to build a house/buy car
• Improve quality of life
• Improve educational level
• Avoid/Escape political persecution
• Seeking humanitarian refuge
• Unite with family already in U.S.
• Curiosity (especially adolescents)
Phases of Migratory Process

• Preparation for leaving
  • Collect funds, decide method, make decision

• Family Reorganization
  • New duties for spouse and children
  • New rules/roles
  • Loneliness, sadness

• The Journey
  • Actual physical and emotional separation
Phases of Migratory Process

• First Impressions in new country
  • Differences if arriving from large cities or small towns
  • Lack of necessary resources

• Decision to stay
  • Obtaining permanent jobs
  • Learning language, culture

• The return
  • How long were they gone?
  • Adaptation process to home country
What we know about the immigrant population?
Behavioral Health Needs of Immigrants
Issues Affecting Mental Health

• The Route (Europe, Asia, Latin America)
• The Journey Transportation
  • Bus or Train
  • Plane
  • Ship
• The Experience
  • Exploitation
  • Extortion
  • Violence
  • Hunger
  • Exposure
• Crossing the border
  • Smuggler “Coyote”
  • Self-crossing

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Major Mental Health Challenges

• The Immigration Process
• Acculturation
  • Psychological
  • Behavioral
• Intergenerational Conflict
• Employment Problems
• Traumatic Experiences
• Discrimination and Racism
Major Mental Health Challenges

- Home Country
  - Who they left behind
  - Poverty related questions
  - Exposure to violence

- Possible Detention

- Lack of Access to medical records

- Post-entry
  - Living conditions
  - Social network: risk of isolation
  - Education; Labor; ESL
  - Homelessness
  - Exploitation

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Major Mental Health Challenges

• **Migration stress** - displacement and disorientation that comes with moving and adjusting without resources

• **Acculturative stress** - adjusting to new circumstances in a new cultural context

• **Traumatic stress** - extensive exposure to traumatic events prior to migration

• **Also** exacerbation of symptoms of disorders already present (learning disabilities)
Consequences of traumatic stress

• Social
  • Drug abuse
  • Anti-social behavior
  • Isolation/withdrawal

• Psychological
  • Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
    • Reexperiencing, Avoidance, Hyperarousal
  • Depression
  • Conduct disorder
  • Emotion Regulation

• Academic...
Behavioral Health Issues

Most common diagnosis

• Major Depression
• Generalized Anxiety
• Substance Use Disorders
• Adjustment Disorders
• Post traumatic stress Disorder
Behavioral Health Issues

- Panic Disorder and Agoraphobia
- Sleep Disturbance
- Somatization Disorder
- Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity

- V-Codes – social determinants
  - Housing insecurity,
  - academic difficulties,
  - parent-child relationships
Barriers to Services

- Language
  - 5 stages
- Affordability
- Availability
- Accessibility
- Organizational
- Psychological stressors
- Systemic

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Barriers to Services (contd)

• Workforce
• Cultural explanations
• Clinical
• Natural/Supernatural
• Story telling
• Transportation
• Mistrust
Barriers to Services

• Individual level

• Provider level and

• System level.
Health Equality vs Equity

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Without Health Literacy....
Treatment Considerations for Mental Health Providers
Health Belief Systems

• Expressions of Culture in Health Care

  • Health Belief Systems

    • Define and categorize health and illness
    • Offer explanatory models for illness
    • Based upon theories of the relationship between cause and the nature of illness and treatments
    • Defines the specific “scope” of practice for healers
Treatment Considerations

• Assessment and Diagnosis
  • Understand immigrant’s experiences
  • Effort to fit between cultural framework
  • Immigrants values, beliefs and attitudes
  • Interaction of person and environment
  • Intersections of social identities (race, gender)
DSM 5 Cultural Formulation Interview

• Cultural Definition Of The Problem

• Cultural Perceptions Of Cause, Context, And Support

• Cultural Factors Affecting Self-coping And Past Help Seeking

• Cultural Factors Affecting Current Help Seeking
### DSM-5 CFI Supplementary Modules

1. Explanatory Model
2. Level of Functioning
3. Social Network
4. Psychosocial Stressors
5. Spirituality, Religion & Moral Traditions
6. Cultural Identity
7. Coping and Help-Seeking
8. Clinician-Patient Relationship
9. School-Age Children and Adolescents
10. Older Adults
11. Immigrants and Refugees
12. Caregivers

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Principles for Clinicians

- Use an ecological perspective.
- Integrate evidence-based practice with practice-based evidence.
- Provide culturally competent treatment.
- Partner with community-based organizations.
- Incorporate social justice principles in providing service.