Cultural Ambassadors at Meridian Health, New Jersey

Linda Hassler, RN, MS, GCNS-BC, FNGNA
NICHE Coordinator/Geriatric Program Manager

C. Darryl Hughes
Manager, Cultural Diversity
SO WHY CULTURAL AMBASSADORS?
## Minority Population %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>One race</th>
<th>Monmouth County</th>
<th>Ocean County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>82.6</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino (of any race)</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2010 Census -
http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml
## Religious Population %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monmouth</th>
<th>Ocean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>79.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Methodist</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episcopal</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Baptist</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reformed Church</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[www.city-data.com/county](http://www.city-data.com/county)
Meridian Service Area Demographics

- White/Caucasian
- African-American
- Haitian
- Jehovah’s Witness
- Latino/Hispanic
- Asian
- Orthodox Jewish
- Muslim
- Gay/Lesbian
- Tourists/Visitors

Source: Meridian Health Strategic Planning
Risk Management and Cultural Competence

• Four major legal risks:
  – medical malpractice
  – informed consent
  – breach of duty to warn
  – breach of patients’ privacy rights.

• Most medical malpractice insurance policies do not cover language access/civil rights claims.

More reasons WHY??

- Patient safety, satisfaction, and outcomes
- Accreditation, regulations, and best practice standards
  - Joint Commission
  - National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health Care (2000)
  - State legislation
  - Magnet Nurse status
- Culture often not considered important until the situation is in **CRISIS** mode

*It’s the RIGHT thing to do!*
What question do you ask in your nursing assessment???

- Is there anything I should know about your culture so I don’t break any religious traditions or customs?
- What do you believe to be the nature and cause of your illness and treatment?
- What traditional folk practices have been passed down to manage your healthcare problems?
Five essential elements to become more culturally aware

1. Have the capacity for cultural self-assessment

2. Value diversity

3. Be conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact

4. Have institutionalized cultural knowledge

5. Develop adaptations of service delivery reflecting an understanding of cultural diversity
CULTURAL AMBASSADOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT!
How the Cultural Ambassador program developed

• Health Resources and Services Administration Geriatric education grant objectives 2009
  – Include Ethnogeriatric education
• Exploratory discussion between Nursing and Cultural Diversity 2010
  – Need for cultural competence education
  – How do we get nurses to programs?
  – Think, think, think…
• Proposal to Geriatric Leadership Team
• Sr. VP Nursing endorsement
What is Ethnogerontology?

- The study of the causes, processes, and consequences of race, national origin, culture, minority group status, and ethnic group status on individual and population aging in three broad areas of biological, psychological, and social aging.

- **Ethnogeriatrics**: health care for elders from diverse ethnic populations.

Stanford University eCampus
www.stanford.edu/group/ethnoger/index.html
What is cultural awareness?

1. Care that is acceptable and effective in treating people
2. Congruent with the persons’ cultural backgrounds and expectations
3. Skill sets needed:
   a. Awareness of one’s own biases, their impact on professional behavior and delivery of care
   b. Knowledge of population specific health-related cultural values, beliefs and behaviors
   c. Disease incidence, prevalence, mortality rates
   d. Techniques for working with culturally diverse populations
Role responsibilities

• Supports unit team members to **improve cultural care**
• **Role models** cultural awareness
• Assists team in utilizing Cultural Diversity **resources**
• **Disseminates information** about cultural care management through a variety of mechanisms:
  – coordination of **unit in-services**,  
  – **journal article** reviews,  
  – dissemination of Cultural Competence **protocols**.
Role responsibilities

• Identifies the need for and reports emerging cultural trends to the Department of Cultural Diversity.

• Attends most quarterly cultural educational workshops per year to enhance self-knowledge and learn communication techniques.

• Active member of Cultural Ambassador Team

• Facilitates communication between care providers and Cultural Ambassador Team members.
Eligibility

• Team members:
  • Nursing in hospital 2011
  • Nursing in Long term care and home care 2012
  • Pastoral care, volunteer, and guest relations 2013
• Must have worked at Meridian Health for at least two years.
• Designated by department leadership, or a team member may volunteer, with leadership approval.
• Goal is that all units/departments are represented.
Education Component

• Annual Workshop (September)
  • Roles and Responsibilities
  • Survey of educational needs
  • Cultural topic

• Quarterly workshops (December, March, June)
  • Topics from survey assessment
  • Area of concern noted

• Meridian Health – Healthstream modules
Past Workshop Topics

- Ethnogeriatrics
- Exploring Hispanic/Latino Culture
- Effective Use of Language Assistance Services
- Workplace Respect and Cross Cultural Sensitivity
- Caring for our Muslim Patients
- Are You Prepared to Care for the LGBT Patient?
- Asian Americans: The Fastest Growing Immigrant Group
- African-Americans and their Health Concerns: A Fresh Look
- Caring for Our Observant Jewish Patients and End of Life Values in the Jewish Faith
- Effective Communications with our Deaf Community
- LGBTI Community Across the Lifespan
Role Playing cultural interactions
Expert Panel Discussions
Example of a Cultural Ambassador Corner

Maria G Torres, RN
JSUMC Booker 2 Women’s Health
Cultural Ambassador
Cultural Ambassador Binder

Binder includes material from Cultural Ambassador Workshops, articles, and emails
Quotes from Cultural Ambassadors

- Thank you so much for this program, I am really enjoying it.
- I am learning a lot and didn’t realize what I didn’t know about the patients I have been caring for…
- Very thought provoking
- Eye opening
- Great exposure and relative information
- Good demonstration of translation services
thank you!

Linda Hassler, RN, MS, GCNS-BC, FNGNA
lhassler@meridianhealth.com

C. Darryl Hughes
dhughes@meridianhealth.com
References

• Administration on Aging - Diversity Tool Kit

• McBride, M. *Ethnogeriatrics and Cultural Competence for Nursing Practice*. Hartford Institute for Geriatric Nursing.
  – [www.hartfordign.org](http://www.hartfordign.org)

• National Resource Center on LGBT Aging

• Stanford University Education Center

• United States Office of Minority Health
  – [www.thinkculturalhealth.org](http://www.thinkculturalhealth.org)