Supporting a culturally safe approach to Advance Care Planning conversations between clinicians and patients

Rachel Carter, Thomas Shajan, Eman Hassan - BC Centre for Palliative Care

Background

The goal of Advance Care Planning (ACP) is for people to get the care that's right for them. Initiating ACP conversations with patients allows healthcare providers to provide personcentred care for their patients. Yet, the literature indicates disparities among culturally diverse communities in rates of ACP engagement. This is of particular importance in BC, where around 30% of British Columbians are from a visible minority group, and 28% have a mother tongue that is neither English or French.

To address this, the BC Centre for Palliative Care (BCCPC) has developed an online learning course to help healthcare providers demonstrate cultural sensitivity and appropriate communication skills when conducting ACP conversations with their culturally diverse patients, in particular patients with a Chinese or South Asian background.

In a larger project, we are adapting and translating a community-based public education model for Advance Care Planning for Chinese and South Asian communities. In anticipation of an activated public, we developed this online learning course.

Approach

To develop the online learning course, we used information gained from a literature review, key informant interviews, focus groups with members of the public from the two communities, input from project working groups (one for each community), and an advisory committee.

The learning objectives for the course are:

- Understand evolution in the concept of ACP and identify current emphases in the ACP process.
- Understand the role of healthcare providers in initiating and facilitating ACP conversations, and how ACP relates to goals of care and serious illness conversations.
- Understand how culture influences the care people receive, and the principle of cultural safety.
- Learn strategies to discuss aspects of culture with patients and families.
- Understand the traditional cultural values relating to ACP, end of life and decision making in the Chinese and South Asian communities in BC.

The course comprises three modules, further detail provided to the right. Basic ACP information is considered a prerequisite to the course.

Tapestry, nonlinear multimodal platform, was selected as the platform for the online learning. Within Tapestry are interconnected nodes, each representing a concept.

Module

Evolution of ACP

An overview of the current state and trends of ACP, and the role of health-care providers in ACP conversations

Learning Objectives

- Understand the current concept and emphases of ACP
- Identify current emphases in ACP in Canada
- Describe how ACP relates to serious illness conversations and goals of care
- Understand your role in initiating and facilitating ACP conversations

Sections

- What is ACP?
- Benefits of ACP
- Current emphases in ACP in Canada
- The role of health-care providers in ACP
- How ACP relates to Serious Illness and Goals of Care conversations
- Challenges in engaging people in ACP

Culturally safe care

Culturally

Chinese &

South Asian

communities

Brings together the

lessons of modules

1 and 2, specifically

in the context of ACP

with members of the

Chinese and South

Asian communities

Safe ACP with

How culture impacts care, an overview of cultural safety, and tips for providing culturally safe care

- Understand and identify aspects of culture
- Understand how culture can influence people's views of health, illness and care
- Assess how your culture influences your professional practice
- Define culturally safe care
- Describe strategies for achieving culturally safe care.

Describe cultural barriers and

facilitators to ACP and end-

Understand cultural values

in Chinese and South Asian

communities that relate to

their engagement in ACP as

part of the care continuum

ACP concepts in the target

Create a personal action plan

to undertake improvements

Describe strategies for

in initiating culturally

communities

informed ACP

sensitively introducing

of-life care

- Cultural diversity in BC
- What is culture?
- How culture influences people's views of health, illness and care
- Working toward culturally safe care
- Learn about a patient's culture
- Working with interpreters

The need for culturally appropriate ACP The role of diversity in decision making

- Guidelines for culturally sensitive ACP
- Community profiles
- Chinese community
- South Asian community

While this module provides community profiles with common aspects of the culture of these communities, it emphasizes that each patient is unique and should not be stereotyped.

Example module content - key takeaways

Culture and health

Culture influences how people see the world around them, including how they view health and illness, how they experience illness and pain, how they seek help and advice relating to their health, what treatment options are preferred, decision-making customs, and communication preferences. This therefore influences a patient's care plan.

Culturally safe care

Culturally safe care is based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power and privilege imbalances inherent in the healthcare system.

Strategies that support culturally safe care:

- **Cultural humility** a respectful and humble attitude toward other cultures, acknowledging that one's own culture is not 'right' or 'better', but just different than another culture.
- **Self-reflection** acknowledging and addressing biases, attitudes, assumptions, stereotypes, prejudices, and characteristics.
- Continuous learning about other cultures. Make learning about other cultures a lifelong goal and process.

Incorporate three behaviors in practice:

- Listen practice active listening to understand your patient's needs and help them feel heard and understood.
- Ask ask questions about your patient's culture, including relevant religious and/or traditional cultural practices and beliefs, and communication styles.
- Respect—show a respectful and humble attitude toward the patient's perspectives.

Culturally safe ACP

Considering a patient's culture and preferences during ACP may involve:

- honouring patients' autonomy, while respecting cultural norms.
- family-based decision-making processes, and patients' delegation of decisions.
- communicating information about serious illness and death subtly instead of explicitly.

Always ask about a patient's cultural beliefs, preferences, and values; never stereotype or make assumptions.

Guidelines for culturally sensitive ACP

Seek understanding

- Understand your patient's preferences for communication.
- Learn about your patient's values, wishes, culture and belief system.
- Explore how your patient's values and wishes relate to health and treatment.
- Understand the patient's views of suffering and quality of life.

Ensure your patient understands you

- Avoid medical jargon.
- Use example scenarios
- If required: use an interpreter; provide translated information.

Lessons Learned

Culture influences care planning and decision making, especially in our ever-expanding diverse country. Consideration of cultural safety in ACP conversations initiated by clinicians can help their culturally diverse patients get care aligned with their values, beliefs and wishes.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the team, working group and advisory committee members, without whose input this work would not have been possible. Production of this document, and the work it describes, has been made possible through a financial contribution from Health Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of Health Canada. The Tapestry Tool project is supported by a UBC Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF) grant—supported by UBC Vancouver students.

