

Cultural Safety Foundation: Discussion Worksheet

2025

About Healthcare Excellence Canada

Healthcare Excellence Canada (HEC) works with partners to spread innovation, build capability and catalyze policy change so that everyone in Canada has safe and high-quality healthcare. Through collaboration with patients, caregivers and people working in healthcare, we turn proven innovations into lasting improvements in all dimensions of healthcare excellence.

HEC focuses on improving care of older adults, bringing care closer to home and supporting the retention of the health workforce – with quality and safety embedded across all our efforts. We are committed to fostering inclusive, culturally safe and equitable care through engagement with different groups, including patients and caregivers, First Nations, Métis and Inuit, healthcare workers and more.

Launched in 2021, HEC brings together the Canadian Patient Safety Institute and Canadian Foundation for Healthcare Improvement. HEC is an independent, not-for-profit charity funded primarily by Health Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of Health Canada.

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Cultural Safety in Health Systems

We all have a part to play in improving the healthcare experiences and health outcomes for First Nations, Inuit and Métis by understanding and embedding cultural safety in our work.

Instructions

1. On your own, reflect on the discussion questions below
2. As a team, have a conversation about cultural safety and share your reflections
3. Together, identify
 - a. One area in which your organization is doing well;
 - b. One area to work on; and
 - c. One action your team can take to consider cultural safety within your project.

“Cultural safety is an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in the health care system. It results in an environment free of racism and discrimination, where people feel safe when receiving health care.”

-First Nations Health Authority

Discussion Questions

1. Who are the First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis governments, organizations, or communities being served within our program or initiative? What are their priorities? What processes are in place within our organization to integrate their priorities into programs and services?
2. What policies or statements does our organization have related to reconciliation, cultural safety, anti-racism or health equity? How do they apply to our project?
3. What is our organization’s patient feedback process? What protocols are in place for tracking and responding to patient and staff reports of racism and discrimination?

Activity

1. Identify one area our organization is doing well (e.g., Indigenous patient advisory circle, organizational declaration of commitment to cultural safety, Indigenous patient navigators, mandatory cultural safety training)
2. Identify one area to work on (e.g., relationships with communities, culturally safe patient feedback processes, policies and pathways to support staff who witness racism and discrimination)
3. Identify one action our team can take (e.g., all team members complete cultural safety training, inclusion of Indigenous patient partner on project team)
4. Why is this action important and what issues does it address?
5. What first step will we take to consider cultural safety within our project?

We call upon you to work toward meaningful engagement and relationship with the First Nations, Inuit and Métis individuals, families and communities who access care through your organization. This is essential to improving access to culturally safe care for the people and communities you serve.

Creating culturally safe care requires time, reflection and sustained action. We encourage you to stay connected with your team, your partners and the communities you serve as you continue this work.