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The efforts of the Cross-cultural Healthcare Committee were largely focused on finding the best wording for these questions, so it is important to pay attention to their phrasing. It is also crucial to understand the rationale behind each category as well as the individual questions themselves. Why, for example, is it important to understand the impact of family dynamics on a particular patient? Especially when the patient is a child, family hierarchy is going to determine decision making. How many generations of one family are living in the same house? Who will be administering medications to a sick child – grandma, older siblings?

Being able to release quality responses from patients from *any* culture is a communication skill that comes with experience. Having a set of strategically designed questions at the ready can help providers be more diligent in accessing the cultural implications of a case during encounters with patients and families. The questions may take more time up front, but will lead to fewer misunderstandings and better diagnosis, saving precious time in the long run.

These questions are *not* intended to be used as a check list which would make them about as useful as fact lists; the context of each encounter will determine what information is most important for a provider to obtain. These key questions are intended as a way of drilling down to deeper levels of context. That's where the individual patient's experience is found. That's where real communication can happen so that the patient experiences truly responsive care.

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