

Cross-Culturally Responsive Care:

Key Questions to Optimize Patient Communication Categorized by Type of Encounter

1. Questions to ask at one of the first encounters, but only once. Then enter it in the medical record.

- Please tell me about where your family comes from originally and where was your child born?
- Where have you lived most recently?
- What is your first language?

2. Questions to ask at any type of encounter

- We have an interpreter available to help **me** for free. Is it OK for the interpreter to join us
- What medicines, remedies or treatments have you tried/want to try? Sometimes people receive remedies from their home country to try. Have you tried any?
- Have you consulted a healer from your community (curandero, etc.)?
- Is there anything that will make it difficult for you to follow the treatment plan?
- Do you have any concerns about this plan or the medications?
- Do you have any questions about what you have heard today?
- Is there a religion/spiritual practice important to you. (Include this question during the personal and social history).

3. Questions to ask when the patient or family is not following advice or when health outcomes are not going well.

- What do you believe caused this problem/illness?
- How do you think this problem has affected your child?

- What worries you the most about this problem/illness?
- Who helps you make decisions about health care for your child?
- Who else have you asked for help/advice about the problem?
- Is there anyone else that we should include to help in decision-making?
- I want to be sure I have explained it well enough. Please tell me what you understand about your child's illness/problem and how we are going to treat it.

4. Questions to ask when dealing with a serious problem on an outpatient basis, or when a child is an inpatient. Particularly on a critical care unit.

Questions in sections 2 & 3 plus....

- Who should be told about the doctor's diagnosis? (Would you give bad news to the patient directly?)
- Will anyone else be involved in follow-up care (like siblings, grandparents, etc.)?
- Is there a religion/spiritual practice important to you?

5. Special Situations

Modesty Concerns:

- *I would like to examine you now. People in families from countries or cultures outside of the US often have important feelings they want their doctor to know about being examined. Is there anything you would like me to know before I examine you?*

Death and Dying:

- *What are the family traditions and rituals used when coping with dying, for the deceased person's body, the final arrangements for the body and honoring the death?*
- *Who is the main person to contact for the family during this time when a family member passes away?*
- *What else should we know in order to help the family and the child through this difficult time.*

