

Culturally Appropriate Care (Criterion C2.1)

POLICY

We aim to identify important and significant cultural groups within our practice and have implemented strategies to meet their needs.

We also aim to accommodate the specific needs of patients who experience disadvantage and increased disease risk whether due to socioeconomic factors, educational or literacy issues, cultural background, or disability.

In order to improve health outcomes we:

- Encourage our patients to self-identify their Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin or cultural background to practice staff.
- Encourage our practice staff to ask the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or other cultural background of our patients.

We are sensitive and aware that there may be many reasons why patients are reluctant to identify their Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or other cultural background and equally there are reasons why practice staff are reluctant to ask about the cultural background of our patients.

When patients are distressed we provide appropriate care and privacy which also respects their cultural practices.

We know how to communicate with patients who do not speak the primary language of our staff or who have communication impairment, and our practice has a list of contact details for interpreter and other communication services including the Translating and Interpreter Services.

The entry of information about the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or other cultural background of patients into health records is undertaken in a standardised manner that enables the extraction of data.

PROCEDURE

Our practice is working towards identifying and recording the cultural background of our new and existing patients. Cultural background and ethnicity, e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, can be an important indication of clinical risk factors and can assist GPs and clinical staff in providing disease prevention and delivering culturally appropriate care.

We have identified the main cultural groups in our practice and endeavour to provide culturally appropriate written health information.

We collect information about the country of birth and languages spoken. We have a system to regularly update our patient information using a standard “update your details form” to help collect additional cultural information from our patients.

(Z:\Reception\templates\New_Patient_Form)

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The standard indigenous status question asked is ‘Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?’ This question should be asked of all patients, irrespective of appearance, country of birth or whether the staff know of the client or their family background. Our practice collects this information as part of our “new patient” questionnaire. (Criterion 1.7 Clinical content of the medical records)

Where our software has the option to input Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander status or cultural background/s we use the drop down options rather than free text to assist with extracting the information for accreditation purposes or preventative activities.

USEFUL LINKS/RESOURCES:

- Summit Health Aboriginal Health: <http://summithealth.org.au/resources/aboriginal-health/>
- Aboriginal Health Council of SA: <http://ahcsa.org.au/Forms & Guidelines for IPIP Payments>
http://www.humanservices.gov.au/health-professionals/services/practice-incentives-programme/?utm_id=9
- RACGP National guide to preventative health assessments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander <http://www.racgp.org.au/yourracgp/faculties/aboriginal/guides/national-guide/>

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