

Providing Culturally Competent Services in Your Practice

Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences
Division of Global Populations and Infectious Disease Prevention
Massachusetts Department of Public Health

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Objectives

- Overview of the Division of Global Populations and Infectious Disease Prevention
- Share Division strategies for culture and language appropriate services
 - MDPH emphasis on health literacy
- Share Division's experiences working with refugees and immigrants
- Share some tips on how to engage clients from diverse cultural and linguistic background

The Division

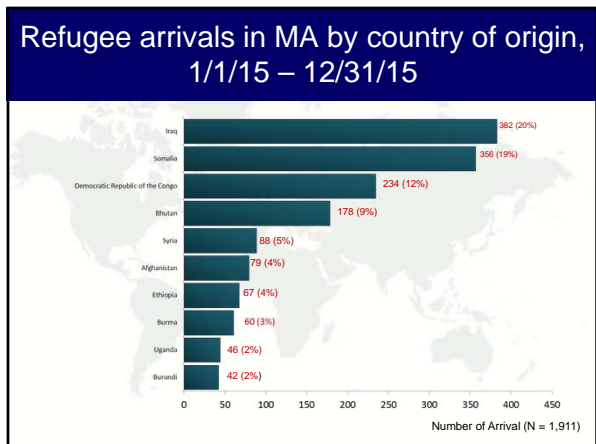
- Surveillance, Research and Epidemiology
- Clinical, Case management, Community services
 - Refugee Immigrant Health
 - Tuberculosis Program

The Division's goals

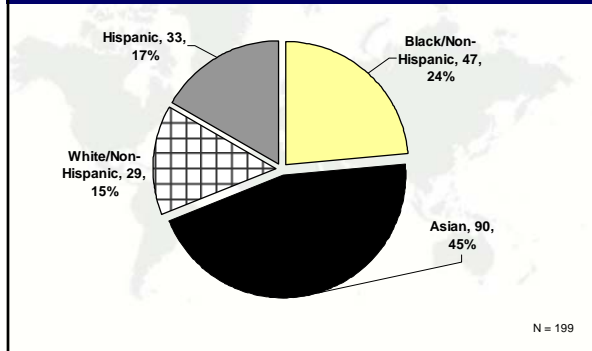
- To reduce the incidence of tuberculosis (TB) through surveillance, education and clinical services delivered within a collaborative multiagency system
- To control communicable diseases among refugees and newly arrived immigrants
- To improve the general health status of the State's refugee populations
- To increase access to public health services for newcomers

The Division's Direct Client Services

- Regionally based Community Health Workers for infectious disease follow up (TB, HBV, other), health orientation and education
- System Navigation
- Community engagement/health education
- Partnership with local health, refugee health assessment sites, TB clinics



TB cases by race/ethnicity, Massachusetts, 2014

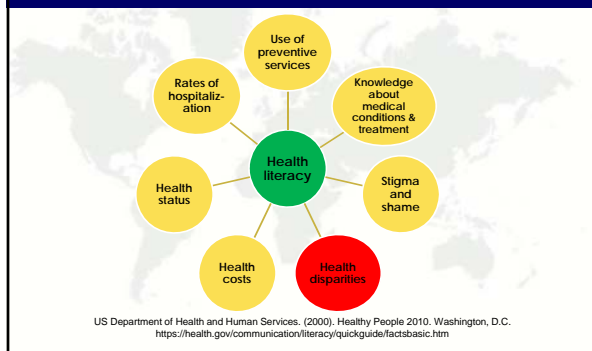


What does health literacy mean?

- **Health literacy** is the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions.

US Department of Health and Human Services. (2000). Healthy People 2010. Washington, D.C. <https://health.gov/communication/literacy/quickguide/factsbasic.htm>

Why is health literacy important?



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What are the sociocultural factors that influence health literacy?

- Communication skills of lay persons and professionals
- Lay and professional knowledge of health topics
- Culture
- Demands of the healthcare and public health systems
- Demands of the situation/context

US Department of Health and Human Services. (2000). Healthy People 2010. Washington, D.C. <https://health.gov/communication/literacy/quickguide/factsbasic.htm>

What is the culture?

- There are many definitions
- Culture is "... the shared knowledge and schemes created by a set of people for perceiving, interpreting, expressing, and responding to the social realities around them"(Lederach, 1995, p. 9).

What are the elements of culture?

- Knowledge and beliefs
- Ideals
- Preferences
- Cultural adaptation
- Cultural shock

Why pay attention to culture?

- Variations can be seen in beliefs about disease etiology, appropriate treatments, proper self-care and preventive treatment, human physiology and appropriate patient and doctor's conduct
- Contributes to an individual's ability to understand and act on a doctor's instructions
- Influences perceptions of disease symptoms and emotional state

Shaw, Huebner, Armin, Orzech & Vivian, 2008.

What sociocultural factors have we observed working with diverse clients?

- Cultural behaviors and norms (age, gender)
- Religious practices
- Individual responsibility to family and community
- Perceptions of 'health', 'illness' and healing
- Literacy (ability to read and write)
- Knowledge of health topics
- Perceived understanding of health provider-patient relationships
- Access to services
- Experience with health care system

What do we mean by cultural and linguistic competency?

“... practices and behaviors that ensure that all patients receive high-quality, effective care irrespective of cultural background, language proficiency, socioeconomic status, and other factors that may be informed by a patient's characteristics.”

Office of Minority Health, Department of Health and Human Services.
What is Cultural Competency? Accessible at: <http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/templates/browse.aspx?vi=2&vID=11>

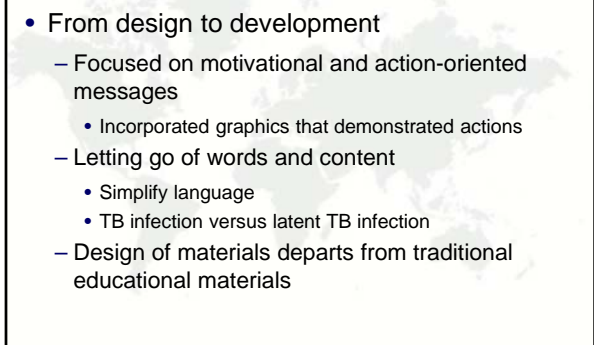
Strategies to improve culturally and linguistically appropriate health care

- Provider-patient communication
- Care/case management
- Health information
- Work force training



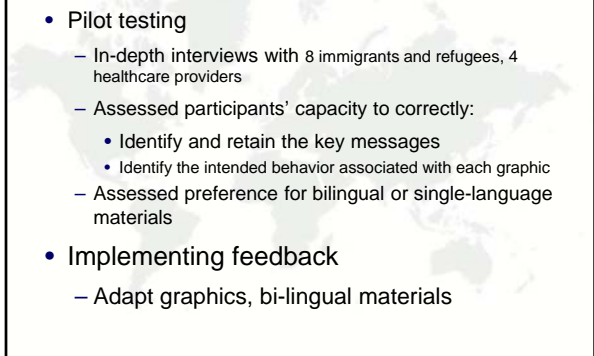
Patient **centered TB infection (LTBI) education materials**

- From design to development
 - Focused on motivational and action-oriented messages
 - Incorporated graphics that demonstrated actions
 - Letting go of words and content
 - Simplify language
 - TB infection versus latent TB infection
 - Design of materials departs from traditional educational materials



A collaborative process

- Pilot testing
 - In-depth interviews with 8 immigrants and refugees, 4 healthcare providers
 - Assessed participants' capacity to correctly:
 - Identify and retain the key messages
 - Identify the intended behavior associated with each graphic
 - Assessed preference for bilingual or single-language materials
- Implementing feedback
 - Adapt graphics, bi-lingual materials



A tool: Educational materials

Key features of our patient centered TB infection (LTBI) education materials

A strategy: The Question Formulation Technique (QFT)

- Developed by The Right Question Institute
 - Worked with Spanish speaking parents and teachers in the Lawrence area
- Expanded to working with health care agencies
 - Facilitating patient-provider communication

What is QFT?

- A rigorous step-by-step process that people can use to consistently:
 - Produce their own questions
 - Improve their questions
 - Strategize on how to use their questions
- Patients initiate their own questions, providers offer the invitation and space to receive questions
 - A shift in power dynamics of the patient-provider relationship

Benefits of Question Formulation Technique (QFT)

- Stronger patient provider communication
- Patients that are more greatly engaged in their own health care
 - Patients are able to gather the information they are interested in
 - Patients understand more and make informed health care choices
 - Patient develop a sense of ownership of their own health

What are the contributions of health providers to increased health literacy?

- Ability of health practitioner to recognize the cultural beliefs, values, attitudes, traditions, language preferences and health practices of diverse populations
- Apply the acquired knowledge to produce a positive health outcome

What are some tips to enhance skills to work with diverse populations?

- Learn cultures of clients served
- Be aware of own cultural biases
- Acknowledge cultural differences
- Practice respect
- Use interpreters and cultural brokers

What are some tips to enhance skills to work with diverse populations?

- Assess users' understanding before, during and after introduction of information and services
- Ensure that health information is relevant
- Supplement instructions with visuals
- Make visuals culturally relevant
- Use images that are familiar to audience

Most importantly....

- Talk clearly and listen actively
- Never assume anything
