

Cultural Needs Assessment Tool

Many individuals and people of different cultural backgrounds struggle with feeling supported and understood in healthcare. There are many aspects of culture and assessing for them is important. It helps the patient feel comfortable and builds trust with their provider. You can use this tool as a guide on what to ask when working with a patient to understand their cultural needs. This information is also important in treating the individual; providing individualized care; maintaining a healthy patient relationship based on trust; and achieving positive health outcomes.



1. Communication

- What is the best way to reach you?
- How do you speak with each other in your family?
- What is your preferred language?

2. Decision-making

- Who would you like included in making decisions about your health management?

3. Gender/Sexuality

If the patient completes an assessment form prior to intake, review and check for accuracy and questions on this form. If there is no other assessment, then ask the patient questions to help them identify themselves, such as "What pronouns do you use"?

4. Mental/Physical Care/Medication

- Are you currently taking any medication?
- How do you feel about taking prescription medications?
- Are there natural ways you prefer over medications?

5. Family/Friends/Involvement

- Are you connected with any family members or friends?
- Who is your 'go-to' person?
- What do current or previous relationships look like?
- How are others involved in your care?
- Who do you confide in?

6. Ethnicity

- What is your cultural background?
- How do you identify yourself?
- Any traditions you have to connect with your background?

7. Solution-focused therapy: group therapy, counseling

- Have you ever been involved in a process like this before?

These might work for individual counseling:

- What is your view of behavioral health?
- What is your cultural view of mental illness?
- Have you ever had services/counseling before?

8. Education

- How far did you go in school?
- Are you currently enrolled in school?
- Explore some developmental milestones that could let you explore other issues outside of education.

9. Spirituality/Religion

Do you have any religious or spiritual beliefs that are important to you?

- Is there a specific religion you identify with?
- Have you attended or do you currently attend a place where you practice your beliefs?
- Do you hold specific beliefs that will help you?

10. Community

- Describe your community to me.
- Are you involved with your community?
- Do you have specific groups you are interested in?

11. Holidays/Rituals

- Does your family have any special traditions or activities they celebrate?
- How do you celebrate?
- Are there any significant times of the year for you?

12. Nutrition

- What does your current eating habits look like?
- Are their foods that you don't eat? Explore reasons why.
- Do you restrict eating to certain times of days?
- Do you fast?

Other

- Where are you staying? (Housing)
- Who do you share your meals with? (Connectiveness)
- What are your thoughts or feelings about your condition? (Mental, Physical or Spiritual Health)