Defining and Identifying Cultural Factors Affecting Recruitment
What is culture?

Culture refers to the integrated patterns of human behavior that include language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious or social groups. (Office of Minority Health 2000)
Culture Affects EVERYTHING!

Art and Music
Celebrations
Clothing
Communication Styles
Death
Food
Language
Self-care
Religious / Spiritual Beliefs
Lifestyle Attitudes
Social Expectations
Social and Health Behaviors
The Culture Iceberg

When we see an iceberg the only portion that is visible is what is above water. Similarly when individuals think of culture they only think about what they can “see” (i.e. clothing, music, food, behaviors etc). Below the surface, culture is ingrained in the beliefs, attitudes and values individuals bring with them everywhere they go.
Cultural Competency

Cultural competence is the ability to interact effectively with people from diverse backgrounds and is a valuable model to apply to the healthcare environment.
## Why is Cultural Competency Important?

### Bridging Cultural Gaps

Cultural competency is crucial when it comes to communication and recruitment of participants from diverse populations. It can bridge the gap between participant concerns and researcher/study needs.

### Recruitment for Clinical Trials

Effective clinical trials recruitment of participants from diverse backgrounds will offer a more comprehensive sample study.

### Access to High Quality Health Care

Having the ability to respectfully and successfully respond to the specific needs of a diverse population will reduce health disparities across all cultures in the health care environment.
Enrollment by Race and Ethnicity

National Cancer Institute, Publicly Funded Cancer Clinic (Phase I-III Treatment Studies)  
January 1, 2003 - June 30, 2005

**Race**
- White - 88.6%
- Black/African American - 8%
- Asian/Pacific Islander - 2.8%
- Native American/Alaskan Native - 0.5%
- Multiple - 0.1%

**Ethnicity**
- Non-Hispanic/Latino - 94.4%
- Hispanic/Latino - 5.6%

Case Study: Justine’s Story

Justine Chitsena is a young Khmu-American girl who has an atrial septic defect, a hole in the wall of her heart. Her cardiologist recommends open chest surgery to seal up the hole but her grandmother is very opposed to the idea.

Footage courtesy Icarus Films from the Worlds Apart Series
Different Views on Health

Chitsena Family

- Justine appears healthy, not sick.
- A surgical scar, or any scar inflicted on a body stays with you even into your next lives.
- It is better to have a shorter life then to be scarred forever.

U.S. Medical Professionals

- Justine has a hole in the muscle wall of her heart.
- Justine needs open chest surgery in order to seal the hole in her heart.
- The surgery can extend Justine’s life and prevent her from having heart complications later on.
Things to Consider

Cultural Background

• How would you approach a participant whose cultural background and family dynamics is different from yours?
• Will your approach be respectful of their cultural beliefs?
• What will make your methods effective?

Family Dynamics
The Five Elements of the Culturally Competent Care System

Valuing Diversity
Recognize and respect that diversity is important. Accept differences in communication, one’s view on life, health, and family.

Institutionalize Cultural Knowledge
Incorporate newly attained knowledge into ongoing development of practice skills.

Cultural Self-Assessment
Realize that aside from being a trained researcher who does interact with diverse groups of people, you are also someone who comes from a unique cultural background.

Adaptation to Diversity
This demonstrates the approaches and actions necessary to incorporate cultural competency into the health system.

Dynamics of Difference
Two or more cultures may clash with each other. Be aware and pay attention to the dynamics that surround cultural interactions.
Cultural Competency Spectrum

- **Cultural Destructiveness**
  - Differences seen as a problem; identifies one superior culture
  - Lacks awareness & skill; perpetuates stereotypes; paternalistic toward non-dominant groups

- **Cultural Incapacity**
  - All cultures are alike; culture does not account for differences

- **Cultural Blindness**
  - Recognizes differences; complacent in making change

- **Cultural Pre-Competence**
  - Accepts, appreciates & values differences; seeks opinions of diverse groups

- **Basic Competency**
  - Actively educates less informed; seeks to interact with diverse groups

- **Advanced Competency**
  - Actively educates less informed; seeks to interact with diverse groups
Case Study: Justine’s Story Continued

During one of Justine’s visits to the cardiologist, the cardiologist explained to Justine’s mother why she believes it is important for Justine to get the surgery.

Footage courtesy Icarus Films from the Worlds Apart Series
** play clip from 4:00 to 5:40 **
Things to Consider

Was the cardiologist respectful of the cultural needs of the family? If she was not, how was she disrespectful?

How was the interaction between the cardiologist and Justine’s mother?

How did Justine’s mother respond to the cardiologist?

During the discussion, was the cardiologist cultural competent?
Things to Consider

Recognize, respect, and accept that Justine’s family dynamics and cultural beliefs can be very different from your own. Apply this to future clinical trials recruitment efforts.

Pay attention to non-verbal cues such as participant mannerisms. It is important to not only listen to what is being said, but also to hear what isn’t being said pay attention to how a participant behaves.

How would you approach someone who has a set of cultural beliefs different from your own?
To Learn More About Each Ethnicity

• **African American**

• **American Indian/Alaskan Natives**

• **Asian American**

• **Hispanic/Latino Americans**
Where Can I Learn More?


2. The NIH Office of Minority Health pages on "Cultural Competency" are available online at http://www.omhrc.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=1&lvlID=3 and include nationwide standards, policies, training tools, information about relevant laws, and other resources.


