

Towards Health Care Quality for Asian American

Lin Wu MMH, RN

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1

Topics

- Importance.
- Understanding Asian cultural health beliefs
- Challenges Asian cultural health beliefs present
- Closing the cultural gap.

2

Importance

Census Bureau, National Population Estimates Show:

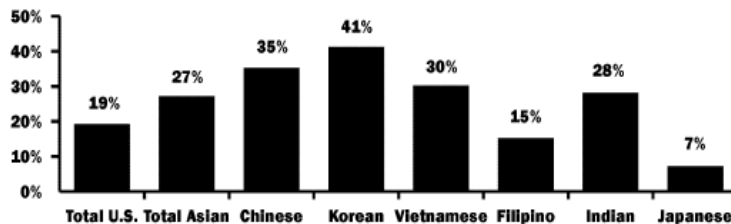
- **AA population is third significant minority in US.**
2008, Total U.S population was 308 million. AA was 13.4 million (4.4% of the total US population).
- **AA population are growing fast.**
2000, Total U.S population was 281.4 million, AA was 10,3 million.
2005, Total U.S population was 296.4 million, AA was 12,7 million
2050, AA expected to make up 9% of the total US population.

3

Importance

Asian Americans Report Greater Difficulty in Communicating with Their Doctor

Percent of adults reporting one or more measures of poor communication*



Base: Adults with a health care visit in the past two years.

* Doctor didn't listen to everything, patient didn't understand fully, or patient had questions but didn't ask.

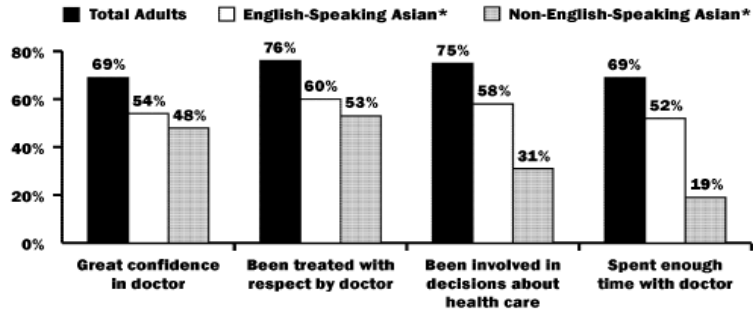
Source: The Commonwealth Fund 2001 Health Care Quality Survey.

5

Importance

Asian Americans Less Likely to Report Positive Patient-Physician Interactions

Percent of adults reporting they had...



Base: Adults with a health care visit in the past two years.

* As defined by language spoken at home.

Source: The Commonwealth Fund 2001 Health Care Quality Survey.

6

Importance

Asian American (AA) rate PCP performance lower than whites, African-American and Latinos.

Deborah A Taira and colleagues surveyed 502 patients from Boston, Mass showed:

7

Importance

Table 2. Primary Care Performance and Overall Satisfaction Scores (on 100 point scales) by Ethnicity, Adjusted for Age, Gender, Education, Income, and Health Status

Primary Care Scale and Overall Satisfaction	Caucasian	Asian	African-American	Latino(a)
Financial access	70 [†]	55*	67	60
Organizational access	67 [†]	58*	65	60
Visit-based continuity	80 [†]	65*	77	76
Longitudinal continuity	57	45	60	69
Communication	84 [†]	70*	82 [†]	84 [†]
Technical skill	82 [†]	73*	81	82
Contextual knowledge of patient	70 [†]	61*	65*	71
Comprehensive scope of care	37 [†]	28*	42	41
Interpersonal treatment	86 [†]	70*	82 [†]	84 [†]
Integration	78 [†]	61*	71*	76
Trust	77 [†]	63*	74 [†]	75
Overall satisfaction	72 [†]	65*	69	71

* indicates significantly different from Caucasian at $p \leq 0.01$.

[†] indicates significantly different from Asian at $p \leq 0.01$.

8

Importance

Cultural beliefs and differences in health care create barriers in obtaining quality healthcare for both non Asian American and Asian American.

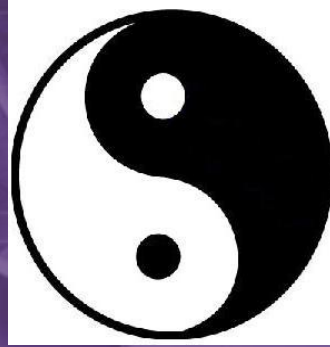
9

Cultural Health Beliefs

Health Practice: Traditional Chinese Medicine is rooted in Yin-Yang

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Yin



陽

Yang

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Cultural Health Beliefs

example

- Giving birth causes a loss of yang, or heat, which must be restored.
- As a result yang is restored with eating yang food, rest, avoiding anything cold and any activity.

11

Cultural Health Beliefs

The family system

- The family functions as collective decision-maker. autonomy becomes collective rather than individual.
- The Chinese family feels a strong obligation to protect the patient from unnecessary stress or worry.

12

Cultural Health Beliefs

Example

- Family make decision for patient's cancer treatment plan.
- Family do not want to let patient know the diagnosis of cancer.

13

Cultural Health Beliefs



Qi
The energy around us and in us.

14

Cultural Health Beliefs

Qi

Circulating life energy that creates the balance of negative and positive forms in the body is believed to be essential for good health

Blood is considered a non-renewable vital energy for the body and Qi.

15

Cultural Health Beliefs

Example

- The patients may resist to having lab tests that involves withdrawing blood or may resist donating blood.
- Patient also may request blood transfusion in the hopes of improving the Qi.

16

Cultural Health Beliefs

Ecchymosis

ecchymosis relieves congestion, thus allowing for the regulation of blood and energy.

17

Cultural Health Beliefs

For Example

It is common for people to rub the skin with a object such as a coin to produce ecchymosis in order to relieve congestion and increase circulation.



18

Cultural Health Beliefs

Self Control

It is believed that an individual should demonstrate inner stamina and strengths to tolerate crisis and pain.

19

Cultural Health Beliefs

example

- It is not unusual for the Asian patient to deny pain even if they are in excruciating pain.
- Report physical discomfort for mental problem

20

Cultural Health Beliefs

obey authority, respect knowledge, harmony

- we all hope for a good experience whether we are the healthcare providers or the patient.
- Education is the most priority in Asian Culture.

21

Cultural Health Beliefs

Example

Disagreement against harmony and disrespect to other.

Do not make other lost face.

22

Challenges

- 83 year old Chinese woman, mentally alter, found to have a lung mass with question of lung cancer..
- Three family members feel disclosure is important but fear the emotional stress.
- Other members feel patient should not be told the truth.

23

Challenges

- **Patient:** A Chinese woman, after given birth, only willing to provider minimal care to her baby, refused to do daily care and to eat hospital food.
- **Healthcare provider:** The nurse though that patient had post-partum depression, may need to have PSY and social consult.
- **Consequences:** Patient upset. Nurse frustrated.

24

Challenge

- **Patient:** A Chinese student was transferred to MGH for LFT that was out of range.
- **Healthcare provider:** doctors ordered more testes and medical treatments.
- **Consequence:** Patient complained ineffective treatment. Cost increased by unnecessary tests.

25

Challenges

- **Patient:** A Cambodian woman presented to PCP for 3 days nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, she was found to have multiple ecchymosis on her back.

Consequence

Confusion between provider and patient mis-diagnosis and even consequences for the family

26

Challenges

Communication Is not only language but also culture for the Chinese

A Chinese patient refused pain medication following surgery. Patient appears to be in pain yet says he is not in pain

Consequence

Nurse confused with patient's body language showed pain level, but patient answer "No pain".

27

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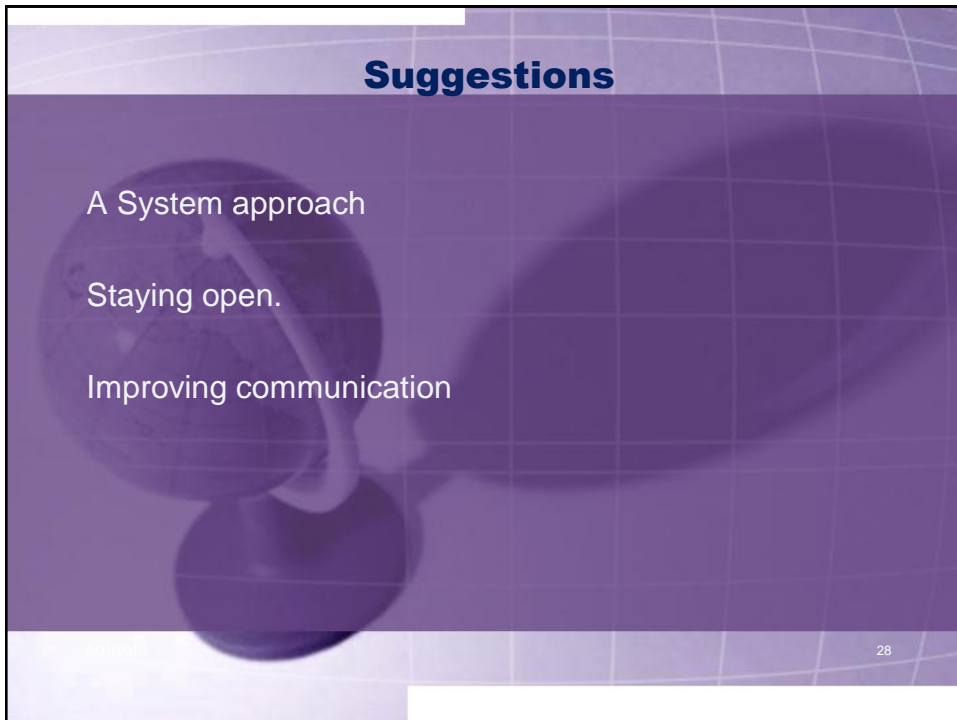
Suggestions

A System approach

Staying open.

Improving communication

28



Suggestions

A System approach structure is the key.

- Education, Committees, Seminars, organizational publications, train class/presentation.
- Encourage excellent cultural practice and share experiences
- Create Cultural consulting.
- Create Cultural quality of patient care managing.

29



Suggestions

Improving personal interactions

3 keys factors cross cultural communication

1. Language---vocabularies, pronunciations, formal/informal.
2. Attitude---do you willing to learn? To speak? To go out of comfort zone?
3. Knowledge---how much do you understand other cultures?

30

Suggestion

Staying open and be willing to understand

- Communication
- Harmony
- Collective decision making

31

suggestion

- Staying open and be willing to understand
- Self-control
- Education
- Language

32

Summary

- AA is third significant group and growing fastest in U.S.
- AA rate PCP performance lower than other Ethnic.
- Close cultural gap will increase quality and safety healthcare
- Provide quality of healthcare via system structure approaching and individual improving.

33

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