

CULTURAL ASSESSMENT TOOL

Andrews/Boyle Transcultural Nursing Assessment Guide for Groups and Communities*

by

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Family and Kinship Systems

- Are the families nuclear, extended, or blended? Do family members live in close proximity? What are communication patterns within the distinct community groups? What is the role and status of individual family members? By age and gender?
- How does the family and/or group members relate to the larger community or groups?
- Are there distinct ethnic neighborhoods or areas of the community where distinct cultural groups, refugees, or immigrants live?
- If working with a refugee community, ask about names of tribes and/or clans.
- What place do the “ancestors” have in the worldview of the group? How is the belief in the power of the ancestors incorporated in the daily life and rituals of the group?
- Is the group now or has it traditionally been matriarchal or patriarchal? Is there a preference for first cousins to marry?

Social Life and Networks

- What are the daily routines of the group? What are the important life cycle events such as birth, marriage, death? How are they celebrated or observed?
- How are the educational systems organized? How do they receive and accept input from the community? How do they assist students from new immigrants or refugees?
- What are the social problems experienced by the group or within the community?

* Source: Andrews, M.M., & Boyle, J.S. (2016). *Transcultural concepts in nursing care*. Philadelphia, PA: Wolters Kluwer Health/Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. Appendix B. pp B1 – B3.

- Are there special concerns with a particular ethnic or cultural group such as abuse of alcohol, FASD, gang membership, polygamy? How does the group view what we label as domestic violence and corporal punishment?
- Are newly arrived groups, such as immigrants or refugees included within the local community or isolated? Who are the group's local leaders?
- Are there centers or organizations that reach out to special groups within the community? What activities or opportunities are available to community members? For example, are GED courses, English as a second language classes and/or work training available to newcomers?
- How does the social environment contribute to a sense of belonging? Do all members of the group belong to a distinct religious group? What are the ways that the group practices its religion? What are the dominant religious groups within a community.
- What are the group's social interaction patterns? Do all members of the group speak a common language?
- Are ethnic grocery stores, restaurants, and churches located within the community? What foods do members of the cultural group commonly eat? What foods/substances do they commonly avoid (i.e., alcohol, pork products)?
- Are members of the group comfortable moving away from the larger group?
- Where are ethnic groups, immigrants, or refugees located within the larger community?

Political or Government Systems

- Which factors in the political system influence the ways in which the group perceives its status vis-à-vis the dominant culture, that is, laws, justice, and cultural heroes?
- How does the economic system influence control of resources such as land, water, housing, jobs, and opportunities?
- What is the legal status of the group members? Refugee or immigrant visas? Temporary worker permits? Documented or undocumented?
- How does the local government respond to the ethnic and cultural make-up of the community? What are the ways that the local community “embraces its diversity”?

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Language and Traditions

- Are there differences in dialects or languages spoken between health care professionals and local groups within the community?
- What is the literacy level of members of the group? Can they read or write in any language?
- Do health care facilities provide educational materials in diverse languages?
- In what ways do the major cultural traditions of history, art, drama, and so on, influence the cultural identity of the group?
- How are local cultures or ethnic traditions embraced during holidays or special celebrations?

Worldviews, Value Orientations, and Cultural Norms

- What are the major cultural values about the relationships of cultural groups to nature and to one another? How can the group's ethical beliefs be described?
- What are the norms and standards of behavior (authority, responsibility, dependability, and competition)?
- Is the group communal versus individualistic? How different is their worldview from the dominant worldview of the larger society or culture?
- What are the cultural attitudes about time, work, and leisure?
- What are the common values of the group, such as education, work, and so on.
- Are there unique cultural practices within the group that might bring wider community censure such as the role of women, discipline of children, relationships between husband and wife?

Religious Beliefs and Practices

- What are the major religious beliefs and practices within the community?

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- How do they influence daily life? How do they relate to health practices? What are the practices surrounding major life events such as birth, marriage, death?
- Does the cultural group have particular practices related to grieving or mourning

Health Beliefs and Practices

- What are the group's attitudes and beliefs regarding health and illness? Does the cultural group seek care from indigenous (folk) practitioners? Where do group members go to seek care? What makes the decisions about seeking health care? Accepting treatments? Are there biologic variations that are important to the health of this group? What are the group's expressed health concerns? Are there cultural or ethnic stores in neighborhoods selling medicinal herbs?
- What are the primary health concerns and/or illnesses in this population/cultural group? Examples might be: malaria, HIV/AIDS, female circumcision, malnutrition, tuberculosis. How do the group's concerns align with those of the local and state health care systems.

Health Care Systems

- Do community health care facilities provide interpreters? Do physicians offices and other health care facilities offer educational materials in languages other than English? Are health facilities located in accessible locations, that is, in ethnic neighborhoods? Do health care providers incorporate aspects of other medical systems, that is, acupuncture and referrals to traditional healers?
 - Do members of the group have access to health care? Do they have adequate transportation? Are the hours of operation of health care facilities and availability of appointment times appropriate for members of the group?
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