

0335

Cultural Competency among Expatriate Occupational Therapists in Hamad Medical Corporation, Doha, Qatar

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Occupational therapists (OT's) have long acknowledged that culture is an important aspect of occupation, and of perceptions of health, disability, and illness. The founders of the profession emphasized that therapeutic activities should be prescribed based on the individual's personal and cultural values (Dunton, cited in Bonder, B. R., Martin, L., & Miracle, A. W. 2004 p. 159). Occupational therapy professionals need to possess excellent interpersonal and communication skills if they are to effectively treat clients. When the client comes from a cultural background different from the occupational therapist, the potential for miscommunications and misunderstandings increase and may lead to cultural barriers. The myriad of cultural differences can be overwhelming to new employees, and even many seasoned clinicians are simply unaware that these cultural barriers exist. (Black, Jill D and Purnell, Larry D. 2002)

In this paper presentation, it aims to explore the depth of understanding and cultural competency among expatriate occupational therapists working in Doha, Qatar predominantly a multicultural diverse country. A survey was given to all the expatriate OT's in different sections of the corporation from the chief, supervisors, senior staffs and assistants using the Self-Assessment Checklist for Personnel Providing Primary Health Care Services (Goode, T.D. 2004). In this checklist it identifies three areas of competency namely physical environment, materials and resources; communication styles; and values and attitudes.

The result, it increases the awareness among expatriate OT's working in Hamad Medical Corporation what are the areas they are competent and what are the areas they need to improve for quality healthcare services. This study will help also educators and clinician across the world to strengthen our competencies not only clinical setting but also understanding multicultural perspective as healthcare providers.