

Scenarios to trigger discussion in peer support groups

These scenarios are suggestions intended as a starting point to stimulate discussion and reflection. There are no right or wrong answers and none are provided as they are merely a starting point for your journey of self-discovery and learning. You may have many other scenarios from your own practice which you prefer to discuss and reflect upon. Use whatever is most meaningful to you.

You have a scheduled patient / client / customer in 5 minutes for a flu vaccination. She is a Middle Eastern woman. You are a male pharmacist – what do you need to consider to ensure her cultural safety in this consultation?

A regular customer comes into your pharmacy with her daughter to pick up a new prescription. She is visibly distressed as she has just received a cancer diagnosis. How might you console and deal with her in a culturally safe way?

You could consider a range of scenarios varying the gender and cultural background of the pharmacist and the cultural background of the patient.

This scenario could also be considered with secondary or general practice situations when the pharmacist is the next health care professional to see the patient following discussion with the medical team or GP.

A Māori man comes into your pharmacy to ask you about his haemorrhoids. You take him into the private consultation area to continue the conversation. Initially he is very open but becomes more withdrawn as the conversation progresses and you get more into the detail of the condition. Consider what might be at play here and how you will deal with this to ensure his cultural safety in order to best help him?

Discuss the following questions

- How do you determine someone's culture?
- How do you identify cultural issues in your working environment? How might you do this in a proactive way
- How might you find out who are the high risk groups in your area ?

A man comes into the pharmacy and asks for some infant formula. You determine that he has a 3-month-old son. You are aware of the recommendation in NZ that tamariki are exclusively breastfed until at least six months of age, you ask whether the baby is being exclusively bottle fed, or whether his wife is also breastfeeding. At this point, the man becomes visibly annoyed and tells you that he has a husband, not a wife, and therefore breastfeeding is not an option. Discuss.

A customer comes into the pharmacy to collect a prescription for their regular medication that the medical centre had dropped off earlier in the day. When handing over the prescription, they explain that they would like to update their records in the pharmacy and that they now identify as male, rather than female as indicated on the prescription. Discuss how you would handle this.

Discuss the following statement

'I'm not racist – I treat everyone the same'

Discuss the following statement

'I don't have any cultural biases – I treat everyone the same'

Read around and discuss the concepts of implicit bias and how this might impact on your interactions with patients and colleagues of other cultures.

Read around and discuss the concept of institutional racism. How might this be at play in the delivery of local health services and what steps could you take to reduce it.

Discuss an area of practice or health condition where there is inequity of outcomes. Explore what may be potential contributors. Are there cultural barriers? How could pharmacists reduce that inequity?

Each peer group member could think about a situation or experience where they felt unsure of the cultural expectations, norms or requirements. Each person could present their case, and work through the following questions¹

- What was the cultural experience or situation?
- What was the outcome or impact? If it wasn't optimal what made you feel/know it wasn't optimal?
- How did it make you feel as a pharmacist?
- Were there any barriers to providing equitable care? i.e. were there issues regarding health equity?
- How were these issues managed or addressed?
- If there was an inequitable element in this situation, what might be done to prevent it in future?
- How might those actions be altered to accommodate another culture?
- Were there knowledge gaps and where could I get this knowledge from?

Alternatively, group members could use similar questions to explore a situation that they felt they handled well and behaved in line with cultural expectations, norms or requirements.

The term partnership has evolved from the discussions around the Treaty of Waitangi. What does this partnership mean, and where did it come from?

You are working in a pharmacy that has a Māori intern pharmacist. The intern is having a casual conversation with their preceptor about holidaying at their holiday bach. When the preceptor mentions that the land the bach is on once belonged to the Māori hapu of the area and goes on to say 'you fellas just think you own all the land!' and tries to laugh it off. Clearly shocked by the commentary, the intern walks away and is quiet for the rest of the day. Discuss the issues here and where the issues arise from.

Your peer group may like to discuss topics that are of significance in Māori culture, and how they manifest in your own community.²

To do this, you could discuss some of the factors that might be considered important in Māori culture that are frequently encountered in the health context. For example

- Connection with people (whakawhanaungatanga)
- Connection to the whenua (land)
- The role of whānau
- Whakapapa, and the calling of ancestors

¹ Adapted from [Cultural competency discussions \(rnzcgcp.org.nz\)](http://rnzcgcp.org.nz)

² Adapted from [Cultural competency discussions \(rnzcgcp.org.nz\)](http://rnzcgcp.org.nz)

- The use of te reo Māori in the consultation
- Rituals around significant events such as birth and death

Each person in the group could choose a particular area of study and find out how that topic is managed at your hospital.

Alternatively, group members could bring along a case which relates to one of these topics. The group could discuss the impact of these cultural factors on patients, and on themselves.

Cultural beliefs and values, including spirituality, is of great importance to many people, but it may not necessarily be a routine topic of discussion in a consultation.²

Peer group members may find it useful to speak with each other about how – and if – these beliefs and values is brought up in a consultation, or to discuss cases related to this area.

Things you could consider

- Do you bring up cultural beliefs and values in consultations?
- If you do, how do you do bring it up?
- If you don't, how might you bring this up in a consultation?
- What factors should be considered when bringing up cultural beliefs and values? E.g.: location, cultural context, your own background

Read around and discuss the concepts of white privilege and white fragility and how these impact on equity in health.

You are asked to take a medication history from a recently admitted Samoan man on your ward. You find him lying on his bed with a sheet over him and he appears to be naked otherwise. He has enough English to have a conversation however he is very shut down and you are unable to take a history from him. His (female) nurse has indicated he is not responding to her either.

What might be going on and what do you need to consider to ensure his cultural safety in this situation?

What do you understand about Pacific models of health such as Fonofale, kakala model, fa'afaletui model? Read around to understand these and discuss the implications for your care of pacific patients

You realise that you are not able to engage directly with some of your older patients as their medicines are usually collected for them by their children or grandchildren who speak English. How might you address this?

A Tongan family with a family member with a diagnosis of Type 2 Diabetes are collecting their oral medicines but not their insulin. Discuss how you might address this?

You notice that a Tokelauan family are going through a lot of paracetamol which you discover they think it will help fight infections. Discuss how you might address this?

A pacific family who visit your pharmacy visit regularly for help with skin infections. How can you address this when you know there are 8 people living under one roof?

“I take my dad to the pharmacy to pick up his prescription at the pharmacist, because she/he thinks he (the dad) is dumb because he doesn't speak English.” Discuss

Pacific people are often stereotyped as being "poorer" so we don't offer them all the options available to them because we don't think they can afford it. Discuss

When issuing dispensed medicines to a customer, you notice that they are Tongan. You begin to counsel them on the medications and she smiles and nods as you continue to discuss the

medications. The customer continues to smile, nods when you finish and you finish the transaction before letting them leave. How could we improve this interaction?

There is a wide diversity of terms used within the Rainbow Community such as Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, intersex, whakawahine, tāhine, vakasalewalewa, fakaleiti, tangata ira tane, tóngzhì, mahu, palopa, fa'afafine, akavaine, fakafafine, queer, questioning, asexual, genderqueer, pansexual, gender diverse and genderfluid. Read around and discuss these terms and why it is important to understand and use these correctly.

A staff member notices that a patient has the name “Ms Jane Doe” alongside the entry of “Male” in the sex field in the dispensing system (or on the patient label on the medication chart) and asks you if this is an error? How would you handle this?

While dispensing tenofovir disoproxil + emtricitabine for PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) a pharmacy intern politely asks you “Why is this medication funded – couldn’t they just use condoms?” How would you answer and discuss the possible reasons?

If one of your employees told you they would like to be known by “they/them” pronouns how would your workplace be able to accommodate this? If you, or anyone else, needs education on pronouns where would you find it?

Sometimes healthcare staff have important religious beliefs that may differ significantly with another culture – how do we make sure that all cultures can access healthcare in a culturally safe way while also respecting religious beliefs?

You and your colleagues have shared lunches to celebrate birthdays. One of your recently appointed colleagues is Muslim and observes Ramadan which is about to start. Two people have a birthday in this time. How might you handle this?

A Deaf patient has a prescription dispensed at your pharmacy for a new medication (or has a new medicine charted as an inpatient on your ward). In place of verbal counselling, you provide them a printed English medication information leaflet. They look at your leaflet with confusion.

- 1) Read around and discuss why it may not be helpful to provide a written information leaflet to a Deaf person
- 2) Read around and discuss how you can organise a sign language interpreter for a pre-planned meeting with a Deaf patient to discuss their medication at your workplace

Read around and discuss what ‘Deaf culture’ is (i.e. how can a group of Deaf people from different ethnic/religious/national backgrounds have a collective culture?) and what this means for you as a pharmacist providing healthcare to a Deaf person.

Read around and discuss how the oppressive history of deafness and sign language in New Zealand affected Deaf people’s health literacy and access to information.

A patient presents to you with a script for antiretrovirals. What do you need to think about as a pharmacist in providing healthcare for patients living with HIV/AIDS, including those with a new diagnosis

Rainbow communities are significantly overrepresented in those with mental health conditions including depression. What sorts of things would pharmacists have to think about?

You have a colleague who makes derogative comments about patients from other cultures and genders. How might you call out their behaviour and discrimination?

You have a number of young patients who identify as transgender. What do you need to learn and take into consideration when interacting with them?