

Chaplain, What Do I Need to Know About Hmong/Yup'ik/Orthodox Old Believer Patients?

Improving Cross Cultural Competency

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Reflection

Introductions

Susan Halvor – I've lived in Alaska since 2000, having grown up in the Pacific Northwest. I'm an ordained Lutheran (ELCA) pastor, and have served as a chaplain at PAMC since 2004 – Children's Hospital Chaplain for 11 years, and more recently as department manager. My passion for diversity is rooted in a life-long concern for justice, diversity in my family, working with a very diverse team of chaplains (as well as patients and caregivers in general) as well as travel and other life experiences.

Ron Galt – I was born and grew up in Scotland, and had all of my schooling and education there up to and including college level. I have ministered in healthcare settings for more than 20 years -- as a parish priest visiting parishioners in hospital in Scotland, and since coming to the USA in 1999 as Clinical Pastoral Education Resident and subsequently as a hospital chaplain. I have been board certified since 2012 and have been in Alaska since 2015. I love ministering in a hospital, particularly as a member of a diverse spiritual care and interdisciplinary team. Although I do visit patients on occasion, my main role over the last few years has been as Director of Mission Integration. Here I get wonderful opportunities to present and walk with my fellow caregivers in giving witness to our Mission and Core Values in caring for those who are poor and vulnerable.

Context of Anchorage, Alaska and our hospital:

*More than 100 languages are spoken in the Anchorage School District,^{1, 2, 3} including (other than English):

Spanish
Hmong
Samoan
Filipino (Tagalog)
Korean
Nuer
Yup'ik
Lao
Somali
Russian

According to the 2017 American Community Survey, Top Ten in the rest of the U.S. include (excluding English):⁴

Spanish
Chinese
Filipino (Tagalog)
Vietnamese
Arabic
French
Korean
Russian
German
Haitian Creole

***In the Anchorage School District:**³ 44% of students identify as white/Caucasian. 15% as multi-ethnic. More specifically, African American – 6%, Alaska Native/Native American – 9%, Asian – 10%, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander – 5%, and Hispanic/Latino – 11%.

***In the state of Alaska:**⁵ White (not Hisp/Latino) – 61%, African American – 4%, Alaska Native/Native American 15%, Asian 6%, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander 1%, Multiethnic 7%, Hispanic/Latino 7% (also included in other categories) <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/AK>

***In the broader US:**⁶ White (not Hisp/Latino) – 61.3%, African American – 13.3%, Asian 5.7%, Alaska Native/Native American – 1.3%, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander – 0.2%, Multiethnic – 2.6%, other 6.2%, and Hispanic/Latino (of any race) 17.8%.

*Anchorage has some of the most diverse high schools, middle schools and elementary schools in the nation. Mountainview, a northeast Anchorage neighborhood, boasts the most diverse census tract in all of America.^{7, 8}

***Providence Alaska Medical Center** is a 400-bed hospital, the largest in the state of Alaska, and a nationally-recognized level II adult and pediatric trauma center. Within the medical center is the Children’s Hospital at Providence, including a 21-bed pediatric unit, 9-bed pediatric intensive care, Alaska’s only high-risk prenatal unit, and Alaska’s only nationally recognized Level III Newborn Intensive Care Unit.

Background: Early Offerings in Cross Cultural Communication Skills

Around 2009: Providing Culturally Sensitive Care in Pediatrics (as well as CPE Didactics)

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the need for culturally competent care
- Identify at least four barriers to effective cross cultural communication, including differences in time orientation, religious/spiritual issues, communication issues, family and gender issues
- Recognize assumptions of Western medical system which may come into conflict with other cultural understandings
- Identify strategies for providing culturally competent care

Around 2011:

- Started offering cross-cultural communication education at Day 2 New Employee Orientation
- collaborated on a brochure for Family Medicine Center (w Alaska Family Medicine Residency Staff) (Oct 2011, Jon Van Ravenswaay), “Suggestions for Medical Professionals from Hmong Patients”
- went on to also develop didactics and resources related to providing culturally sensitive spiritual care in Anchorage, and recognizing privilege. We frequently invite local leaders to offer didactics, as well as online learning opportunities with national speakers.

October, 2011

With Children's Hospital Bereavement Council, offered a day long conference, "**Courage, Compassion and Cross-Cultural Communication.**"

Opening: Alaska Native drumming.

Session 1 (2 hrs): Cross Cultural Communication Basics, Fr. Michael Oleksa, Rev. Dr. Chancellor for the Diocese of Alaska Orthodox Church in America, and international speaker on culture.

Session 2: Interpreter Skills (1 hr) – Program manager from the Language Interpreter Center of the Alaska Immigration Justice Project.

Session 3 (after lunch) (1 hr): Refugees 101: Participating Globally through Welcoming Locally – overview of concerns of refugees in Anchorage, Program Director and State Refugee Coordinator, Catholic Social Services of Alaska

Three Panel Discussions (one hour each): Included representatives from,

Hmong community	St. Innocent's Orthodox Cathedral
Polynesian Association	Hispanic Community
Islamic Community Center	Alaska Native – Inupiat community
Japanese Society of Alaska	Navajo RN/Recruiting and Retention of Alaska Natives into Nursing (RRANN)

State Chaplain, AK National Guard
Chaplain, Military Family Support
Pastor, representative of LGBT community
Teacher, representative of LGBT community

Closing: Taiko drumming

Activities used in New Employee Orientation:

Wedding discussion – In small groups, share highlights of a wedding

Highlight importance of getting beyond first impression

Same words, different meaning

(Also, good way to bond group and get conversation going)

Brainstorming Characteristics of Western Medical Culture

Highlight different time orientations, germs vs other causes of disease, highly technical and evidence-based, etc.

Assumption of high education,

Athabaskan vs Western/English Speaking culture – 8-10

*"predicting the future" vs "planning ahead"

*helping people vs "boundaries"

* "slow thinkers" and long listeners vs always talking

*Being careful about talking about people/things –being fully informed vs not speaking into being bad news

History and description of Culture and Diversity Committee, projects:

In the summer of 2017 a group of caregivers came together to launch the first Culture and Diversity Committee for Providence Alaska Medical Center. With Anchorage and indeed Alaska being incredibly diverse in language, culture and faith tradition, among other distinctions, we wanted the medical center to offer opportunities for us to celebrate our diversity as well as our unity as a caring place of healing and ministry. We agreed to commit to the following:

- To celebrate the many cultures in our community and ministries
- To promote cross cultural relationships, fostering understanding and effective communication
- To offer education so that as caregivers we can better understand the interaction between health and culture, and provide more sensitive and respectful care of those we serve
- To increase cultural awareness and the use of inclusive language, behaviors and values throughout Providence

We introduced the committee at a hospital-wide picnic, with a well-received activity inviting hospital caregivers to place a pin on a map indicating where they're from.

We are offering "Lunch and Learn" panel discussions with representatives from various cultures (including hospital employees and people from the community at large). We've had panel discussions exploring –

Samoan	Filipino	African American
Hmong	Refugees	Latino/Hispanic
Muslim	People with disabilities	Military

Additionally, we are developing a website as a resource for staff, and hope to provide content for one of our hospital "Welcome" boards. We also hold an annual Interfaith Service for Peace and Diversity, with representatives from various religious groups in the community and from the hospital.

Future Hopes:

- Culture Broker position
- More resources and education for providers re: care for transgender patients and family members
- Better options for interpreter needs (video interpreting, certifying local caregivers for simple interpreting)

Questions? Contact us!

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Sources:

1. "These are the languages spoken in Anchorage students' homes," Tegan Hanlon, April 22, 2018, Anchorage Daily News. <https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/education/2018/04/22/these-are-the-languages-spoken-in-anchorage-students-homes/>
2. "From Hmong to Sinhalese, over 100 languages are represented in Anchorage schools," Tegan Hanlon, published October 22, 2016 and updated Oct 24, 2016, Anchorage Daily News. <https://www.adn.com/alaska-news/education/2016/10/22/from-hmong-to-sinhalese-more-than-100-languages-represented-in-anchorage-schools/>
3. <https://www.asdk12.org/domain/1254> (retrieved 5/4/2018)
4. "Languages of the United States," data from the 2016 American Community Survey, a project of the U.S. Census Bureau, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Languages_of_the_United_States (retrieved 5/4/2018)
5. *Alaska Diversity data*: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/AK> (retrieved 5/4/2018)
6. *U.S. Diversity data*: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045217> (retrieved 5/4/2018)
7. "Anchorage public schools lead nation in diversity," Matt Tunseth, published May 23, 2015 and updated Sept 28, 2016, Anchorage Daily News. <https://www.adn.com/education/article/anchorage-melting-pot-diversity/2015/05/24/>
8. "Most diverse place in America? It's not where you think." By Moni Basu, CNN, Jan. 11, 2016 <https://www.cnn.com/2015/06/12/us/most-diverse-place-in-america/index.html>

Resource List

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Kundtz, David J. and Bernard S. Schlager. *Ministry Among God's Queer Folk: LGBT Pastoral Care*. Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry. Pilgrim Press, 2007. **2nd Edition coming in 2018: *Ministry Among God's Queer Folk: LGBTQ Pastoral Care*, Cascade Books..

Lanier, Sarah A. *Foreign to Familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot- and Cold-Climate Cultures*. Hagerstown, MD: McDougal Publishing, 2000.

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Symonds, Patricia V. *Calling in the Soul: Gender and the Cycle of Life in a Hmong Village*, 2nd edition. University of Washington Press, 2014.

Tanis, Justin. *Trans-gendered: Theology Ministry and Communities of Faith*. Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2003.

Internet Resources:

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: The danger of a single story – TedGlobal 2009/July 2009.

https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

The Things that Happen: Two Boys and Cancer (Anchorage Daily News series about two young men (Laotian and Hmong), treated at Providence for cancer), by Julia O'Malley. Great story of their responses, delving into culture and religion.

<https://juliaomalley.media/2014/11/21/from-the-anchorage-daily-news-the-things-that-happen-two-boys-and-cancer/>

HealthCare Chaplaincy, Handbook of Patients' Spiritual and Cultural Values for Health Care Professionals, updated March 2013, New York. www.healthcarechaplancy.org.

CDC Ethnographic Guides, for Burma, China, Laos (Hmong), Mexico, Somalia, Vietnam

<https://www.cdc.gov/tb/publications/guidestoolkits/ethnographicguides/default.htm>

Namratha Kandula, MD. "The Patient Explanatory Model." *The HealthCare Blog*, June 11, 2013

<http://thehealthcareblog.com/blog/2013/06/11/the-patient-explanatory-model/>

This essay elaborates on Arthur Kleinman's 8 questions for culturally appropriate health care assessment.