

CULTURAL COMPETENCE: An Individual or Institutional Responsibility?

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**EXPLORING CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND NOVA
SCOTIA'S CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM:**

APPROACHES AND DIALOGUE FOR CHANGE

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Outline of Presentation

- Why cultural competence?
- What is cultural competence in practice in the justice system?
- The Journey to Cultural Competence- The Triple A Paradigm: Awareness- Analysis - Action
- Is cultural competence an individual or institutional responsibility?

Why cultural competence in Justice?

- Changing demographics in Canada
- Oppression and Disparities faced by marginalized populations and impact on services
- Over-representation of marginalized groups as clients and under-representation as workers in the system
- A commitment to Life-long learning
- Providing services outside the context of culture is counterproductive and **perhaps even dangerous**

Interrogating Cultural Competence

- Definitions:
 - Culture
 - Competence
 - Problemitizing Culture and Competence



CULTURE

- implies the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs and values, as well as institutions of racial, ethnic, religious or social groups” Este
- one’s world view; where one came from, why one is here and where one is going

COMPETENCE

- Cross et al (1989) states that “cultural competence embraces... the importance of culture, the assessment of cross-cultural relations, vigilance towards the dynamics that result from cultural differences, the expansion of cultural knowledge, and the adaptation of services to meet culturally unique needs (p. 31).

Beyond Cultural Competence...

- Definitions must include discussions of power, privilege and oppression
- Must also include discussions of how these influence helping relationships, help seeking behaviors and actions
- Bernard and Moriah 2007

Interrogating Cultural Competence cont'd

- **cultural sensitivity**
- **cultural safety**
- **cultural relevance**
- **cultural awareness**



Cultural Competence

- A journey, not a destination- Sharon Davis Murdoch 2007
- Steps on the journey
- The Triple A Paradigm



The Triple A Paradigm

- AWARENESS
 - ANALYSIS
 - ACTION
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- Individuals and Institutions need to go through these continual processes
 - Need to continually examine oppression, power and privilege- individually and in institutions

Awareness

- Embrace the importance/centrality of culture
- Cultural knowledge and awareness Builds Bridges to culturally competent and relevant practice
- Heightened awareness of others and own world views
- Knowledge of history and contemporary experiences of cultural groups

Analysis

- Critical understanding of power, privilege and oppression
- A critical review of organizational cultural barriers
- A critical review of systems barriers
- How these impact service provision
- How these impact relationships between workers, and between workers & clients

Action

- Who is responsible for leading the change you want to see in your organization?

Action

- What personal actions are needed to bring about the changes to make your work more culturally safe?
- What systemic actions are needed to make the organizational changes that are deemed necessary?

Who is Responsible?

- Individual Responsibility?
- Institutional Responsibility?



Thank You

**I Welcome Discussion on These
Issues**

