Learning Guide

Culture and support

Name:

Workplace:

28529 Identify the impact of culture on support in a health or wellbeing setting

| Level 2 | 5 credits |

Issue 1.0
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Introduction

How you support people will be impacted by your culture and the cultures of the people you support. You need to understand what culture is and how it impacts on the way you act and the way you see the world.

How to use your learning guide

This learning guide supports your learning and prepares you for the unit standard assessment.

This guide relates to the following unit standard:

- 28529 Identify the impact of culture on support in a health or wellbeing setting (level 2, 5 credits).

This learning guide is yours to keep. Make it your own by writing notes that help you remember things, or where you need to find more information.

Follow the tips in the notes column.

You may use highlighter pens to show important information and ideas, and think about how this information applies to your work.

You might find it helpful to talk to your colleagues or supervisor.

Complete this learning guide before you start the assessment.

What you will learn

This learning guide will help you to:

- understand how your culture impacts on the support you give.
- communicate well with people from different cultures.
- talk about biculturalism.
What is culture?

Culture is the word we use for what is normal for a particular group of people. This can include what they like to do, what they like to eat, what is important to them and many other things.

Identifying with a culture

To identify with a culture means that you feel it is a part of who you are. People can identify with more than one culture.

Example:

This is Padma. She is originally from India but lives in New Zealand now. She enjoys Indian food and music, but she also enjoys Kiwi food and music. She thinks of herself as an Indian and a New Zealander. She identifies with Indian culture and New Zealand culture.

This is Sarah. Her father is from Vietnam and her mother is a New Zealand European. Her family lives in New Zealand and she has never been to Vietnam. Sarah thinks of herself as a New Zealander. She doesn’t identify with the Vietnamese culture.

Types of culture

There are many cultures in the world. People can identify with and be part of more than one culture.

Within a culture, there can be smaller cultures. These are called subcultures. For example, Pasifika culture is about all the things that people from the Pacific Islands have in common.

Within Pasifika culture, there are people from different Pacific Islands who have their own culture for their particular nation. A person from Tokelau will have a different culture to a person from Samoa.
Culture and ethnic groups

An ethnic group is a set of people who identify with each other in terms of having the same nationality or race. Each ethnic group will have its own culture.

Some examples of ethnic group cultures that are found in New Zealand are listed below.

**Māori**

Subcultures may include different iwi, such as:

- Ngāti Porou.
- Ngāi Tahu.
- Ngāti Toa.

**New Zealand European or Pākehā**

Subcultures may include:

- Scottish ancestors.
- Irish ancestors.

**Pacific Island or Pasifika**

Subcultures may include:

- Samoan culture.
- Tongan culture.

**Asian**

Subcultures may include:

- Chinese culture.
- Japanese culture.
- Indian culture.
- Filipino culture.
Culture and religion

Being part of a religious group usually means being part of that religion’s culture. Forty percent of the people living in New Zealand say that they have no religion. Some examples of religious groups in New Zealand are listed below.

**Christian**

**Islamic/Muslim**
Culture and minority groups

A minority group is a set of people who have something in common that most people in New Zealand don’t have. Many minority groups can face discrimination and/or bullying.

It’s important to remember that a person who qualifies as a member of a minority group may or may not identify with that culture. For example, a person who is deaf may not think of themselves as part of the Deaf culture.

Here are some examples of minority group cultures in New Zealand:

People with disabilities

LGBT

This means lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

Immigrants

This means people who have moved to New Zealand from different countries.

Immigrants will bring their cultures from their own countries, but they may also identify as the minority culture group of immigrants to New Zealand.

More info

Discrimination is treating someone badly based on things they can’t change about themselves, for example, gender, race or sexual orientation.
Effects of culture

There are many effects of culture that you may not be aware of. Cultural practices include cultural behaviours, understandings, values and beliefs.

Cultural behaviours and understandings

Cultural behaviours are what people from a particular culture do and how they act.

Cultural understanding means that people from the same culture will understand why the people from their culture do certain things, even if they have never thought about it and have never had to talk about it before.

This includes understanding things such as:

- why a person acts a certain way. For example, in New Zealand culture, if a person is complimented, they will often dismiss their achievements so that they don’t seem arrogant about their own abilities.
- what is expected in social situations. For example, in New Zealand culture, if you are asked to “bring a plate” to an event, it means you need to bring food to share.
- what gestures mean. For example, in New Zealand culture, if a person raises their eyebrows and briefly nods up at you, it can mean “hi” or “thanks”.

Cultural values and beliefs

Cultural values and beliefs are the things that people from a culture think are true and important.

Some examples of New Zealand cultural values and beliefs include:

- women and men should have equal rights.
- you can have your own religion, but you can’t make other people follow it.
- everyone deserves a fair chance.
Communicating with people from different cultures

To communicate better with a person from a different culture, you need to know:

- possible barriers to communication.
- their cultural practices.
- your cultural practices.

Cultural barriers to communication

Some things that can cause misunderstandings with a person from another culture are:

- language difficulties. You may need an interpreter.
- non-verbal communication. This means what you say with your body language and gestures. A gesture can mean different things in different cultures. For example, in some cultures, a nod simply means that the person has heard you, not that they understand or agree with what you are saying.
- differences in cultural practices. For example, in some cultures, it might not be ok for a woman to provide support for a male person while, in other cultures, it might be fine for a woman to support a man or boy.
- assuming that everybody thinks the same way that you think.

Finding out about a person’s culture

You can support a person better and avoid offending them when you know more about their culture.

The best way to find out about a person’s culture is to ask them and their family or whānau. Some things you might like to ask include:

- are there any special rules from their culture that might affect the support you provide?
- is there anything you can do or avoid doing to make them feel more culturally supported?
Knowing your own culture

Now that you understand a bit more about culture, this section will help you recognise how your own culture affects your behaviour and your work.

Your culture’s community

Your cultural community will be the groups of people that you identify with or the groups of people that you think you are part of.

For example, if you think of yourself as a Christian, you may be part of the Christian community.

If you think of yourself as Pasifika, you may be part of the Pasifika community.

The communities you are part of can relate to:

- your ethnic group.
- your nationality.
- your age.
- your sexuality.
- your gender.
- any other culture you identify with.
In the table below, write down three cultural communities you belong to and one or more cultural practices of each of those communities. An example has been done for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural community</th>
<th>Cultural practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Māori (Ngāi Tahu)</td>
<td>It’s not ok to sit on top of a table, because it’s seen as unhygienic to have your bottom where food might be placed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conflicts of culture

Different cultures can have different cultural practices. This means that when something happens, people from one culture might feel differently about it to another.

Example:

Hannah supports Mei in Mei’s home. Mei is originally from Japan.

Hannah is rostered to start her shift at Mei’s house at 9 am. She leaves her house at 8.30 am and gets to Mei’s house at 9.02 am. She spends a few minutes getting things out of her car and knocks on Mei’s door at 9.06 am. Mei has already rung Hannah’s supervisor to complain that Hannah is late.

The conflict: For some New Zealanders, being 5 or 10 minutes late is fine. In Japanese culture, it is very important to be exactly on time or even early. To be even a few minutes late is very rude and shows disrespect for the person you are meeting.

Changing your behaviour to respect a person’s culture doesn’t mean that you think that they are right and your culture is wrong. It means that, in your role as a support worker, you respect a person’s right to identify with their culture in their own life, just as you can follow your own cultural practices in your life.

Question

Look at your answers for the cultural communities activity on the previous pages. Think about a person you support. Does that person have any cultural practices that might conflict with your own cultural practices? What can you do to avoid conflict?
**Conflict scenarios**

The following scenarios will help you think about how to deal with cultural conflicts in your work. Read each scenario and answer the question that follows each one.

---

**Write**

Charles supports Jim. Charles is from the Philippines and Jim is a New Zealand European.

Jim’s family is coming to visit. Charles thinks Jim should dress up nicely in something colourful, because in Filipino culture it shows respect to dress nicely when someone visits.

Jim just wants to be comfortable and doesn’t want to dress up.

What should Charles do? Write your answer here.

---

**Write**

Mary has been supporting Joan in her own home for 2 years. Mary and Joan get on well and they are both happy with the support relationship.

Joan is very excited because her daughter Anna and Anna’s wife Sarah are moving to the city to be closer to her. Anna and Sarah are a lesbian couple. They will be around more to help support Joan.

Mary is from a Christian culture that believes that it is a sin for people of the same sex to be in a relationship. Joan and her family are not religious. Mary is a bit worried about being around Anna and Sarah.

What should Mary do? Write your answer here.
Biculturalism and Māori tikanga

New Zealand is a bicultural country. Bicultural means that two cultures are of equal importance in New Zealand. The two cultures are:

- Māori culture.
- non-Māori culture.

Why do we have biculturalism?

We have biculturalism in New Zealand because our society is founded on the Treaty of Waitangi. The Treaty of Waitangi is an agreement that guarantees that Māori and non-Māori people have equal rights and their cultures are respected equally.

In 1840, Māori leaders and the British Crown signed the Treaty of Waitangi. This formed a cultural partnership between the two groups.

Māori are tangata whenua of New Zealand. This means that Māori are the first people of the land. Māori and Pākehā are equal partners in the Treaty of Waitangi.

What does biculturalism look like in support?

In the health and disability sector, the bicultural partnership means that Māori and non-Māori both have the right to achieve equality in health and wellbeing outcomes (wellness). This means that everyone should have access to the health and wellbeing services that meet their needs.

In your role as a support worker, biculturalism means that:

- you understand why we have biculturalism.
- you provide the same level of support to Māori and non-Māori people.
- you know the basics of Māori tikanga (cultural practices) and use them throughout your work.
Culturally safe support

It is important that you provide culturally safe support to any person you are working with. This means that:

- you work to understand the person’s culture.
- you help support their cultural practices.
- you don’t do things that will offend them culturally.

Culturally safe support is important for every person you work with and their individual cultures.

Māori tikanga

Māori tikanga means Māori cultural practices. Knowing the basics of Māori tikanga and using them in your work will help you provide culturally safe support. Some important elements of Māori tikanga that you should know are described below.

Pronunciation

Pronunciation means how you say something.

Many people find Māori language, or te reo Māori, much easier than English to learn to pronounce correctly. All the letters in Māori always sound the same!

In your role

Pronouncing Māori names and place names correctly shows respect for Māori people and their culture.

If you are working with a person with a Māori name, make sure you learn how to pronounce it correctly.

Greetings

Using Māori greetings in the workplace can make it more welcoming for Māori people and people who value Māori culture.

Some Māori greetings you can use are:

- Kia ora. This means “hi”.
- Mōrena. This means “good morning”.
- Tēnā koe. This means “hello” and you use this greeting when you speak to one person.
- Tēnā kōrua. This means “hello” and you use this greeting when you speak to two people.
- Tēnā koutou. This means “hello” and you use this greeting when you speak to three or more people – a group.

Media

The Tōku Reo videos are a fun way to learn some basic Māori language and pronunciation.

Go to the website: tokureo.maori.nz
Tapu and noa

There is an important difference between tapu and noa in Māori culture.

**Tapu** means sacred, important or restricted. Examples of things that are tapu are:
- a person’s head.
- a person who has died.
- the whare tupuna on a marae (the meeting house).

**Noa** means ordinary, everyday or unrestricted. Examples of things that are noa are:
- food.
- water.
- the whare kai on a marae (the kitchen or dining room).
- most other things – anything that isn’t tapu.

Tapu and noa things must be kept separate.
In your role

You can respect tapu and noa by:

• asking permission before you touch a person’s head.
• not touching a person’s head unless it’s necessary.
• keeping food out of a room where a dead body is lying.

Pōwhiri

A pōwhiri is a traditional Māori welcome. It usually involves whaikōrero (speeches) and waiata (songs, usually Māori songs).

In your role

It might be the custom in your workplace to welcome new colleagues or residents with a pōwhiri.

It’s important that you pay attention and show respect during a pōwhiri.
Mana

Mana is a traditional Māori idea. There is no single English word that means mana, but it can be translated as a combination of:

- honour.
- dignity.
- power.
- authority.
- control.

In your role

Mana is very important. Recognising, valuing and supporting a person’s mana will help build a good relationship with the person you support and also with their family and whānau.

You can respect a person’s mana by:

- remembering their dignity.
- supporting them to stay independent and in control of their lives as much as possible.

Manaakitanga

Manaaki or manaakitanga means being kind, generous and a good host to visitors.

In your role

You can support manaakitanga in your workplace by:

- providing support and training for new colleagues.
- treating the people you support with respect and making them feel valued.
- treating all people fairly and equally.
You have finished!

Great work – you’ve finished this learning guide.
Now you can:

- understand how your culture affects the support you give.
- communicate well with people from different cultures.
- talk about biculturalism.