

Educational support materials for ABIM's *Care for the Underserved* Module

Module #4

One approach to improving outcomes in racially diverse patient populations is cultural competency training for healthcare providers. A large systematic review of 34 different studies demonstrated that cultural competency training holds substantial promise as a strategy for improving provider knowledge, attitudes, and skills.¹ In addition, the systematic review showed that the three studies assessing patient perceptions all showed a positive effect on patient satisfaction if providers had received cultural competency training. In addition, cultural competence training appears to improve provider satisfaction and interest in caring for diverse patient population.^{2,3,4}

Consistent with the systematic review, a recent large study that combined cultural competency training with race-stratified performance reports for 124 primary care physicians caring for 7,557 African American and white patients improved clinician awareness of racial disparities. However, African American patients randomized to the provider cultural competence intervention did not differ from those seeing providers who did not get the intervention in any of the outcomes evaluated – diabetes control, low-density lipoprotein cholesterol control, or blood pressure control.⁵

While the above studies highlight the benefits of cultural competency training to improve clinician behaviors and patient satisfaction, more studies are needed that focus on the role of cultural competency training for healthcare providers to improve patient outcomes. How cultural competency training relates to health care costs is unknown.

For further information, see the following:

1. Beach MC, Price EG, Gary TL, Robinson KA, Gozu A, Palacio A, et al. Cultural competence: a systematic review of health care provider educational interventions. *Med Care* 2005 Apr;43(4):356-73. Margaret
2. Green AR, Betancourt JR, Park ER, Greer JA, Donahue EJ, Weissman JS. Providing culturally competent care: residents in HRSA Title VII funded residency programs feel better prepared. *Acad Med.* 2008 Nov;83(11):1071-9.
3. Lopez L, Vranceanu AM, Cohen AP, Betancourt J, Weissman JS. Personal characteristics associated with resident physicians' self perceptions of preparedness to deliver cross-cultural care. *J Gen Intern Med.* 2008 Dec;23(12):1953-8.

This educational support material was created by the Society of General Internal Medicine's Disparities Task Force. For more information, visit www.sgim.org/qo/disparities

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4. Greer JA, Park ER, Green AR, Betancourt JR, Weissman JS. Primary care resident perceived preparedness to deliver cross-cultural care: an examination of training and specialty differences. *J Gen Intern Med.* 2007 Aug;22(8):1107-13.
5. Sequist TD, Fitzmaurice GM, Marshall R, Shaykevich S, Marston A, Safran DG, et al. Cultural competency training and performance reports to improve diabetes care for black patients: a cluster randomized, controlled trial. *Ann Intern Med* 2010 Jan 5;152(1):40-6.