

## Component 2: The Culture of Health Care

### 2.1 Unit 1: Introduction to the Culture of Health Care

#### 2.1.a: What do we mean by "The Culture of Health Care?"

Component 2/Unit 1/a

Health IT Workforce Curriculum  
Version 1.0/Fall 2010

1

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Defining Terms: Health

- Health, Illness, Disease
- Health as Artifact – something produced through culture [Bateson]
- Acute Illness: temporary interruption of health
  - Goal: restore complete health
  - examples: common cold, simple fracture
- Chronic illness: stable disability or symptoms
  - Goals: minimize symptoms, maximize function
  - examples: diabetes, asthma, back pain

Component 2/Unit 1

Health IT Workforce Curriculum  
Version 1.0/Fall 2010

2

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Defining Terms: Health Care

- Health a product of broad social and environmental factors, not just health care
  - Food, sanitation, housing
- Health care: actions principally and explicitly directed at maintaining or restoring health
  - Actions by patient, family, etc. (70-90%)
  - Actions by health care system
- Health Care "System" – collection of structures and actions directed delivering health care

Component 2/Unit 1

Health IT Workforce Curriculum  
Version 1.0/Fall 2010

3

---

---

---

---

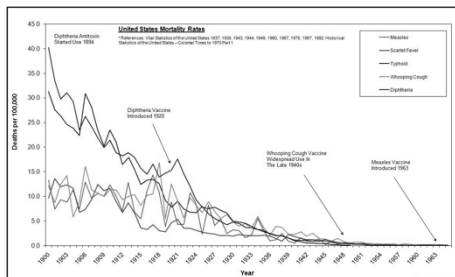
---

---

---

---

### Infectious Disease Deaths Controlled With Broad Social Improvements: Food, Housing, Sanitation



Component 2/Unit 1 Health IT Workforce Curriculum Version 1.0/Fall 2010 4

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

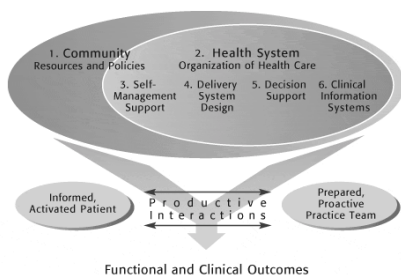
---

---

---

---

### Chronic Care Model Coordinates Community Resources with Health System to Enable Interaction Between Team and Patient



Component 2/Unit 1 Health IT Workforce Curriculum Version 1.0/Fall 2010 5

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Defining Terms: Culture

“Culture refers to integrated patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups.”

(US HHS Office of Minority Health)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Defining Terms: Culture

“A collective expression for all behavior patterns acquired and socially transmitted through symbols. Culture includes customs, traditions, and language.”

(National Library of Medicine MeSH)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Definitions: Culture of Health Care

- Patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of the health care system.
- Behavior patterns in the health care system acquired and socially transmitted, including customs, traditions, and language.

Component 2/Unit 1

Health IT Workforce Curriculum  
Version 1.0/Fall 2010

8

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### The language, behaviors, traditions, customs we observe in the health care system



Component 2/Unit 1

Health IT Workforce Curriculum  
Version 1.0/Fall 2010

9

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Culture and Health Care**  
**Main Themes in Current Literature**

1. Patient diversity: caring for people from diverse backgrounds: national, ethnic, racial, religious
2. Workplace diversity: working with people from diverse backgrounds: national, ethnic, religious
3. Organizations and culture: safety culture, organizational culture, measuring culture
4. Health professional culture: nurses and physicians, medical and surgical, traditional and alternative

Component 2/Unit 1      Health IT Workforce Curriculum  
Version 1.0/Fall 2010      10

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Culture of Patients**

- Impact of patient's culture: inequities in care
- Language, Concepts, Models of Illness
- Cultural Competence, culturally sensitive care
- Specific cultures and our health care system
  - Geographic: SE Asian, African-American
  - Religious: Hmong, Islam
  - Language: Spanish, Telugu,
  - Ethnic: Romany
  - Special Groups: deaf culture, street culture, adolescent culture

Component 2/Unit 1      Health IT Workforce Curriculum  
Version 1.0/Fall 2010      11

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Cultural Competence**

- Awareness and respect for cultural differences
- Issue specific not culture specific avoid stereotypes
- Approach every person as an individual
- Examples
  - Traditional beliefs re: transfusion, vaccines
  - Modesty issues in physical examination
- Application to HIT workforce
  - Assumptions built into HIT
  - Stereotypes about HIT interest or proficiency of health professionals.

Component 2/Unit 1      Health IT Workforce Curriculum  
Version 1.0/Fall 2010      12

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Culture of Healthcare Workforce

- Cultural diversity in workgroups, e.g. within a nursing unit
- Physician gender, race, ethnicity
- International Medical Graduates
- Impact or role of health professional culture on patient care
- “Just Culture”

Component 2/Unit 1 Health IT Workforce Curriculum  
Version 1.0/Fall 2010 13

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Just Culture

<p><b>Blame Culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organizational rigidity</li> <li>• emphasis on compliance with existing practices</li> <li>• Unintentionally evolves from             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– rigid, rule oriented</li> <li>– focus on individual blame for system failure</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Fear of punishment</li> <li>• Risk avoidance</li> <li>• Distrust</li> <li>• Silence the predominant response to error, near misses</li> </ul>	<p><b>Just Culture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organizational learning culture</li> <li>• members believe they can question existing practices, etc.</li> <li>• management openness to worker input</li> <li>• overall commitment to quality</li> <li>• uninhibited reporting of problems</li> <li>• extensive information sharing about problems</li> <li>• organizational response to f/u <b>eg. staff training, etc.</b></li> </ul>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Component 2/Unit 1 Health IT Workforce Curriculum  
Version 1.0/Fall 2010 14

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Organizational Culture

- Desirable properties in organizations
  - Culture of Innovation
  - Culture of health (employee wellness)
  - Culture of privacy
  - Culture of cost effective care
- Safety Culture
  - organizational correlates of safety
- Measurement of Culture
- Culture change

Component 2/Unit 1 Health IT Workforce Curriculum  
Version 1.0/Fall 2010 15

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Features of Safety Culture

- Safety culture is a concept defined at the group level or higher, which refers to the shared values among all the group or organization members.
- Safety culture is concerned with formal safety issues in an organization, and closely related to, but not restricted to, the management and supervisory systems.
- Safety culture emphasizes the contribution from everyone at every level of an organization.
- The safety culture of an organization has an impact on its members' behavior at work.
- Safety culture is usually reflected in the contingency between reward systems and safety performance.
- Safety culture is reflected in an organization's willingness to develop and learn from errors, incidents, and accidents.
- Safety culture is relatively enduring, stable and resistant to change.

Component 2/Unit 1

Health IT Workforce Curriculum  
Version 1.0/Fall 2010

16

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## What Works? A Climate of Safety

A system. Many elements, working together:

1. Management Commitment
2. Safety Practices and Behaviors
3. Safety Knowledge and Training
4. Safety Communication
5. Safety Equipment and Supplies

Survey of 2500 healthcare workers, in 17 hospitals

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Health Professional Culture

- Western biomedicine compared to alternatives
  - Allopathic Medicine, Osteopathic Medicine
  - Complementary and alternative medicine
    - Chinese medicine and acupuncture traditions
    - Naturopathic and homeopathic
- Nursing culture, physician culture
  - nursing as a holistic, caring profession
  - physicians as disease focused, benign paternalism, autonomy,
- Surgery, Medicine, ICU, OR, ER cultures

Component 2/Unit 1

Health IT Workforce Curriculum  
Version 1.0/Fall 2010

18

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Other Professional Cultures in Health Care Settings

- Management, business culture
  - Customers
- IT culture
  - Users
- Librarian
  - Patrons
- Counselors
  - Clients
- Doctors
  - Patients

Component 2/Unit 1 Health IT Workforce Curriculum Version 1.0/Fall 2010 19

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Observations

- Most literature is about 'other' cultures
  - the culture you don't notice is your own
- Many resources about culture, cultures on web
- What is acculturation?
  - US person in another country; immigrant in US
  - IT professional in health system; health professional in IT

Component 2/Unit 1 Health IT Workforce Curriculum Version 1.0/Fall 2010 20

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Practical Take Home Points

- 'Culture' has many meanings that are relevant to health care and health IT
- Health care takes place in a complex mix of cultures: professional, organizational, etc.
- Culture is not apparent from within – taken for granted
- We work more effectively when we are aware of the differences – cultural competence applied to health/IT/ as well as to management/patients
- One job of informatics professionals is to bridge these cultures and translate across boundaries

Component 2/Unit 1 Health IT Workforce Curriculum Version 1.0/Fall 2010 21

---

---

---

---

---

---

---