

DQ DIGEST TENNCARE

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In Your Clinical Corner...

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN DENTAL CARE

Many families, especially those in Medicaid and CHIP programs, face multiple barriers to receiving dental care. They simultaneously have a low income, are members of a racial or ethnic minority and lack a dental home.

Some dentists are unprepared to provide care to patients of diverse cultures. Each culture has unique values, beliefs, languages, and unwritten rules that guide member behavior. Dentists who recommend treatment without regard to their patients' beliefs experience lower patient compliance with their recommendation and as a result, inferior outcomes. Communicating in a language and with cultural values that patients understand is essential to keeping patients satisfied and healthy.

Understanding a different culture

In this context, we are referring to culture as thoughts,

Ongoing Covid-19 Response

DentaQuest remains dedicated to supporting all health professionals who deliver care for our communities. While information on COVID-19 will continue evolve, we are committed to crisis support and deliver on our mission: **to improve the oral health of all.**

The DentaQuest Partnership is constantly providing free webinars that will discuss critical topics being faced during the current national situation regarding COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

DentaQuest is ensuring everyone has access to resources in this challenging time (via the link below).

[Stay up-to-date on our announcements and free webinars »](#)

In this context, we are referring to culture as thoughts, style of communication, languages, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of a given population. Everyone belongs to multiple cultural groups and accepts cultural elements from one or more of these groups.

Here are a few examples of areas that frequently arise when working across cultures:

- **Respect** – Respect is a core element in all cultures; however, it differs dramatically across cultures. For example, people greet each other differently. Americans are taught to look a person directly in the eye, and they feel insulted when someone avoids eye contact. Whereas the Japanese could find such direct eye contact insulting.
- **Health beliefs** – Patients from other cultures have unique expectations, experiences, values, and beliefs (referred to as health beliefs) regarding dental care and oral health. Since health beliefs rarely come up in discussion, many people assume they are shared by everyone. A dentist who treats “everyone the same” may unwittingly violate a patient’s health beliefs and find the treatment plan ignored and the patient dissatisfied.
- **Patient’s level of knowledge of U.S. dental care** – Patients from other countries may have a limited understanding of mainstream American dental care. Dentists need to help patients understand the benefits and purpose of American dental care.

Patient/clinician relationship –

Patients may anticipate a difficult relationship with their dentist depending on their past experiences. Past dental experience can create an atmosphere of mistrust.

What can I do to ensure I have a culturally sensitive dental practice?

Here are a few ways that you can positively impact the experience of your diverse patient population.

- **Welcoming** – In many Latin American, Asian, and Native American cultures, family members and friends accompany patients to the dentist. One or more of these family members may be involved in clinical decision making. Welcoming the whole family - however the patient defines family - will help everyone feel more at ease.
- **Offering a tour of the facility** – Many patients may not understand the roles of the dentist, dental hygienist, dental assistant, and reception staff. They vary from office to office. A dental assistant might also serve as receptionist and interpreter in some offices, while a health center may have multiple receptionists and professional interpreters.
- **Taking a culturally effective history** – This involves obtaining information that may affect treatment recommendations and doing so without being a burden to the provider or the patient. The questionnaire, which can be found on the provider web portal, is designed to allow patients to provide cultural information at the same time as completing the dentist’s standard registration/history form.

Learn more about providing culturally sensitive care:

US Department of Health and Human Services: <https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/>

Cultural Competence Health Practitioner Assessment from the National Center for Cultural Competence Georgetown University <http://nccc.georgetown.edu/features/CCHPA.html>

Self-Assessment for Cultural Competence from the American Speech and Hearing Association <http://www.asha.org/practice/multicultural/self.htm>

Excerpts taken from the Massachusetts Dental Society’s Cultural Competency Report for MDS Members. To read the full report visit: http://www.massdental.org/uploadedFiles/For_the_Public/Cultural%20Competency%20Handout.pdf

ORM Update

The following CDT Codes will be ADDED to the TennCare ORM, effective January 1, 2021:

D2928	prefabricated porcelain/ceramic crown – permanent tooth	\$124.31
D7961	buccal / labial frenectomy (frenulectomy)	\$206.84
D7962	lingual frenectomy (frenulectomy)	\$206.84

The following CDT Codes will be DELETED from the TennCare ORM, effective January 1, 2021:

D7960	frenulectomy	\$206.84
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Information Box:

Providers/Offices should not be using **D9420-hospital call**. This is not a covered benefit. Providers should only indicate place of service in box 38 on the ADA claims form in addition to where the services will be rendered in box 35.

Contact Information

Provider Service

- TennCare: 855.418.1623
-Press 1 Automated Eligibility (via IVR system)
- Press 2 Benefits, Eligibility and History
- Press 3 Claims and Payment Options
- Credentialing Hotline: 800.233.1468

Department Emails

- Electronic Claims Setup and Questions – ddusa_providerrelations@dentaquest.com
- Claims Payment Questions – denclaims@dentaquest.com
- Eligibility or Benefit Questions – Dentelig.benefits@dentaquest.com

Utilization Review

- 888.294.9650

Provider Web Questions

- 888.560.8135
- www.dentaquest.com

Corporate

- Main Corporate: 800.417.7140