

Ways in which individuals can achieve cultural competence and serve their communities better

- In addition to asking patients about their clinical history and symptoms, **ask them about their religious, cultural, social and familial background and general lifestyle** as this may impact the treatment decisions they make.
- **If appropriate** don't be afraid to **talk about your own background** and upbringing if you feel this will **put patients at ease** and **help them open up**.

Be transparent about treatment options, give the patient time to digest information and ask questions.

- **Encourage patients to talk about their treatment options with relatives.** If appropriate encourage them to accompany the patient to appointments for support. Involve relatives attending appointments in conversations but **be mindful they are also a source of influence** on the patient and their choices may not necessarily be in agreement with yours.
- **It may be helpful to ask a colleague with the same background as the patient to attend an appointment** to help convey information in a culturally sensitive manner. Please ask the **patient's permission before** you do this.
- **Provide information in an appropriate language or format**, please remember not everyone can read and write so providing written information may not be appropriate.
- **Attend any cultural awareness training provided by your organisation** and acquaint yourself with any **resources/repositories of information** your organisation may have developed to support you.