

# Using the 4 C's to Facilitate Patient Conversations and Improve Understanding

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**CAPSULE**

Effective, patient-centered care is highly dependent on a foundation of understanding and respect for a patient's health care beliefs.<sup>1,2</sup> Open communication about each patient's personal values, goals, and challenges is crucial for building trust, addressing misconceptions, and promoting adherence.

Table 1 outlines the 4 C's of Culture framework for assessing the patient's perception of their problem.<sup>3</sup> It is important for clinicians to remain non-judgmental during the cultural assessment process and exhibit a sincere interest that encourages patients to share their personal beliefs.<sup>2,3</sup>



**Table 1. Quick Cultural Assessment Checklist: The 4 C's of Culture**

4 C's of Culture	Sample Questions
What do you <b>CALL</b> the problem?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What do you think is wrong?</li> </ul>
What do you think <b>CAUSED</b> the problem?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What might be the source (or cause) of the problem?</li> <li>Why do you think it started when it did?</li> </ul>
How do you <b>COPE</b> with your condition?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What have you done to try to make it better?</li> <li>How have you been coping with your illness?</li> <li>What effect has it had on your life/daily routine?</li> </ul>
What are your <b>CONCERNS</b> regarding the problem?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How serious do you think this is?</li> <li>How does it interfere with your life or your ability to function?</li> </ul>

Adapted from *The 4 C's of Culture*<sup>3</sup>

For more information, access Cardi-OH's expanded resource on **health care beliefs**.

## References

1. AHRQ Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit: Tool 10 – Consider Culture. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD. <https://www.ahrq.gov/health-literacy/improve/precautions/tool10.html> Accessed March 6, 2024.
2. United States Department of Health and Human Services. Think Cultural Health. <https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/resources>. Accessed March 6, 2024.
3. Slavin S, Kuo A, Galanti G. The 4 C's of Culture. <https://ggalanti.org/the-4cs-of-culture/>. Accessed March 6, 2024.

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