4.4: Transcultural Healthcare

It is vital that health services are also appropriate for the target cultures to the extent that they are compatible with contemporary medical understanding. People’s beliefs and practices are part of the culture of the society in which they live. Cultural characteristics should be seen as a dynamic factor of health and disease. In order to be able to provide better health care, it is necessary to at least understand how the group receiving care perceives and responds to disease and health, and what cultural factors lie behind their behaviors [7, 13, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20].

Unless health care initiatives are based on cultural values, it will be impossible to achieve the goal and the care provided will be incomplete and fail [2, 21].

For this reason, healthcare providers should try to understand the cultural structure of a society. Health workers must collect cultural data to understand the attitudes of towards coping with illness, health promotion and protection [2, 21].

Cultural differences and health beliefs have been recognized for many years as prior knowledge in practice. Despite that, cultural health care is unfortunately not part of a routine or common health practice. Knowing cultural beliefs related to health can enable us to build a framework for data collection in health care [2, 22].

Today, health policies focus primarily on the prevention of health-related inequalities and discrimination, especially ethnic characteristics. In order for the societies to regulate health care that will meet the needs of different groups in terms of culture, all health team members must be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills [23, 24].