

Good Practice Guidelines Making Assumptions

- As a manager, try to understand and accommodate any specific needs that your staff might have – such as specialized food, time off for religious holidays or an unwillingness to treat members of the opposite gender.
- As a colleague, try to support your co-workers and appreciate that they may work in a different way to you.
- As a member of the healthcare team and an ethnic group, think hard how your background is affecting how you see illness, healthcare and, especially, patients.
- As a patient and a member of an ethnic group, let your healthcare team know if they are not fulfilling your needs and be prepared to discuss your care with them.
- Dress, skin color, language and other factors can cause medical staff to make assumptions about a patient – even without recognizing that they have done so. Be aware of your own preconceptions.
- If in any doubt about anything, always ask. It is better to risk offense in the pursuit of understanding than to offend through ignorance.
- Talk to the patient, their friends and family, community leaders or the local hospital chaplain for more information and advice.

Source: Ethnicity Online - Copyright (C) 2003 University of Cambridge, School of Clinical Medicine - All Rights Reserved