

**Title:** Healthcare Providers' Level of Confidence and Ability to Provide Culturally Competent Nutrition Education to Diverse Populations in the Carolinas

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**Objective:** The purpose of this study was to evaluate healthcare providers' confidence, knowledge, and barriers to providing culturally competent nutrition education to diverse populations in the Carolinas.

**Design, Methods and Instruments:** A 20-item survey was developed to assess healthcare providers' ability to provide nutrition education to patients of varying backgrounds and cultures. Survey items focused on access to language interpretation, frequency of cultural training/continuing education, and use of accommodational nutrition education materials for diverse populations. The survey was electronically distributed to community organizations and healthcare facilities throughout the Carolinas.

**Results:** Seventy-two participants met the inclusion criteria of providing nutrition education. Sixty-five percent of participants had interpreters available at their worksite. Over half (51.43%) of providers reported being somewhat confident in their knowledge of health disparities among diverse populations. When asked about accommodational education materials, 65.15% of participants did not analyze nutrition education materials for readability, and 61.54% reported that they do not present nutrition information differently to immigrant and refugee populations. Among the participants, 19% have never attended training on cultural competence while 66.18% attended training 1-2 times per year.

**Conclusions:** This study demonstrates that there are still gaps in providing culturally competent nutrition care in the Carolinas. More emphasis should be placed on the importance of cultural competence in nutrition education and the available resources to increase confidence among healthcare providers working with diverse populations. Future research should identify strategies to make nutrition-focused cultural competency training more accessible to healthcare providers.

**Conflict of interest/Funding Disclosure:** None