

## **Brief list of questions for Cultural Interview**

### **Summary of personal background and medical history**

Taken from the dossier before the interview.

1. Biography (personal and social details)
2. History of current health complaints
3. Previous treatment
4. Psychiatric disorders in the family
5. Course of the illness

### **Introduction**

Aim: To explain and set the tone for the interview

"We see people from a whole range of countries in our clinic. Every country and every culture has its own traditions and customs. You only really notice this if you leave your own country and go to live abroad. The people look different, they speak a different language, behave and express themselves differently. You sometimes feel as if no-one understands you. Have you ever felt like this?

(If so: let them give a brief explanation. "We shall be discussing this later on in the interview". If not: "perhaps you'll understand what I mean if we return to this later on.")

One of the reasons for communication problems is a lack of knowledge about cultural differences. As we want to help as much as we can, it is important that we know something about your country or your culture. In other words, what your customs are, how people treat each other in your culture, what it means to be ill..., etc. So I shall now ask you a few questions about your culture and your symptoms."

## **A. Cultural identity of the individual**

### ***Language***

1. Which language did you speak when you were growing up? Did you also speak another language?
2. Which language do you speak at home now?  
[If applicable: with your wife? With your children? With your friends?]
3. How well do you think you speak Dutch?  
[If this is unclear: how would you grade yourself on a scale of 1 to 10?]
4. Can you explain exactly what you mean in Dutch?

### ***Ethnicity and culture***

5. Do you belong to a group in your country that is different from other (ethnic) groups?  
Are your parents from the same group?
6. What makes this group different from other groups? Which customs, opinions, position in society?
7. How important is belonging to this group to you?
8. Are you still in contact with people from this group or your culture?  
If so: how important to you is this?  
If not: would you like to?
9. What do you feel is the most important thing about your culture?  
[For example: eating customs, respect, family, holidays, honour]
10. How do you think your culture differs from the Dutch customs and opinions?  
Is that important to you?
11. Do you think you fit in well in the Netherlands? Do you talk to Dutch people? Do you have any Dutch friends or acquaintances?

## **B. Cultural explanation for the illness**

### ***Symptoms in a cultural perspective***

12. You have told me about your symptoms: what do you call them in your language?
13. How would people in your native country explain your symptoms?
14. How would people deal with these symptoms?
15. Do you think that your family and those around you understand you?
16. Do you think that the people treating you understand you?
17. Which part of the treatment you have received so far do you think has helped best?

### **C. Cultural factors in the psychosocial environment**

#### ***Family***

18. How would you describe your relationship with your partner? Do you talk to him / her about your illness?
19. Is there anyone in your social circle or family who listens to you and gives you advice?
20. Who did you turn to for help previously?

#### ***Faith and religion***

21. Are you religious?
22. Do you pray? Do you go to church / the mosque / the synagogue?
23. Is it different from in your native country?
24. Does your faith give you strength? Was that always the case?

### **D. Cultural elements affecting the relationship between the patient and the person in charge of the case**

25. Is it important to you that the person providing help is a man or a woman, or shares your faith?
26. What was your job?
27. Do you accept everything that the doctor who is treating you says, or do you ask questions?

### **E. Observations**

What was the patient's mood before, during and after the cultural interview? How did he/she respond to the questions? Which questions evoked the most emotions? Which moments during the interview were significant?

### **F. Summary for the treatment plan consultation**