AETC-NMC
AIDS Education and Training Center
National Multicultural Center
HOWARD UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

Case Study Adapted from Addressing HIV Care and African American Model

Kenny, a medical student, was filling out the medical record form for Mrs. Jones, a woman who appeared to be of African descent but who had an unfamiliar accent. Mrs. Jones will find out that she is HIV-positive when she meets with the physician in another 10 minutes.

One question on the form was "Ethnic origin?" Kenny asked, "What is your ethnic origin?" Mrs. Jones said, "Oh dear, we've always been Americans." Kenny marked, "None" on the medical record form.

Another question on the form was about cultural practices. "Do you have any special cultural practices?" Kenny asked. "Of course not," Mrs. Jones replied. "We are just like everyone else around here." Kenny again recorded "None" on the medical record form for the cultural practice question.

Discussion Questions

1. What would you have asked to obtain Mrs. Jones' ethnic origin?

2. If Mrs. Jones did not know her specific ethnic origin, what could be recorded?

3. How would you ask questions to find out about Mrs. Jones' cultural practices?

4. Discuss other Cultural Competence issues that may impact retention into care and treatment.