

## **Aspects describing learning in the clinical environment of culturally and linguistically diverse healthcare**

Mikkonen Kristina, PhD candidate, MHSc, RN, University of Oulu

Elo Satu, Adjunct Professor, PhD, RN, University of Oulu

Kääriäinen, Maria Professor, PhD, RN, University of Oulu

**Background:** Internationalization of higher education introduced into healthcare education has brought many opportunities for encountering cultural diversity and for using a variety of teaching methods. The greatest challenges relating to cultural and linguistically diverse healthcare education were found in learning in the clinical environment. Learning in clinical environment of healthcare students involves up to 50% of the whole professional higher education in Europe, which is an essential part of the education.

**Objective:** The purpose of this systematic review was to synthesize qualitative studies describing aspects relating to learning in the clinical environment of culturally and linguistically diverse healthcare students.

**Methods:** The search strategy was conducted according to the guidelines of the Centre of Reviews and Dissemination. The original studies were collected from seven databases from year 2000 to 2014. The data was synthesized according to Thomas and Harden (2008) three stage thematic analysis. The data was analyzed on the basis of the experiences of students and their mentors. The total number of 24 analytical themes emerged from 17 original studies chosen for review.

**Results:** The main findings indicate that cultural and linguistically diverse healthcare students' adaptation process into clinical placements is a stressful experience in the beginning. The implementation process into clinical learning environment requires additional support for the students and their mentors with pedagogically well planned orientation. The hindrances in the learning of students included cultural discrimination, social isolation, limited learning opportunities because of distrust by clinical staff and other disadvantages because of language difficulties. Mentors enhanced students own role in learning and language management.

**Conclusion:** Clinical staff attitudes influence students' clinical learning experiences and their outcomes. Additional education in culture and language for students and clinical staff is seen essential to improve the clinical learning experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse healthcare students.