

## Abstract for CU Research Forum

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### TITLE:

Utilizing Case Vignettes to Survey Patient Perceptions and Values Regarding Physician Cultural Competency

### ABSTRACT (3000 characters):

Physician multicultural competency is a growing topic of interest in the study of medical education and physician-patient dynamics. Previous research has indicated a link between physician multiculturalism, patient outcomes, patient satisfaction, and willingness to engage in medical care. However, there is a lack of research into how patient perceptions of physicians' cultural competence informs decisions about seeking care. Using a quantitative survey, this study aimed to characterize how perceptions of cultural competence may inform a patient's choice of a prospective primary care physician. Study participants (N=114) viewed two vignettes, one depicting a doctor with a background in multiculturalism and intersectionality, and one with a background in clinical research. Participants then evaluated each physician's character traits and selected which of the two physicians they would prefer to receive care from before answering subsequent questions regarding personal values and importance placed on physician cultural competency. Statistical analyses revealed a preference for the culturally competent provider, where 67.5% of respondents chose the culturally competent provider ( $p=.0002$ ). Furthermore, participants who chose the culturally competent provider placed higher importance on physician cultural competency compared to those who chose the doctor with a background in clinical research ( $p=0.0007$ ). When stratified by demographic factors including age, gender, ethnicity, education, and employment, there were no statistically significant differences, except with education, wherein higher levels of education indicated higher tendency towards choosing the culturally competent provider ( $p=0.002$ ). Additionally, results showed statistically significant differences in composite cultural competency importance scores between employment ( $p=0.01$ ) and education status ( $p=0.02$ ) demographics. Finally, a statistically significant difference in physician character traits was noted, wherein the culturally competent provider was deemed more compassionate ( $p < 0.001$ ), empathetic ( $p < 0.001$ ) and humble ( $p = 0.03$ ) compared to the doctor with a background in clinical research. Taken together, these results indicate participants' preference for culturally competent providers and that this preference correlates with the intrinsic value participants place on cultural competency in physicians.

Furthermore, this demonstrates that participants perceive culturally competent doctors as having higher levels of desirable character traits relative to non-culturally competent doctors. This preliminary study shows the importance of physicians engaging in culturally competency training and professional development due to participants preferred values of engaging with physicians exhibiting higher levels of multicultural competency.