

## **COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT AND THE DANGER OF A "CULTURE OF NO CULTURE"**

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### **Overview**

The teaching and testing of "cultural competence" has become a priority for medical educators. Yet anthropologist Janelle Taylor cautions that we sometimes forget that medicine itself is a culture and end up constructing "cultural" patients as "exotic others". This workshop explores ideas about what culture is and how our understanding leads to various challenges for assessment.

### **Workshop elements**

What is cultural competence? First we will explore some current formulations of cultural competence and common approaches to its teaching and assessment in medical schools and residencies.

What about the culture of medicine? Next we will turn the lens of anthropology on medicine itself. What is the culture of medicine? Is it universal? How is it constructed? Works ranging from Becker's early sociological study "Boys in White" to Taylor's recent paper "The Culture of No Culture" will be introduced.

How do we think about teaching and assessing cultural competence in a diverse world? The final part of the workshop will involve interactive activities that illustrate the challenges of assessing the construct of cultural competence.

### **Target audience**

Health professional educators and students with an interest in issues of culture and the socialising role of education.