

## Symposium

📅 Fri. Sep 26, 2025 1:10 PM - 2:40 PM JST | Fri. Sep 26, 2025 4:10 AM - 5:40 AM UTC 🏛️ Session Room 2  
(Main Hall B)

**[Symposium 37] Cultural Formulation Interview Symposium 1**

Moderator: G. Eric Jarvis (McGill University)

[SY-37]

**Cultural Formulation Interview Symposium 1**

Lukas Claus<sup>4</sup>, Laurence J. Kirmayer<sup>3</sup>, Roberto Lewis-Fernández<sup>1,2</sup>, Hans Rohlof<sup>5</sup> (1.Columbia University(United States of America), 2.New York State Psychiatric Institute(United States of America), 3.McGill University(Canada), 4.University of Antwerp(Belgium), 5.Private Practice Rohlof(Netherlands))

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[SY-37-01]

**Use of the CFI with asylum seekers: learnings from their experience**

\*Lukas Claus<sup>2,1</sup>, Seline van den Ameele<sup>2,3</sup>, Bernard Sabbe<sup>2</sup> (1.Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Brussels, Belgium)(Belgium), 2.CAPRI (Collaborative Antwerp Psychiatric Research Institute), Universiteit Antwerpen (Antwerp, Belgium)(Belgium), 3.Department of Psychiatry and Medical Psychology, Brugmann University Hospital, Brussels, Belgium(Belgium))

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[SY-37-02]

**Integrating Social Determinants of Health in Cultural Formulation**

\*Laurence J Kirmayer (McGill University(Canada))

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[SY-37-03]

**A sampling of recent and ongoing research on the Cultural Formulation Interview**

\*Roberto Lewis-Fernandez (Columbia/NYS Psychiatric Institute(United States of America))

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[SY-37-04]

**Cultural Formulation Interview: history and present**

\*Hans Rohlof (Private Practice Rohlof(Netherlands))

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## [Symposium 37] Cultural Formulation Interview Symposium 1

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### [SY-37] Cultural Formulation Interview Symposium 1

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Mental health assessment and treatment planning need to be adapted to the cultural and social diversity of people accessing care. If cultural factors are not properly assessed, patients may be misdiagnosed or the severity of their condition may be misjudged. The lack of clinicians' cultural sensitivity can create communication barriers leading to the breakdown of patients' trust in the therapeutic process and hesitancy to communicate important information. Likewise, valid treatment planning and implementation requires information on patients' expectation of care and barriers to service use. The introduction of the Cultural Formulation Interview (CFI) in DSM-5 in 2013 was a breakthrough for improving cultural sensitivity in mental health care. The CFI is an interview protocol that helps obtain culture-relevant information and improve rapport in psychiatric assessment based on a person-centered, non-stereotyping approach. This symposium will present up-to-date research on the uses of the CFI, including the performance of several of its components; its use with specific subgroups, e.g., asylum seekers; strategies to complement the CFI with systematic evaluation of social determinants of health; and ways to incorporate the information obtained from the CFI into an ecologically valid cultural formulation, diagnostic assessment, and treatment plan. Contributors will discuss research questions, innovative clinical applications, and challenges in training and implementation.

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## [Symposium 37] Cultural Formulation Interview Symposium 1

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### [SY-37-01] Use of the CFI with asylum seekers: learnings from their experience

\*Lukas Claus<sup>2,1</sup>, Seline van den Ameele<sup>2,3</sup>, Bernard Sabbe<sup>2</sup> (1.Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Brussels, Belgium)(Belgium), 2.CAPRI (Collaborative Antwerp Psychiatric Research Institute), Universiteit Antwerpen (Antwerp, Belgium)(Belgium), 3.Department of Psychiatry and Medical Psychology, Brugmann University Hospital, Brussels, Belgium(Belgium))

Keywords : Cultural Formulation Interview、Asylum Seekers、Mental Health

Asylum seekers experience significant mental health difficulties, yet they often face barriers to appropriate psychiatric assessment and care. Given their diverse backgrounds, a comprehensive evaluation that considers cultural and contextual factors is essential. The Cultural Formulation Interview (CFI) has been proposed to enhance cultural sensitivity in mental health care, but its application in asylum seekers remains largely unexplored. Therefore, we conducted a study on the use of the CFI in asylum seekers, focusing on different aspects: its contribution to illness narratives, its impact on clinical outcomes, and the asylum seekers' experience of the instrument.

First, this presentation will explore the nuanced experiences of asylum seekers with the CFI. On the one hand, it will illustrate, with concrete examples, the advantages of the CFI approach, such as promoting meaningful encounters, generating new insights, and strengthening the patient-clinician relationship. On the other hand, it will outline the barriers encountered during its administration, including the complexity and number of questions, uncertainty regarding its benefits, and emotional distress linked to recalling past traumatic experiences. Additionally, the notable impact of the CFI on diagnostic categorization will be addressed.

The presentation will further elaborate on the CFI's potential to provide asylum seekers the space to articulate their suffering, and for the clinician to create a safe framework to do so, enabling an authentic encounter. Concrete attention points for CFI administration with asylum seekers will be discussed. Finally, the presentation will translate the learnings into perspectives for future research and potential adaptations of the CFI.

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## [Symposium 37] Cultural Formulation Interview Symposium 1

Moderator: G. Eric Jarvis (McGill University)

### [SY-37-02] Integrating Social Determinants of Health in Cultural Formulation

\*Laurence J Kirmayer (McGill University(Canada))

Keywords : Cultural formulation、 Social determinants of mental health、 Structural competency、 Ecosystems view

There is growing recognition of the importance of social determinants of mental health in clinical assessment and treatment planning. The DSM-5 Cultural Formulation Interview (CFI) was designed to collect information on sociocultural context and experience from the perspective of patients and their entourage. The CFI was motivated by work in medical anthropology on the importance of cultural variations in illness meaning. Recent work in structural competence has emphasized the need for more systematic attention to social structural factors in mental health services. This presentation will review methods for eliciting information on social structural determinants of health in clinical assessment. There is evidence that the CFI can obtain some information on social determinants but it does not canvas these in a systematic way. The impact of structural determinants depends in part on cultural meaning and there is a need to examine how culture and social structure interact. This presentation will discuss frameworks and strategies to augment or supplement the CFI to collect information on social determinants of mental health and illustrate the use of a cultural-ecosocial approach to integrative case formulation.

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Moderator: G. Eric Jarvis (McGill University)

### [SY-37-03] A sampling of recent and ongoing research on the Cultural Formulation Interview

\*Roberto Lewis-Fernandez (Columbia/NYS Psychiatric Institute(United States of America))

Keywords : cultural assessment、 social determinants of health、 individual cultural identity、 person-centered evaluation

Without a person-center assessment of the relevant cultural aspects of the person's identity, illness representations, treatment expectations, and social-structural impacts on vulnerabilities and resources, mental health practice often lacks the information to provide effective treatment. The Cultural Formulation Interview (CFI) is a protocol that guides clinicians in eliciting information from people seeking health care about their and their families/friends' views of their situation, cultural identity, past experiences of help seeking, and expectations for future care. It can be used as a culturally sensitive method to engage care recipients in mental health services and orient a more comprehensive evaluation and treatment plan. This presentation will review some recently published studies on the CFI that address multiple person-centered uses of this tool: how it elicits more granular descriptions of the person's cultural identity than demographically organized self-report checklists; how it can obtain information on the person's social-structural stressors, supports, and determinants of health; and how it guides conversations on the person's level of trust in the clinical relationship in the early stages of treatment. Other studies planned or currently underway will also be described: on the impact of the CFI vs. usual care in reducing the misdiagnosis of schizophrenia and enhancing treatment engagement and response in individuals being evaluated for a psychotic disorder in a community mental health clinic; on its role orienting the evaluation and psychotherapy of US veterans with PTSD; and on the value of CFI use in helping neurology clinicians understand the impact of culture on someone's clinical presentation, diagnosis, and treatment.

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### [SY-37-04] Cultural Formulation Interview: history and present

\*Hans Rohlof (Private Practice Rohlof(Netherlands))

Keywords : Culture、 Assessment、 Cultural Formulation Interview

The Cultural Formulation Interview (CFI) was constructed about 20 years ago. Precursors of this interview, on the base of the Outline for Cultural Formulation (OCF) were already used in different clinical programs in the Netherlands and other countries. Clinical experience showed that patients liked these interviews about their mental state, and the context in which it developed. Although quite long, these older interviews are still used, among others in forensic reports. Till now, the CFI has been used in many clinical situations, and was studied on its effect in diagnostics and treatment. Especially, in transcultural situations like the assessment of refugees and migrants, it has shown its value. Research has also shown that in specific clinical situations there is a place for the CFI, as for instance in patients with eating disorders or bipolar illness. More research is underway. The further development of the CFI is promising.