

## Case Study: Religious Diversity Among Nursing Staff

*Authored by Victoria Talbot*

A newly graduated nurse reported for her first shift at a community hospital shortly before the winter holidays. Judaism was an important part of the nurse's identity, and she was very involved in her synagogue. During her shift, the nurse overheard her colleagues talking about the Christmas party and they asked her if she was going. When she told them she didn't celebrate Christmas, they said "well you can dress in blue and white for Hanukkah." They also shared that there would be vegetarian food at the party for those like her with "religious rules about food."

As she was leaving the room, she heard one of the other nurses say, "I am glad she is here now, she can be assigned all of those cranky old Jewish moms. They are so demanding." The new nurse was upset by the comments and privately shared her concern with the unit nurse manager.

### Reflection:

- How would you respond to this nurse if you were the nurse manager?
- What steps would you take to promote cultural understanding on the unit?
- How might discriminatory behavior among staff negatively impact patient care?
- How can this hospital better promote respect for religious diversity in the workplace?

### Additional Resources:

Berrett, B., & Spiegelman, P. (2013). *Patients come second: Leading change by changing the way you lead*. New York: Greenleaf Book Group.

Cadge, W. (2012). *Paging God: Religion in the halls of medicine*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Foronda, C., Baptiste, D. L., Reinholdt, M. M., & Ousman, K. (2016). Cultural humility: A concept analysis. *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, 27(3), 210-217.

Koenig, H. G., Hover, M., Bearon, L. B., & Travis III, J. L. (1991). Religious perspectives of doctors, nurses, patients, and families. *Journal of pastoral care*, 45(3), 254-267.