

PROVIDING TRAUMA- & VIOLENCE-INFORMED CARE (TVIC): CORE COMPETENCIES, LEARNING OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES

Overview:

Providing care in ways that are trauma- and violence-informed¹ means emphasizing the integration of the four TVIC Principles to prioritize safety, agency, strength and choice, while also encouraging self-care and organizational support for providers.

Learning Objectives & Outcomes:

Trauma-and violence-informed care means that the responsibility for the physical, cultural² and emotional safety of the person accessing care or services rests with the organizations and professionals providing care. This can be thought of as a universal approach to ensuring that individuals do not suffer further harm when seeking care and are helped in ways that are based on their strengths and capacities and offer meaningful choice and collaboration. This is differentiated from trauma-specific services, where interventions are provided to those identified with trauma symptoms, and expands on trauma-informed practice, where the focus is on individual-level traumatic experiences and responses. TVIC includes explicit attention to structural and systematic violence, with a focus on people's life conditions as well as their trauma and violence experiences.

Knowledge: Those who provide trauma-and violence informed safe care know:

1. The prevalence of different types of trauma and violence and the physiological, psychological and social impacts of these on physical and emotional well-being, including the cumulative effects of violence and trauma over the lifespan.
2. How social and structural factors, including health and social care practices and policies, focus ongoing harm against certain people and groups and can contribute to their ongoing experiences of violence and trauma, and their effects.
3. That common actions by providers, and/or environmental conditions, may be re-traumatizing for people who have experienced various forms of structural or interpersonal violence and trauma, and their effects.
4. That an environment that is safe for the most traumatized person will be safe for all people and care providers, regardless of their histories.

Skills: Those who provide trauma-and-violence informed and culturally safe care can:

1. Create emotionally, culturally, and physically safe care spaces and contribute to trauma and violence-informed policies that support doing so.
2. Respect the person's experience by using strengths-based and collaborative approaches to discuss realistic and appropriate strategies to support the person's active involvement in their own well-being.
3. Perform self-care practices, and access organizational supports, to promote personal well-being in the face of their own trauma and violence histories, and of exposure to others' experiences.

¹ See: https://gtvincubator.uwo.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2019/10/TVIC_Backgrounder_Fall2019.pdf

² <https://equiphealthcare.ca/modules/> - Cultural Safety & Humility Module (requires free registration)

4. Advocate for policies and practices that support safety and well-being within and beyond their organizations.

Attitudes: Those who practice in a trauma-and-violence informed, culturally safe way and are aware of the impact of trauma and violence on people's health and well-being, demonstrate:

1. A respectful, non-stigmatizing and non-judgmental attitude towards all people.
2. Compassion and positive regard for people while promoting safe decisions and behaviours.
3. The ability to examine, with humility, their own role in the dynamics and impact of structural violence and stigma.
4. A commitment to structural competency, including continuous learning, teaching, and advocacy.

Core Competencies:

Health and social service providers who provide trauma-and-violence informed care can:

- i. Demonstrate structural competence, understanding the influence of social and system-level factors (including policies, economic structures, and social hierarchies) on individuals' experiences.
- ii. Provide emotionally, physically and culturally safe, competent and high-quality care.
- iii. Describe the core elements of trauma-and-violence informed care.
- iv. Maintain and enhance practices and policies that promote safety, including their own well-being.
- v. Demonstrate a non-judgmental, anti-discriminatory and non-stigmatizing attitude as a fundamental aspect of their professional roles.