



# Global Awareness in Health Care



A dark blue world map serves as the background. On the left side, there is a vertical strip of colorful icons representing various global landmarks and travel-related items, including the Colosseum, the Taj Mahal, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, and various architectural structures. A white airplane icon is flying over the map. The title text is overlaid on the right side of the map.

# Global Awareness Travel Journal



## Travel Journal



Dr. Asha Behari



### "Cultural Bias"

Occurs when you judge how others do things based on your own cultural standards, beliefs, and traditions. Unfortunately, many people working in health care lack awareness of the differences in health care practices from one culture or country to the next.





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**Introduction**

**Asha's Blog**

Read & learn about cultural awareness

**World Tour**

See how health care works in five major countries

**Cultural Competency Challenge**

Test your knowledge

**Summary**

In order to earn completion for this course, you must view all of the lessons shown here.





### My Health Care Travel Journey | Asha Behari, MD

Click the first article to begin!



*Global Awareness in  
Health Care Practices:  
Understanding Culture  
& Culture Bias*



*Strategies for  
Cross-Cultural  
Communications*



*Working Collaboratively  
Across Cultures*



Click **Next** to navigate through this article. You must visit **ALL** pages and answer the **Think & React** question(s) at the end of the article to earn completion.



### Global Awareness in Health Care Practices: Understanding Culture & Culture Bias

*Culture* is the shared beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, customs, and achievements of a particular group. Each political, economic, and social system develops its own set of cultural standards. Not surprisingly, cultural standards will be reflected in a country's health care practices. The result is wide variation among health care systems around the world: No single set of standards fits all cultures, though each is "normal" for the local population and customs.

*Cultural bias* occurs when you judge how others do things based on your own cultural standards, beliefs, and traditions. Unfortunately, many people working in health care lack awareness of the differences in health care practices from one culture or country to the next. I was certainly unaware - after all, as a U.S.-based doctor, why should I even worry about health care elsewhere?

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### Think & React Question 1

Consider one of the examples of health care practices that I described in my article. Compare the practice to what is typical for your country or culture. In the space provided below, enter the differences that surprised you most.

When you are finished, click **Submit**.

type your text here

Submit



# Cigna. Global Awareness in Health Care



## Travel Journal

### Health Care World Tour

#### Explore

Click each highlighted country in turn to explore its cultural health care context. You'll earn a passport stamp for each country that you visit!

You must visit all five countries to earn completion for this section.



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## Saudi Arabia

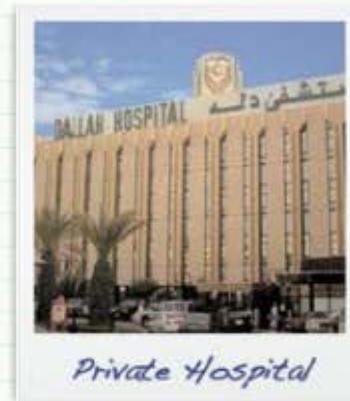
Explore all sections of this country guide using the **Next** button. For a deeper understanding of any of the key points shown below, roll your mouse over the "Learn more" links.

### Country Profile

### Insiders's View

### Asha's View

- Known officially as the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), Saudi Arabia has the largest land area of any Arab state by land mass in Western Asia, and it is the second largest country in the Arab world. The high-income economy is supported by some of the world's richest oil and gas reserves.
- The primary language is Arabic, though English is widely spoken in business circles.
- People in the KSA have access to high-quality health care by well-trained health care professionals through a tightly controlled national health care system of government and private facilities. Learn [more...](#)
- People may access a range of health care services without going through a General Practitioner, with access to affordable medications. Learn [more...](#)
- Standards of health and sanitation are very high; water, food and blood supplies are safe. Learn [more...](#)



- Major health concerns include malaria, the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus, better known as MERS, and diseases associated with a more sedentary or stressful lifestyle. Learn [more...](#)

WORLD MAP

Country Profile Page 1 of 2

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**Saudi Arabia**

Explore all sections of this country guide using the **Next** button. For a deeper understanding of any of the key points shown below, roll your mouse over the "Learn more" links.

**Country Profile**
**Insiders's View**
**Asha's View**


*Dr. Elias Nawfal, MD  
Provider Contracting Manager  
Cigna SAICO*

I manage pre-authorization and clinical review for medical care services that are requested. I also review the costs and charges for specific clinical services and procedures to make sure we are paying fairly and only for services deemed medically necessary and covered under the plan benefits. Cigna SAICO is a joint venture partnership between the Global Health Benefits business unit of Cigna and the Saudi Arabian Insurance Company (SAICO) focused on developing the portfolio of health, wellness, and insurance products targeted to regional and multinational employers and organizations across the Middle East.

You may be familiar with how the CignaLinks® global network helps Cigna manage health care with local representation around the world. With rigid regulations for health care provision and the very traditional, closed culture in the Middle East, local representation is essential. Cigna SAICO brings Cigna into a dedicated relationship with SAICO - a key player in Middle East health care - that gives us needed legal compliance with local laws, managerial control within a restrictive system, and access to local fees instead of higher international fees.



*Patient Room in a  
Public Saudi Hospital*

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[WORLD MAP](#)

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**Saudi Arabia**

Explore all sections of this country guide using the **Next** button. For a deeper understanding of any of the key points shown below, roll your mouse over the "Learn more" links.

**Country Profile**
**Insiders's View**
**Asha's View**

Health care in the KSA has improved greatly in the past 10 years with the mandatory insurance coverage law. Learn [more...](#)



*Saudi Nurses*



*Family Visiting a Patient in a Private Hospital*

The KSA faces the major ongoing challenge of providing an adequate number of beds and trained professionals to serve the very large population. Learn [more...](#)

◀ PREVIOUS

WORLD MAP

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**Saudi Arabia**

Explore all sections of this country guide using the **Next** button. For a deeper understanding of any of the key points shown below, roll your mouse over the "Learn more" links.

**Country Profile**
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**Asha's View**



My visit to Saudi Arabia was eye-opening on several levels. The strong traditional aspects of the overriding Islamic culture challenged my cultural perceptions as a woman, and as a doctor who lives in a country that celebrates diversity. I also found the contrast between very traditional and modern aspects of life surprising: The kingdom is ruled by a monarchy and very traditional religious practices; yet people live in modern cities with record-breaking skyscrapers and upscale shopping malls, and have excellent health care services.

**Keeping an Open Mind to Cultural Variation**

Islam provides the first and only word on behavior and culture in Saudi Arabia: No other religions may be publically practiced. This is quite strongly reflected in the realities of daily life. In the modern capital city of Riyadh, I saw women covered head to toe in the traditional abaya and niqāb, travelling only with male family escorts (and never driving). Religious police patrolled public areas to monitor the behavior of all residents, ready to arrest those who break Sharia, the divine law, as expressed in the Quran and Muhammad's example. I even heard of one expatriate being arrested for ignoring the new policy against smoking in public! At first it was alarming to experience such restrictions, so counter to most Westernized cultures! With careful and patient observation, I began to see slight variations within the culture: Within their compounds, women had freedom to dress and express themselves and news reports indicated that a loosening of restrictions (e.g., on driving) are looming.

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[WORLD MAP](#)

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### Evaluate

I hope my Blog and World Tour have helped you gain a more global understanding of health care.

Take my Cultural Competency Challenge to discover if you've gained a broader understanding of how culture affects communications and health care delivery and outcomes.

You can always go back and review my travel journal at any time.

Click on **Begin** to get started!

**BEGIN** ▶





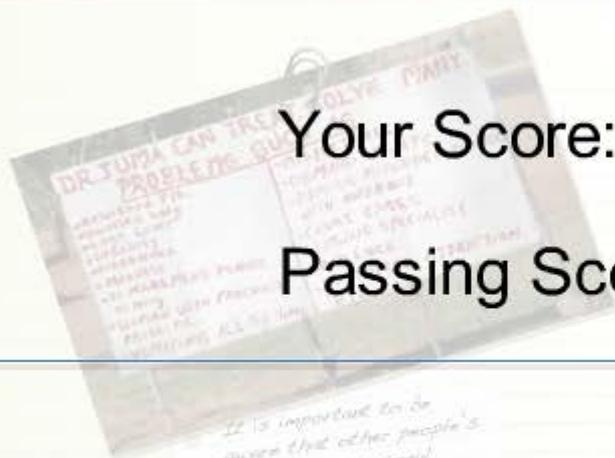
## Cultural Competency Challenge

### Challenge Question 1

Select the best answer to the question.

*Culture* is defined as:

- The language, dress, and behaviors of people in a certain country.
- The shared beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, customs, and achievements of a particular group.
- Any kind of shared behavior that defines a specific group or subgroup.
- All of the above.



Your Score:

80%

Passing Score:

80%



"Cultural Bias"

Occurs when you judge how others do things based on your own cultural standards, beliefs, and traditions. Unfortunately, many people working in health care lack awareness of the differences in health care practices from one culture or country to the next.

Result:

 Congratulations, you passed.

Click the Next button to properly complete the course.



Review Quiz

Retry Quiz

