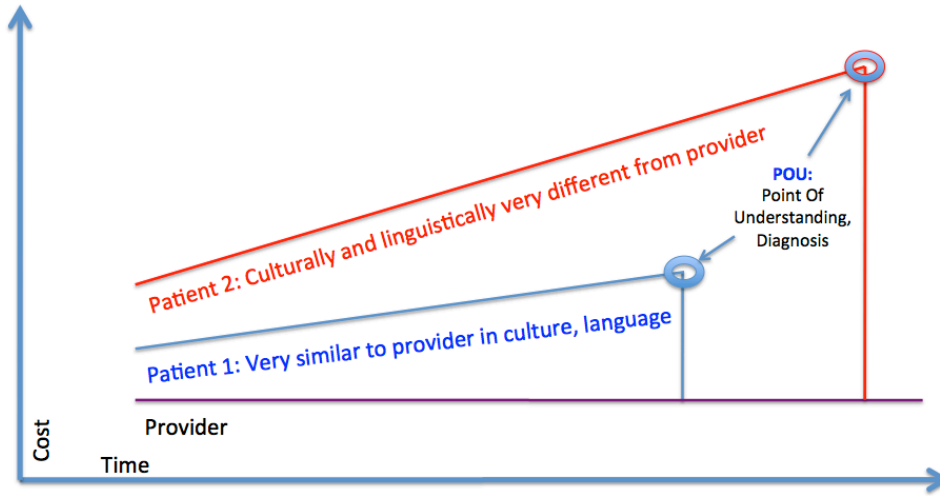


# Degrees of Divergence©

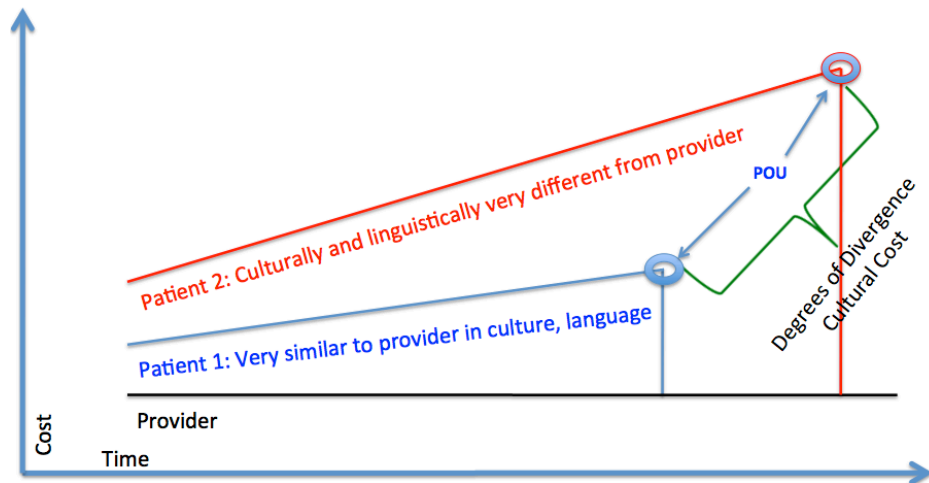
When providing care to patients from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds or, when physicians from different cultural backgrounds provide care to American patients, there is a cultural gap. The greater the cultural and linguistic differences between the provider and the patient, the longer it can take for the provider to come to a **Point Of Understanding** and diagnosis. Taking longer means there is a higher cost associated with providing the care in comparison to providers and patients that are culturally and linguistically similar.



Two patients present with the same symptoms. Patient 1 is culturally similar to the provider, so it is quicker to understand and diagnose. Patient 2 is culturally different than the provider and it takes longer to come to a point of understanding so that a diagnosis can be made.



The **Degrees of Divergence** is the amount of difference between the provider and the patient. The **Degrees of Divergence Cultural Cost** is the additional time and resources it takes to come to a point of understanding so that a diagnosis can be made when the patient and physician are culturally different.



Developing cultural competency skills allows the Degree of Divergence to be reduced, thus saving time and resources. Providers who increase their cultural competency skills are able to provide more culturally competent care which improves patient satisfaction and outcomes.



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