

We Are Here: Addressing Language & Communication Access Barriers for Youth and Families



The National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health provide guidelines to improve care quality and advance health equity by establishing a blueprint for organizations to implement culturally and linguistically appropriate services. These standards can be applied at various levels: individually, within organizations, and across communities. Here's how each level might utilize the CLAS standards:

1. Individual Actions

- **Self-Education:** Providers and staff can educate themselves on cultural competence and the specific needs of diverse populations they serve.
- **Communication:** Learn and use individual's preferred personal pronouns and names, ensuring respectful and effective communication.
- **Feedback:** Actively seek feedback from individuals regarding their cultural and language needs to improve service delivery.

2. Organizational Implementation

- **Policies and Procedures:** Develop and implement policies that promote cultural competence and the provision of services that meet the cultural and linguistic needs of patients.
- **Training:** Provide training for staff at all levels on cultural competency and the importance of language access services.
- **Language Services:** Offer and promote free, accurate, and timely language assistance services to all patients who require it.

3. Community Engagement

- **Community Partnerships:** Collaborate with community organizations to improve health literacy and access to culturally and linguistically appropriate health services.
- **Outreach:** Conduct outreach initiatives to educate communities about their rights to receive culturally and linguistically appropriate services.
- **Feedback and Adaptation:** Use community feedback to adapt services to better meet local needs.

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4. Healthcare System Integration

- **Data Collection and Use:** Collect and maintain accurate and reliable demographic data to monitor and evaluate the impact of CLAS on outcomes.
- **Quality Improvement:** Integrate cultural and linguistic competence into quality improvement initiatives and practices to enhance youth/ family satisfaction and outcomes.
- **Resource Allocation:** Ensure resources are allocated to support CLAS implementation effectively, including training, language services, and community engagement activities.

5. Policy Advocacy

- **Advocacy for Regulations:** Support and advocate for local, state, and federal policies that enforce the implementation of CLAS standards.
- **Funding:** Advocate for funding and resources to support the implementation of CLAS standards in all care settings.