


# The National CLAS Standards

2019

# What is CLAS?

- ▶ CLAS is services that are respectful of and responsive to each person's culture and communication needs.
  - ▶ CLAS helps you take into account:
    - ▶ Cultural health beliefs
    - ▶ Preferred languages
    - ▶ Health literacy levels
    - ▶ Communication needs
  - ▶ CLAS helps make your services:
    - ▶ Respectful
    - ▶ Understandable
    - ▶ Effective
    - ▶ Equitable



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- ▶ The **National CLAS Standards** are a set of 15 action steps intended to advance health equity, improve quality, and help eliminate health care disparities by providing a blueprint for individuals and health care organizations to implement culturally and language appropriate services.

# Principal Standard

- ▶ **1)** Provide effective, equitable, understandable and respectful quality care and services that are responsive to diverse cultural health beliefs and practices, preferred languages, health literacy and other communication needs.



# Governance, Leadership and Workforce

- ▶ **2)** Advance and sustain organizational governance and leadership that promotes CLAS and health equity through policy, practices and allocated resources.
- ▶ **3)** Recruit, promote and support a culturally and linguistically diverse governance, leadership and workforce that are responsive to the population in the service area.
- ▶ **4)** Educate and train governance, leadership and workforce in culturally and linguistically appropriate policies and practices on an ongoing basis.



# Communication and Language Assistance

- ▶ **5)** Offer language assistance to individuals who have limited English proficiency and/or other communication needs, at no cost to them, to facilitate timely access to all health care and services.
- ▶ **6)** Inform all individuals of the availability of language assistance services clearly and in their preferred language, verbally and in writing.
- ▶ **7)** Ensure the competence of individuals providing language assistance, recognizing that the use of untrained individuals and/or minors as interpreters should be avoided.
- ▶ **8)** Provide easy-to-understand print and multimedia materials and signage in the languages commonly used by the populations in the service area.



# Engagement, Continuous Improvement and Accountability


- ▶ **9)** Establish culturally and linguistically appropriate goals, policies and management accountability, and infuse them throughout the organizations' planning and operations.
- ▶ **10)** Conduct ongoing assessments of the organization's CLAS-related activities and integrate CLAS-related measures into assessment measurement and continuous quality improvement activities.
- ▶ **11)** Collect and maintain accurate and reliable demographic data to monitor and evaluate the impact of CLAS on health equity and outcomes and to inform service delivery.
- ▶ **12)** Conduct regular assessments of community health assets and needs and use the results to plan and implement services that respond to the cultural and linguistic diversity of populations in the service area.



# Engagement, Continuous Improvement and Accountability –Continued

- ▶ **13)** Partner with the community to design, implement and evaluate policies, practices and services to ensure cultural and linguistic appropriateness.
- ▶ **14)** Create conflict- and grievance-resolution processes that are culturally and linguistically appropriate to identify, prevent and resolve conflicts or complaints.
- ▶ **15)** Communicate the organization's progress in implementing and sustaining CLAS to all stakeholders, constituents and the general public.



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- ▶ Many Americans struggle to achieve good health because the health care and services that are available to them do not adequately address their needs. As our nation becomes increasingly diverse, improving cultural and linguistic competency across public health and our health care system can be one of our most powerful levers for advancing health equity.

- ▶ J. Nadine Garcia, MD, MSCE Former Deputy Assistant Secretary for Minority Health