Purpose & Overview

The National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health and Health Care (the National CLAS Standards) are intended to advance health equity, improve quality, and help eliminate health care disparities by providing a blueprint for individuals and health and health care organizations to implement culturally and linguistically appropriate services. Adoption of these Standards will help advance better health and health care in the United States.

[https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/](https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/)

Cultural and Linguistic Competence and Disparities: The Application of the National Standards on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health and Health Care to Systems of Care

Participants will:
1. Summarize the purpose for each theme of the National CLAS Standards.
2. Describe the relevance of the National CLAS Standards in behavioral health services and supports.
3. Describe key approaches, strategies, and lessons learned from implementing the National CLAS Standards in the Colorado Trauma Informed System of Care.
4. Identify strategies to implement the National CLAS Standards in their respective settings.

National CLAS Standards Themes

**Standard 1**
- Principal Standard

**Standards 2-4**
- Governance, Leadership & Workforce

**Standards 5-8**
- Communication & Language

**Standards 9-15**
- Engagement, Continuous Improvement & Accountability

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National Standards on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health and Health Care (CLAS)

**PRINCIPLE 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

Standards 2-4:

- Emphasize that the promotion, adoption, and implementation of CLAS is the responsibility of the organization or system.
- Require the investment in, support of, and that professional development is provided for all staff within the organization or system.

Data source: https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/

Governance, Leadership and Workforce

Standard 2: Advance and sustain organizational governance and leadership that promotes CLAS and health equity through policy, practices, and allocated resources.

Standard 3: Recruit, promote, and support a culturally and linguistically diverse governance, leadership, and workforce that are responsive to the population in the service area.

Standard 4: Educate and train governance leadership, and workforce in culturally and linguistically appropriate policies and practices on an ongoing basis.

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Communication and Language Assistance

Standard 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 health care and services.

Standard 6: Inform all individuals of the availability of language assistance services clearly and in their preferred language, verbally and in writing.

Standard 7: Ensure the competence of individuals providing language assistance, recognizing that the use of untrained individuals and/or minors as interpreters should be avoided.

Standard 8: Provide easy-to-understand print and multimedia materials and signage in the languages commonly used by the populations in the service area.

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Communication and Language Assistance

Standards 5-8:

- Emphasize that care and services should address all communication preferences and needs of patients, clients, and populations including:
  - Sign language
  - Braille
  - Oral interpretation
  - Written translation

- Should focus attention on literacy and health literacy preferences and needs (both in English and the language of origin of populations) should be addressed

Data source: https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/

WATCH FOR SIGNS ALONG THE ROAD!!

Detour
Stop Sign
U-Turn
Proceed with Caution
Hidden Entrance
Work Zone
Divided Highway
New Traffic Pattern
Hazardous Driving Conditions
Watch for Pedestrians & Cyclists
Slow Speed
Toll Ahead

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Engagement, Continuous Improvement, and Accountability

Standards 9-15:
Focus on the support necessary to facilitate the adoption, implementation, and maintenance of CLAS
- organizational
- infrastructure
- policies

The responsibility of all organizational staff (contractors, vendors, volunteers) to uphold the values of the National CLAS Standards

Data source: https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/

Engagement, Continuous Improvement, and Accountability

Standard 13: Partner with the community to design, implement, and evaluate policies, practices, and services to ensure cultural and linguistic appropriateness.

Standard 14: Create conflict and grievance resolution processes that are culturally and linguistically appropriate to identify, prevent, and resolve conflicts and complaints.

Standard 15: Communicate the organization’s progress in implementing and sustaining CLAS to all stakeholders, constituents, and the general public.

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