A DEFINITION OF CULTURAL COMPETENCE

The National Center for Cultural Competence embraces a conceptual framework and model for achieving cultural competence adapted from the work of Cross et al., (1889). The NCCC uses this framework and model to underpin all of its activities. Cultural competence requires that organizations:

- have a defined set of values and principles, and demonstrate behaviors, attitudes, policies, and structures that enable them to work effectively cross-culturally;
- have the capacity to (1) value diversity, (2) conduct self-assessment, (3) manage the dynamics of difference, (4) acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge, and (5) adapt to the diversity and cultural contexts of communities they serve; and
- incorporate the above into all aspects of policymaking, administration, practice, and service delivery and systematically involve consumers, key stakeholders and communities.

Cultural competence is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period of time. Individuals, organizations, and systems are at various levels of awareness, knowledge and skills along the cultural competence continuum.


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