

Understanding Cultural Competency in Health Care

CMDP promotes the delivery of services in a manner that is culturally competent to all members, including those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds.



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DEFINING CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Cultural Competency within the health care system is defined as the ability to respect and appreciate the values, beliefs, and practices of all individuals; including those who are culturally different than oneself and to perceive such individuals through their own cultural lens rather than that of oneself.

- Culture refers to the patterns of human behavior that include the thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values and the institutions of racial ethnic, religious or social groups.
- Competence is the capacity to function effectively as an individual or organization within the content of the cultural beliefs, behaviors and needs presented by people and their communities.
- Culture Competence is an awareness and appreciation of the customs, values and beliefs (culture) and the ability to incorporate them into the assessment, treatment and interaction with any individual within the context of their current circumstances.

PATIENTS' BELIEFS AND VALUES

Health care providers should care for CMDP members without making judgments about the importance of one set of values over another. The goal is to not let your own cultural values and beliefs interfere with providing quality health care.

The difference between a provider who is culturally competent and one who is culturally aware is in the service that is provided. A culturally competent provider is aware of the cultural differences and even more aware of the individual and his or personal needs.

COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE ASSISTANCE

A language barrier can be a big problem for patients, caregivers and health care providers. The following strategies should be implemented to meet the needs of languages spoken and demographic characteristics of your service area.

- Inform all individuals of the availability of language assistance services clearly.
- Ensure the competence of individuals providing language assistance.
- Provide easy-to-understand multimedia materials and signage in the languages commonly used by the populations in your service area.

CMDP offers interpretation services for members, caregivers and health care providers, including sign language for hearing impairment, through the CMDP Language Line. If you believe a CMDP member or caregiver may be in need of translation services, please contact CMDP Member Services for assistance. Advance notice is preferred, however, CMDP will make every effort possible to arrange services regardless of the notification timeframe.

HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**
Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services Standards (CLAS)
<https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas/standards>
844.899.8057
- **US Department of Health and Human Services**
Office of Minority Health (OMH)
<https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/>
240.453.2882
- **U.S. Department of the Interior**
Indian Affairs
<https://www.bia.gov/>
202.208.3710
- **National Alliance for Hispanic Health**
<https://www.healthyamericas.org/>
866.783.2645
- **National Urban League**
<http://nul.iamempowered.com/>
212.558.5300
- **Greater Phoenix Urban League**
<http://gphxul.org/>
602.254.5611
- **Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organization (AAPCHO)**
<http://www.aapcho.org/>
510.272.9536
- **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)**
<https://www.aap.org/en-us/Pages/Default.aspx>
847.434.4000