



HEALTH EQUITY

Governor's Interagency Council
on Health Disparities



Implementing CLAS Standards in Washington State

From September 2013 through August 2015, the Council is implementing a two year project to promote the adoption of the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS Standards) among government agencies and health/healthcare organizations.

The project aims to assist organizations meet state and federal requirements

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits recipients of federal funding from discriminating on the basis of race, color, or national origin.
- US Supreme Court decisions include discrimination against people with limited English proficiency as a form of discrimination by national origin.
- RCW 43.60.030 ensures freedom from discrimination to be a recognized and declared civil right.

Organizations participating in this project receive information, resources, training, and technical assistance on adopting CLAS policies and implementing strategies to meet the 15 CLAS Standards.

This project is supported through a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health.

About the CLAS Standards:

The enhanced National CLAS Standards are intended to advance health equity, improve quality, and help eliminate health care disparities by establishing a blueprint for individuals as well as health and health care organizations to implement culturally and linguistically appropriate services. The enhanced Standards are a comprehensive series of guidelines that inform, guide, and facilitate practices related to culturally and linguistically appropriate health services.

Additional resources are available on the Office of Minority Health's Think Cultural Health website: www.ThinkCulturalHealth.hhs.gov.

For more information, please contact:

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About the Interagency Council on Health Disparities

The Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities was established by the Legislature in 2006. The Council is charged with the following tasks:

Action Plan: Create a state action plan for eliminating health disparities by race/ethnicity and gender in Washington state. Provide regular updates to the Governor and Legislature

Advisory committees: Establish advisory committees to assist the Council with its recommendations.

Language Assistance: Issue recommendations for improving the availability of culturally appropriate health literature and interpretive services within public and private health-related agencies.

Communication: Promote communication among state agencies and between state agencies and communities of color, the public sector and the private sector to address health disparities.

Information gathering: Work to understand how the actions of state government ameliorate or contribute to health disparities.

Health impact reviews: Collaborate with the Board in the development of health impact reviews requested by the Governor or the Legislature.

Current Priorities:

- **Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS).** The Council is working to promote adoption of CLAS policies and procedures among state agencies, health-related organizations and community-based organizations.
- **State System (focus on language access).** The Council has convened a workgroup to identify strategies to ensure people with limited English proficiency have meaningful access to state services and information.
- **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).** The Council will monitor efforts in the state to address ACEs and provide input when appropriate.
- **Childhood Obesity.** The Council will convene an advisory committee to develop recommendations to reduce disparities in obesity experienced by children of color and other vulnerable youth. The Council will align its efforts with other state initiatives.
- **Inequities in Birth Outcomes.** The Council will convene an advisory committee to develop recommendations to promote equitable birth outcomes in ways that contribute to Results Washington indicators to reduce the percentage of African American and American Indian/Alaska Native babies born with low birth weight.