

Looking Ahead: The Future and the National CLAS Standards

Since the inception of the original National CLAS Standards in 2000, the fields of cultural and linguistic competency have proven to be as dynamic as the diversity of our communities and the fields of health and health care themselves. Looking ahead, the ultimate goal is to ensure that the National CLAS Standards remain relevant until the next Enhancement Initiative. Following are some of the areas currently under consideration to achieve this goal.

Continued Enhancements

In recognition of this dynamic landscape, the HHS Office of Minority Health will revisit *The Blueprint* periodically to incorporate new and relevant resources as appropriate. Therefore, a Web version of *The Blueprint* will be maintained, which will reflect the more comprehensive and up-to-date resource.

In the event that a change in national policy occurs or research is published that impacts the integrity or validity of any of the Standards or content within the Standard chapters, appropriate revisions will be made and noted on the Office of Minority Health's Think Cultural Health website (www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov).

State and Federal Legislation

State Legislation: Mandating Cultural and Linguistic Competency Training

In the years since the launch of the original National CLAS Standards, a number of states have implemented legislation pertaining to culturally and linguistically appropriate services (Graves, Like, Kelly, & Hohensee, 2007; HHS OMH Think Cultural Health, 2012). For many health professionals and organizations, the original National CLAS Standards served as a driver or model for what the legislation could include.

Federal Legislation: Affordable Care Act of 2010

The Affordable Care Act of 2010 lays an important foundation for advancing health equity and improving the quality of services to diverse communities (Andrulis, Siddiqui, Purtle, & Duchon, 2010; Youdelman, 2011). There are numerous provisions in the health care law related to cultural and linguistic competency, and the enhanced National CLAS Standards serve as a resource, at all levels, in these areas.

Support and Guidance

A recurring theme throughout the public comment portion of the Enhancement Initiative was the request for additional support and guidance in the implementation and maintenance of the National CLAS Standards. *The Blueprint* represents the first component of that support and guidance. While *The*

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Blueprint provides strategies for implementation, more targeted discipline- or profession-specific strategies may be necessary. It is anticipated that as part of the ongoing discussion of these efforts, collaborations will be formed with the aim of developing discipline specific support and guidance documents. Additional supporting documents will be made available on the Think Cultural Health website (www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov).