

## HEALTH CENTER BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL: CULTURE AND LANGUAGE ACCESS

### Purpose

The purpose of this tool is to help the Board of Directors and health center leadership assess areas of strength and potential growth in supporting culturally and linguistically appropriate services at the health center.

### Framework

This assessment uses the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health and Health Care (CLAS Standards) as a framework. The CLAS Standards were developed by the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health as a blueprint for health and health care organizations to implement services that advance health equity, improve quality, and help eliminate health disparities. The CLAS Standards were first published in 2000, and revised in 2013. More information can be found at [www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov](http://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov).

### How to Complete the Self-Assessment Tool

It is recommended to read through all the self-assessment questions first, gather input, data, and supportive documents as necessary, and then work through the assessment as a group. It is suggested that the assessment be completed in sections over several weeks, or months, to allow ample time for group discussion, as different viewpoints may emerge. Another option is to divide the assessment sections to be completed by smaller groups or subcommittees of your health center board.

Documents that may be helpful to gather before completing the assessment:

- Health center operations manual
- Personnel handbook
- Board handbook
- Records of past trainings
- Past year UDS (Uniform Data System) reports
- Patient education materials

For each question, select the number that best represents how well the measure is addressed at health center:

- 1- Not addressed at my health center
  - 2- Needs improvement at my health center
  - 3- Implemented at my health center for SOME of our diverse patient populations
  - 4- Implemented across my health center for ALL diverse patient populations
- NS- Not sure

The notes section is available to mark down rationale for the selection, notes about potential improvements, data to collect, etc.

### Output

The assessment is intended to focus discussion among board members on how the health center can improve its provision of culturally and linguistically appropriate services. It is meant to create an informed starting point for discussion and priority setting. We encourage you to adapt the tool to meet your own health center's needs, and we appreciate any feedback on how to improve the usefulness of this too.

**HEALTH CENTER BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL: CULTURE AND LANGUAGE ACCESS**

- 1- Not addressed at my health center
- 2- Needs improvement at my health center
- 3- Implemented at my health center for SOME of our diverse patient populations
- 4- Implemented across my health center for ALL diverse patient populations
- NS- Not sure

<b>CLAS Standard 1: Provide Effective, Equitable, Understandable, and Respectful Quality Care and Services</b> <i>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.</i>					
<b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mission statement</li> <li>▪ Board handbook</li> <li>▪ Translated health information and education materials</li> </ul>	<b>NOTES</b>				
<b>1a. Is providing effective, equitable, understandable and respectful quality and care part of the health center's mission, values, and goals?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS
<b>CLAS Standard 2: Advance and Sustain Governance and Leadership that Promotes CLAS And Health Equity</b> <i>Advance and sustain organizational governance and leadership that promotes CLAS and health equity through policy, practice, and allocated resources.</i>					
<b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mission statement</li> <li>▪ Board handbook/by-laws</li> </ul>	<b>NOTES</b>				
<b>2a. Do individual board members demonstrate a commitment to promoting CLAS and health equity?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS
<b>2b. Does executive leadership demonstrate a commitment to promoting CLAS and health equity?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS
<b>CLAS Standard 3: Recruit, Promote, and Support a Diverse Governance, Leadership, and Workforce</b> <i>Recruit, promote, and support a culturally and linguistically diverse governance, leadership, and workforce that are responsive to the population in the service area.</i>					
<b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mission statement</li> <li>▪ Board handbook</li> <li>▪ Employee Hiring Principles</li> <li>▪ Standardized interview questions</li> <li>▪ Employment and benefits guide (i.e. bilingual premium)</li> </ul>	<b>NOTES</b>				
<b>3a. Does the organization have a policy and plan for recruiting demographically representative board members (as required in PHSA Section 330)?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS
<b>3b. Does the organization conduct board meetings in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner to maximize the recruitment and participation of culturally and linguistically diverse board members?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS
<b>3c. Does the organization have a policy and plan for recruiting culturally and linguistically diverse staff?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS
<b>3d. Does the organization have a policy and plan for promoting culturally and linguistically diverse individuals into leadership?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS

**HEALTH CENTER BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL: CULTURE AND LANGUAGE ACCESS**

- 1- Not addressed at my health center
- 2- Needs improvement at my health center
- 3- Implemented at my health center for SOME of our diverse patient populations
- 4- Implemented across my health center for ALL diverse patient populations
- NS- Not sure

<b>CLAS Standard 4: Educate and Train Governance, Leadership, and Workforce In CLAS</b> <i>Educate and train governance, leadership, and workforce in culturally and linguistically appropriate policies and practices on an ongoing basis.</i>						
<b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mission statement</li> <li>▪ Board handbook</li> <li>▪ Employee handbook</li> <li>▪ Employee training program records</li> </ul>	<b>NOTES</b>					
<b>4a. Does the organization have a policy and plan for providing all new staff and board members with initial training on culturally and linguistically appropriate services?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS	
<b>4b. Does the organization have a policy and plan for providing ongoing training for staff on culturally and linguistically appropriate services?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS	
<b>4c. Do the board and executive leadership receive ongoing training on culturally and linguistically appropriate services?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS	
<b>CLAS Standard 5: Offer Communication and Language Assistance</b> <i>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 all health care and services.</i>						
<b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mission statement</li> <li>▪ Board handbook</li> <li>▪ Language access policy and protocols</li> <li>▪ Patient Satisfaction Surveys</li> </ul>	<b>NOTES</b>					
<b>5a. Does the health center offer language access services for limited English proficient consumers at no cost to the consumer?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS	
<b>5b. Are language assistance services available in such a way that <i>all</i> limited English proficient consumers are able to receive timely access to care?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS	
<b>5c. Does the health center have a language access plan with clear policies and procedures for how limited English proficient consumers from <i>all</i> language groups will be served?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS	
<b>5d. Does the health center have appropriate referrals and linkages to other services (e.g. behavioral health services, insurance enrollment) for <i>all</i> individuals needing language assistance services?</b>	1	2	3	4	NS	

**HEALTH CENTER BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL: CULTURE AND LANGUAGE ACCESS**

- 1- Not addressed at my health center
- 2- Needs improvement at my health center
- 3- Implemented at my health center for SOME of our diverse patient populations
- 4- Implemented across my health center for ALL diverse patient populations
- NS- Not sure

<b>CLAS Standard 6: Inform Individuals of the Availability of Language Assistance</b> <i>Inform all individuals of the availability of language assistance services clearly and in their preferred language, verbally and in writing.</i>					
<b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New patient/member orientation handout</li> <li>▪ Signage available in multiple languages</li> <li>▪ Posting of patient rights</li> </ul>					<b>NOTES</b>
6a. Does the health center have a policy of providing verbal and written notice of language assistance services?	1	2	3	4	NS
<b>CLAS Standard 7: Ensure the Competence of Individuals Providing Language Assistance</b> <i>Ensure the competence of individuals providing language assistance, recognizing that the use of untrained individuals and/or minors as interpreters should be avoided.</i>					
<b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Core requirements for in-language assistance (e.g. interpreter certification)</li> <li>▪ Employee annual review or evaluations</li> <li>▪ Hiring practices (screening process for language competency)</li> </ul>					<b>NOTES</b>
7a. Does the health center have a policy and plan for ensuring only qualified individuals are used to provide language assistance?	1	2	3	4	NS
7b. Does the health center have a policy and plan for educating both staff and consumers on the role and appropriate use of interpreters?	1	2	3	4	NS
<b>CLAS Standard 8: Provide Easy-to-Understand Materials and Signage</b> <i>Provide easy-to-understand print and multimedia materials and signage in languages commonly used by the populations in the service area.</i>					
<b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health education resources (patient portal, website, or other internal sources)</li> <li>▪ Entrance and patient waiting area signage</li> </ul>					<b>NOTES</b>
8a. Does the health center have a policy and plan for providing translated materials, in various media, and posting signage in the languages commonly used by the populations in the service area?	1	2	3	4	NS
<b>CLAS Standard 9: Infuse CLAS Goals, Policies, and Management Accountability Throughout the Organization's Planning and Operations</b> <i>Establish culturally and linguistically appropriate goals, policies, and management accountability, and infuse them throughout the organization's planning and operations.</i>					
<b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategic plan</li> <li>▪ Employee manual</li> <li>▪ Customer service policies and/or procedures</li> </ul>					<b>NOTES</b>
9a. Does the health center have clearly defined and measurable goals for delivering culturally and linguistically appropriate services?	1	2	3	4	NS

**HEALTH CENTER BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL: CULTURE AND LANGUAGE ACCESS**

- 1- Not addressed at my health center
- 2- Needs improvement at my health center
- 3- Implemented at my health center for SOME of our diverse patient populations
- 4- Implemented across my health center for ALL diverse patient populations
- NS- Not sure

<p><b>9b. Are the board and executive leadership held accountable for establishing policies, procedures, and operations that support and help the health center meet these goals?</b></p>	1	2	3	4	NS	
<p><b>CLAS Standard 10: Conduct Organizational Assessments</b>  <i>Conduct ongoing assessments of the organization's CLAS-related activities and integrate CLAS-related measures into measurement and continuous quality improvement activities.</i></p>						
<p><b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Quality improvement plan</li> <li>▪ Strategic plan work plan and evaluation</li> </ul>						<p><b>NOTES</b></p>
<p><b>10a. Does the health center conduct ongoing assessments of CLAS goals and measures (as established in 9a)?</b></p>	1	2	3	4	NS	
<p><b>CLAS Standard 11: Collect and Maintain Demographic Data</b>  <i>Collect and maintain accurate and reliable demographic data to monitor and evaluate the impact of CLAS on health equity and outcomes and to inform service delivery.</i></p>						
<p><b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ EMR data collection policy and/or procedure</li> <li>▪ Quality improvement plan</li> <li>▪ UDS report</li> <li>▪ Strategic plan work plan</li> </ul>						<p><b>NOTES</b></p>
<p><b>11a. Does the health center have a policy and procedure for collecting and maintaining demographic data that, at minimum, includes (I) race and ethnicity, (II) preferred language, and (III) communication needs?</b></p>	1	2	3	4	NS	
<p><b>11b. Does the health center have a policy and plan for evaluating services and outcomes based on demographic data?</b></p>	1	2	3	4	NS	
<p><b>CLAS Standard 12: Conduct Assessments of Community Health Assets and Needs</b>  <i>Conduct regular assessments of community health assets and needs and use the results to plan and implement services that respond to the cultural and linguistic diversity of populations in the service area.</i></p>						
<p><b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community needs assessments</li> <li>▪ Executive Team meeting minutes</li> <li>▪ Board of Directors meeting minutes</li> <li>▪ Strategic plan work plan</li> </ul>						<p><b>NOTES</b></p>
<p><b>12a. Does the health center have a policy and plan for assessing community health assets and needs on an ongoing basis?</b></p>	1	2	3	4	NS	
<p><b>12b. Does the board use community health assessment results in planning and implementing services?</b></p>	1	2	3	4	NS	

**HEALTH CENTER BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL: CULTURE AND LANGUAGE ACCESS**

- 1- Not addressed at my health center
- 2- Needs improvement at my health center
- 3- Implemented at my health center for SOME of our diverse patient populations
- 4- Implemented across my health center for ALL diverse patient populations
- NS- Not sure

<b>CLAS Standard 13: Partner with the Community</b> <i>Partner with the community to design, implement, and evaluate policies, practices, and services to ensure cultural and linguistic appropriateness.</i>					
<b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Annual patient satisfaction survey</li> <li>▪ Consumer Board committee agendas</li> <li>▪ Strategic plan work plan</li> <li>▪ Patient engagement/leadership program activities</li> </ul>					<b>NOTES</b>
13a. Does the health center have processes for engaging patients in the design, implementation, and evaluation of services?	1	2	3	4	NS
13b. Does the health center work to develop and maintain partnerships with health and human service providers, local community leaders, and other stakeholders?	1	2	3	4	NS
<b>CLAS Standard 14: Create conflict and grievance resolution processes</b> <i>Create conflict and grievance resolution processes that are culturally and linguistically appropriate to identify, prevent, and resolve conflicts or complaints.</i>					
<b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Patient and staff grievance policies and procedures</li> <li>▪ Customer service policies and/or procedures</li> </ul>					<b>NOTES</b>
14a. Does the health center have a defined conflict and grievance resolution process?	1	2	3	4	NS
14b. Is the conflict and grievance resolution process accessible for LEP patients?	1	2	3	4	NS
<b>CLAS Standard 15: Communicate the Organization’s Progress in Implementing and Sustaining CLAS</b> <i>Communicate the organization’s progress in implementing and sustaining CLAS to all stakeholders, constituents, and the general public.</i>					
<b>Supporting Documents &amp; Data to Review</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CEO reports to the Board of Directors</li> <li>▪ Patient/Community communications (web, newsletters, town halls)</li> </ul>					<b>NOTES</b>
15a. Does the health center have a plan and procedure for communicating the health center’s progress in implementing and sustaining CLAS to its patients and the general community?					

To provide feedback on this tool, or to request technical assistance and training related to any of the assessment measures, please contact Jen Lee at AAPCHO, the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (jlee@aapcho.org).