

Maryland



National CLAS Standards Planning, Policies, and Collaboration

Maryland has incorporated the National CLAS Standards in several of its policies and plans. The [Maryland Health Improvement and Disparities Reduction Act of 2012](#)¹ required the Maryland Health Quality and Cost Council to form the [Cultural Competency Workgroup](#)² to develop recommendations on how the state could increase the cultural, linguistic, and health literacy competency of health providers and health care delivery organizations throughout Maryland. There were three legislative charges: develop recommendations for cultural competency standards and tiered reimbursement for medical and behavioral service settings; recommend standards for multicultural health in patient-centered medical homes and other health care settings; and propose standards for continuing education in cultural competency for health care providers. The workgroup's 2013 [report](#)³ recommends adoption of the National CLAS Standards as a component of efforts to establish multicultural health care equity and assessment programs for patient-centered medical homes and other health care settings in Maryland.

The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene developed the [Maryland Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan](#)⁴ to serve as a resource and guide for health professionals who are involved in cancer control research in Maryland. The plan provides a list of goals and objectives related to cancer care delivery, including public and professional education, service delivery, health insurance issues, research, and data collection. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene identifies implementation of the National CLAS Standards and interpretation services as a key strategy for achieving the objective of implementing health care programs designed to reduce cancer disparities among targeted populations in Maryland.

The Maryland General Assembly in 2007 enacted House Bill 524, which required the formation of the Workgroup on Cultural Competency and Workforce Development for Mental Health Professionals. The workgroup was tasked with assessing barriers to accessing appropriate and culturally competent mental health services, initiatives used by other states to facilitate licensure or certification of foreign-trained mental health professionals, mental health workforce shortages and strategies to use foreign-trained mental health professionals to alleviate shortages, and options for enhancing the cultural competency of licensed and certified mental health professionals. Among the recommendations in its [final report](#)⁵, the workgroup recommended making cultural competency training based on the National CLAS Standards a requirement for licensure and certification of professionals and interpreters.

National CLAS Standards Training and Technical Assistance

The Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities was a 2005, 2010, and 2013 recipient of funding from the State Partnership Grant Program to Improve Minority Health, which is administered by the federal Office of Minority Health. As part of the 2013 program, the Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities worked with partners to implement the [Maryland Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services \(CLAS\) Standards Training Project](#).⁶ The goal of the project was to provide training and promote adoption of the enhanced National CLAS Standards for health care delivery organizations in Maryland, including hospitals, patient-centered medical homes, federally qualified health centers, and organizations in Health Enterprise Zones. The training highlights how specific strategies within the National CLAS Standards can help health care delivery organizations achieve key quality improvement and performance objectives.

National CLAS Standards Dissemination

The Maryland Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities has disseminated the National CLAS Standards through its Cultural and Linguistic Competency and Health Literacy [webpage](#).⁶ The site provides links to the National CLAS Standards section on the federal Think Cultural Health website. The office also created [CLAS Standards for Individual Providers](#),⁷ a document that provides an overview of the enhanced National CLAS Standards as well as suggestions and resources for practitioners as they champion implementation of the National CLAS Standards in their organizations.

Endnotes

- 1 Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Minority Health and Health Disparities. (n.d.). *Maryland Health Improvement and Disparities Reduction Act of 2012 (SB 234)*. Retrieved March 8, 2016, from Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Minority Health and Health Disparities: <http://dhmh.maryland.gov/mhhd/Pages/Legislation.aspx>.
- 2 Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Minority Health and Health Disparities. (n.d.). *Cultural and Linguistic Competency Workgroup*. Retrieved March 8, 2016, from Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Minority Health and Health Disparities: <http://dhmh.maryland.gov/mhhd/Pages/Cultural-and-Linguistic-Competency-Workgroup.aspx>.
- 3 Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. (2013, December 6). *Maryland Cultural, Linguistic and Health Literacy Competency Strategies: A Policy Framework for 2013–2020*. Retrieved December 30, 2014, from Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Maryland Health Quality and Cost Council: <http://dhmh.maryland.gov/mhqcc/SiteAssets/SitePages/meetings/Cult%20Comp%20Full%20Report%2012.13.pdf>.
- 4 Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. (n.d.). *Maryland Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan: Our Call to Action 2004–2008*. Retrieved December 31, 2014, from Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/cancer/cancerplan/pdf/Cancer_Plan_full.pdf.
- 5 Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Mental Health Transformation Office. (2007). *Cultural Competency and Workforce Development for Mental Health Professionals*. Retrieved December 31, 2014, from Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene: <http://www.dhmh.maryland.gov/mha/Documents/Final%20Report%20Cultural%20Competency%20Workforce.pdf>.
- 6 Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Minority Health and Health Disparities. (n.d.). *Cultural and Linguistic Competency & Health Literacy*. Retrieved December 30, 2014, from Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Minority Health and Health Disparities: <http://dhmh.maryland.gov/mhhd/Pages/Cultural-And-Linguistic-Competency.aspx>.
- 7 Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities. (2013, August). *What Do the CLAS Standards Mean for Individual Providers?* Retrieved December 30, 2014, from Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities: http://www.mbp.state.md.us/forms/CLAS_2013.pdf.