

Minnesota



National CLAS Standards Planning, Policies, and Collaboration

In 2014, the Minnesota Department of Health delivered the [Advancing Health Equity in Minnesota: Report to the Legislature](#).¹ The purpose of the report was to provide an overview of Minnesota's health disparities and health inequities, to identify the inequitable conditions that produce health disparities, and to make recommendations to advance health equity in Minnesota. A key recommendation was to enhance knowledge of health disparities and structural inequities across all divisions and programs within the department. To achieve this goal, the department plans to train staff on the National CLAS Standards to improve the department's working climate and the way staff engage with the communities that their programs serve.

The Department of Health, Office of Rural Health and Primary Care conducted a study on [Language Access Services in Critical Access Hospitals for Patients with Limited English Proficiency in Rural Minnesota](#).² The study used a mail questionnaire to examine how well critical access hospitals were meeting the needs of patients with limited English

proficiency in rural Minnesota. Questionnaire items were based on the language access services portion of the National CLAS Standards. The survey tool addressed a wide range of issues, including staff resources devoted to language access services, the level of demand for language access services, as well as the availability, quality, and cost of such services. Based on the findings, the Department of Health provided recommendations regarding CLAS compliance issues, rural hospital staff development issues, statewide policy development, and statewide coordination of resources.

National CLAS Standards Dissemination

The Minnesota Department of Health provides a description of the National CLAS Standards and a link to the National CLAS Standards on the [Information and Resources for Providers](#)³ webpage. The Office of Rural Health and Primary Care also has disseminated the National CLAS Standards through a [Health Care Interpreters in Minnesota](#)⁴ factsheet.

Endnotes

- 1 Minnesota Department of Health. (2014, February 1). *Advancing Health Equity in Minnesota: Report to the Legislature*. Retrieved November 6, 2014, from Minnesota Department of Health: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/healthequity/legreport.htm>.
- 2 Minnesota Department of Health, Office of Rural Health and Primary Care. (2008, March). *Language Access Services in Critical Access Hospitals for Patients with Limited English Proficiency in Rural Minnesota*. Retrieved November 6, 2014, from Minnesota Department of Health: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/pubs/cah.pdf>.
- 3 Minnesota Department of Health. (n.d.). *Information and Resources for Providers*. Retrieved November 6, 2014, from Minnesota Department of Health: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/cfh/program/cyshn/provider.cfm>.
- 4 Minnesota Department of Health, Office of Rural Health and Primary Care. (2008, March). *Health Care Interpreters in Minnesota*. Retrieved November 6, 2014, from Minnesota Department of Health: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/pubs/interpreter.pdf>.