(CLAS) in Action. CLAS is a way for health and health care professionals to provide respectful and responsive services, improve quality of care, and advance health equity. To guide organizations in providing CLAS, the HHS Office of Minority Health (OMH) developed a set of 15 action steps called the National CLAS Standards. **Visit Think Cultural Health** 

The Think Cultural Health newsletter highlights Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services

**Celebrating 10 Years of the Enhanced National CLAS** 

**Standards** 



thank you for your efforts to build a healthcare system that respects and responds to everyone's unique beliefs, values, and needs. Roslyn Moore advised the enhanced National CLAS Standards' development from 2010 to 2013, and she continues to guide their use and evaluation as OMH's Deputy Director for Programs. She shared the following reflections on the Standards' past, present, and future.

"The National CLAS Standards occupy a unique space in the narrative around health equity and health promotion. The original Standards, published in 2000, were built on the understanding that culture and language matter in health and healthcare. The Standards' history now spans

over two decades of efforts to hone and elevate strategies that integrate cultural and linguistic appropriateness into healthcare services. In the face of ongoing disparities in healthcare delivery, the Standards strive to advance the healthcare industry's understanding of how culture and communication influence healthcare experiences and outcomes and how CLAS can improve quality. "In the years to come, the National CLAS Standards will continue to inform conversations around health equity and the interventions and investments necessary to deliver equitable services. As the national healthcare landscape becomes increasingly complex and fraught, and as health

inequities persist, it is more important than ever to commit to the transformational change the

My sincere gratitude to everyone who has shared or worked to implement the National CLAS

Standards can foster around quality and equity.

Standards at their organization. Together, we are advancing health equity nationwide." Join us in celebrating the National CLAS Standards' 10th anniversary! Visit Think Cultural Health today for resources to support your organization's CLAS journey.

Visit the National CLAS Standards



English-speaking countries (e.g., Canada, Australia, and the U.S.) typically employ low-context communication. In contrast, people in many Asian countries (e.g., China, Japan, and Korea) and American Indians and Alaska Natives in the U.S. tend to employ high-context communication. People in the dominant cultures of Romance-language countries (e.g., Italy, France, Brazil) often

Understanding and navigating the differences between high- and low-context communication can make your services more respectful and effective. Let's explore more, starting with a fictional

land somewhere in the middle.

body language), silences, and indirect meanings.

patients understand their diagnosis and next steps.

clinical scenario.

Irwin Professional Publishing.

**Learner Feedback** 

stomach. Expecting Dr. Clark to probe deeper, Mr. Begay is surprised when Dr. Clark instead prescribes sleep aids. Feeling unheard but not wanting to push, Mr. Begay leaves, but his problem persists. Upon follow-up with Dr. Emezi, who understands high-context communication cues, Mr. Begay's glances and hints are recognized, leading to a diagnosis of gastritis. You can use this information, not to stereotype, but to improve your awareness of different communication styles and cues to watch out for. For patients employing high-context communication, providers can pay attention to nonverbal communication cues (such as tone and

When you're aware of the cultural contexts for communication and adopt a stance of openness and curiosity, you have equipped yourself to communicate more effectively and respectfully with your patients. This helps you assess and diagnose patients more accurately, and it helps your

resources for improving cross-cultural communication skills. **Visit TCH's Resource Library** 

[1] Trompenaars, F., & Hampden-Turner, C. (2021). Riding the waves of culture: Understanding diversity in global business. (4th ed.)

[3]Ladha, T., Zubairi, M., Hunter, A., Audcent, T., & Johnstone, J. (2018). Cross-cultural communication: Tools for working with

[2] Meyer, E. (2014). The culture map: Decoding how people think, lead, and get things done across cultures. PublicAffairs.

families and children. Paediatrics & child health, 23(1), 66-69. https://doi.org/10.1093/pch/pxx126

Think Cultural Health is here to guide you in building your communication skills. Please visit our



Think Cultural Health's behavioral health e-learning program offers free continuing education credits to counselors, nurses, psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers. The program presents knowledge and skills in CLAS to help behavioral health professionals better respect and

More than 100,000 people have completed all or part of this e-learning program. What did they think of it? Over 85% of learners agreed or strongly agreed that each course is an effective tool

respond to their clients' unique cultural and communication needs.

The materials equip you to facilitate an interactive learning experience for groups of 6-12 people. The materials include slides, talking points, discussion questions, activities, handouts, and video

case studies. In this way, you can engage your colleagues in rich discussions and activities to

We invite you to check out TCH's Improving Cultural Competency for Behavioral Health Professionals to improve your CLAS skills. Once you've completed the program, consider delivering it to your colleagues! Find the small group learning materials by logging in to the e-learning program and clicking on Resources at the top of the page.

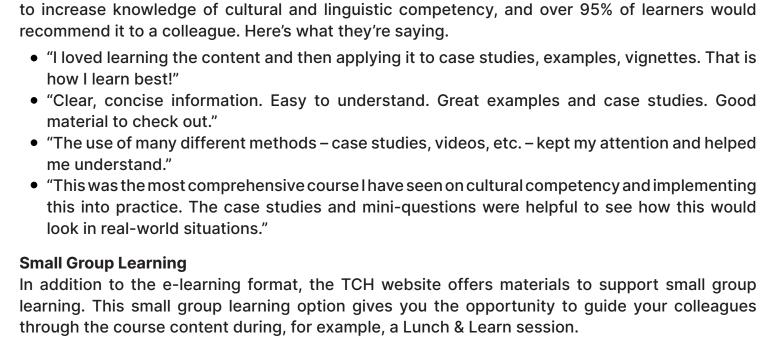
**Visit TCH's Behavioral Health Program** 

## **High and Low Context Communication in Healthcare**



Mr. Begay, from a high-context communication culture, visits Dr. Clark, who is used to lowcontext exchanges. Mr. Begay says, "Sometimes, I have trouble sleeping," while glancing at his

**Resource for Small Group Learning: TCH Behavioral Health Program Facilitator's Guide** 



## Stay Tuned! A New, Accredited E-learning Program for Nurses

apply the course content to your specific work context.

We are excited to announce the upcoming launch of an all-new e-learning program for nurses. CLAS in Nursing will be available in early 2024 with free continuing nursing education units. It will present strategies for improving self-awareness, practicing cultural competency and cultural humility, and communicating effectively. The program offers four courses of one hour each, as well as a Resource Library with additional information and tools.

Follow the Office of Minority Health on social media to be the first to know when the new program

Think Cultural Health is a website of the Office of Minority Health at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that provides health and healthcare professionals with information,

ABOUT THINK CULTURAL HEALTH

is available!

continuing education opportunities, resources, and more to learn about culturally and linguistically

appropriate services, or CLAS.