

# National Center for Cultural Competence



*“Increasing the capacity of health and mental health care programs*



*to address growing diversity and persistent health disparities and inequities.”*



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Center for Child and  
Human Development





*“The NCCC is committed to bringing people together, bridging the worlds of clinical care, community service, and health care policy, and evaluating the effectiveness of cultural competency interventions.”*

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*The mission of the National Center for Cultural Competence is to increase the capacity of health care and mental health care programs to design, implement and evaluate culturally and linguistically competent service delivery systems to address the growing diversity and persistent health disparities.*

This nation is experiencing a rapid increase in the diversity of its population as a result of immigration patterns and significant increases among racially, ethnically, culturally, and linguistically diverse groups already residing in the United States. This growing diversity has significant implications for effective provision of health, mental health, and social services, the most salient of which are summarized below.

- Cultural differences in perceptions of illness, wellness, healing, and help-seeking behaviors create the need for providers and systems to adapt care to serve diverse populations effectively.
- A range of language access needs—limited English proficiency, low literacy skills, limited health literacy, and disability related communication needs—require implementation of strategies to assure appropriate care.
- Nowhere are the divisions of race, ethnicity, and culture more sharply drawn than in the health and mental health of the people in the U.S. Despite recent progress in overall national health, there are continuing disparities in the incidence of illness and death among African Americans, Latino/Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Alaskan Natives and Pacific Islanders as compared with the U.S. population as a whole.
- There is a growing body of evidence that validates cultural and linguistic competency as effective interventions in the goal to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities and inequities in the provision of quality care.



More than ever, health and mental health care providers need the awareness, knowledge, and skills to serve patients from a broad array of cultures different from their own, and need to acknowledge and address the significant health and mental health care disparities and inequities that plague our systems in this country.

The National Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) provides national leadership and contributes to the body of knowledge on cultural and linguistic competency within systems and organizations. Major emphasis is placed on translating evidence into policy and practice for programs and personnel concerned with health and mental health care delivery, administration, education and advocacy. The NCCC is a component of the Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development (GUCCHD) and is housed within the Department of Pediatrics of the Georgetown University Medical Center.



The NCCC provides training, technical assistance, and consultation, contributes to knowledge through publications and research, creates tools and resources to support health and mental health care providers and systems, supports leaders to promote and sustain cultural and linguistic competency, and collaborates with an extensive network of private and public entities to advance the implementation of these concepts. The NCCC provides services to local, state, federal, and international governmental agencies, family advocacy and support organizations, local hospitals and health centers, healthcare systems, health plans, mental health systems, universities, quality improvement organizations, national professional associations, and foundations. In addition, the NCCC's on-line training, publications, and products are accessed by tens of thousands of individuals each year.

For over 15 years, the NCCC's efforts have had impact on numerous facets of advancing and sustaining cultural and linguistic competency including:

- **Measuring and assessing cultural and linguistic competency.** The NCCC has created self-assessment tools, instruments, and processes for organizations and individuals to identify their strengths and challenges in implementing cultural and linguistic competency. Measures address both practice and policy that are the foundation for cultural and linguistic competency. The NCCC works closely with organizations that seek its help in self-assessment and has worked with local health centers, foundations, and national organizations to tailor tools, processes, and the foci of cultural and linguistic competency self-assessment.
- **Contributing to the body of knowledge.** NCCC faculty produces literature reviews, articles, and monographs that identify and advance the



evidence about cultural and linguistic competency and analyze factors related to their successful implementation. In addition, the NCCC identifies and shares promising practices for implementing cultural and linguistic competency within the health and mental health fields.

- **Training and staff development.** The NCCC provides customized on-site training and professional development to diverse audiences, and assists other U.S. and international organizations to develop their own customized training materials and processes. In addition, the NCCC has developed a series of modules that can be used to infuse content on cultural and linguistic competency into existing courses and curricula, and has created on-line learning experiences, including continuing medical education for credit.
- **Enhancing practice.** The NCCC develops products and training approaches designed to increase the awareness,

knowledge, and skills of practitioners and organizations to deliver culturally and linguistically competent services and supports. These include on-line self-assessment instruments and tools that lead to personalized learning plans; checklists to improve practice settings; guides on planning, implementing, and evaluating cultural and linguistic competency in health, mental health, and academic settings; and web features that address practice issues, such as front desk staff.

- **Influencing academia.** NCCC publications and products are being utilized in coursework in an array of university programs for health, mental health, public health, and social services professionals. In addition, NCCC faculty provide consultation to an array of university-based programs and departments on how to address cultural and linguistic competency in teaching, research, faculty development, community outreach and engagement, and recruitment and retention.

- **Impacting policy.** The NCCC has documented since 1995 that policy is an underdeveloped area of the many cultural competence efforts within health, mental health, social services, and education. A number of NCCC efforts address the role of policy in implementing and sustaining cultural and linguistic competency within organizations and systems, including a series of policy briefs, organizational assessment tools that focus on policy, and a process for organizations to conduct a “policy audit” related to cultural and linguistic competency. The NCCC also collects examples of policies that advance and sustain cultural and linguistic competency.





*The NCCG has received numerous awards for its efforts including recognition from U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration; Minority Health Communications, Inc.; Kaiser Permanente Institute for Culturally Competent Care; and the Association of University Centers on Disabilities.*

## **PAST AND CURRENT FUNDERS:**

### **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

#### **Health Resources and Services Administration**

Maternal and Child Health Bureau

Division of Services for Children with Special Health Care Needs

Division of Research, Training and Education

Division of Child, Adolescent and Family Health, SIDS/ID Program

Bureau of Primary Health Care

Bureau of Health Professions

Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities

Office of Performance Review

#### **National Institutes of Health**

National Library of Medicine

National Institute for Child and Human Development

#### **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration**

Center for Mental Health Services, Child, Adolescent and Family Branch

#### **Environmental Protection Agency**

Indoor Environments Division, Office of Radiation and Indoor Air

#### **Foundations**

Commonwealth Foundation

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Connecticut Health Foundation

#### **Others**

Praxis Partnership/Wyeth Pharmaceuticals

Pan American Health Organization



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<http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/nccc>





## GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY



Founded in 1789, the same year the U.S. Constitution took effect, Georgetown is the nation's oldest Catholic university. What began as Georgetown College, a small gathering of 12 students and a handful of professors, has grown into a major international university that includes four undergraduate schools, respected graduate programs, a law school and a medical school. The vision of Georgetown founder John Carroll, S.J., still guides the university in its commitment to respect for diversity and open dialogue in the pursuit of truth. The Center for Child and Human Development, in the Department of Pediatrics, of Georgetown University has operated since the mid 1960's as a clinical, research, and policy Center serving children and families in Washington, DC and programs throughout the country.

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