

cultural competence in governance

This tip sheet covers one of seven domains used to measure cultural competence. Each domain includes a set of indicators of good practice.

How to embed cultural competence within your organisation's advisory bodies, policies, standards and goals.

Why is it important?

Cultural competence requires an organisation-wide approach to planning, implementing and evaluating services for clients of culturally diverse backgrounds. Meaningful consultation and participation strategies need to be embedded in the core business of the organisation. Policies and systems need to guide the actions of the board, management, staff, volunteers and students, in order to ensure a consistent and responsive approach.

Community involvement at board and advisory levels

Indicators

- Boards and advisory committees are representative of groups served by the organisation.
- Community members are provided with financial and other necessary supports for their involvement in governing and advisory committees.
- Regular reports are provided to stakeholders on cultural competence issues and activities.

Good practice example

A rehabilitation centre translates its board papers and forwards them to two of its board members at least one week prior to a board meeting. The Chair individually contacts these board members before and after each meeting to check that they are adequately informed of proceedings and have the opportunity to provide input and feedback. During board meetings, interpreters are provided for these members.

Board development

Indicator

- Board members participate in ongoing education on cultural competence.

Good practice example

A rural community health centre requires its board members to attend cultural competence training as part of their professional development program.

Policy

Indicator

Cultural competence is included in policies on:

- personnel recruitment and retention
- training and staff development
- language access and communication
- management of grievances and complaints
- community and client input and participation

Good practice example

As part of induction, all new employees receive organisational policies and protocols that provide guidance in working with clients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Reference

This tip sheet is based on Indicators of Cultural Competence in Health Care Delivery Organisations: An Organisational Cultural Competence Assessment Profile , prepared by the Lewin Group Inc. under contract with the USA Department of Health and Human Services (2002).

Other tip sheets in this series

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