DC SUPPORT LINK
CONNECTIONS TO SUPPORT AND SERVICES

CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC COMPETENCY AND PERSON-CENTERED THINKING

Cultural and Linguistic Competency (CLC) Statement

Cultural and linguistic competence requires that organizations have a clearly defined, congruent set of values and principles, and demonstrate behaviors, attitudes, policies, structures, and practices that enable them to work effectively cross-culturally. (adapted from Cross, Bazron, Dennis & Isaacs, 1989)

Person-Centered Thinking (PCT) Statement

DC Support Link encourages employees at the front door of services to practice person-centered thinking with people and their circles of support in order to establish a foundation of trust, accountability, and understanding.

Person-Centered Thinking is a philosophy and skill set that can be developed by anyone, through practice, to facilitate conversations that support and discover what is important to and for a person.

Person Centered Counseling refers to an interactive process wherein people receive guidance in making informed choices about eligibility based and non-eligibility based LTSS options. This process is directed by the person seeking supports or services, and may include others the person chooses and mandated representatives, examples are family members, friends, service coordinators or court appointed attorneys. Essential parts of person-centered counseling include:

- Discovery Conversations
- Decision Support Process
- Shared Action Planning (Developing a Person-Centered Service Plan)
- Quality Assurance/Monitoring Service Delivery
  Follow-up and Transition/Discharge Planning

Discovery Conversation is a strengths-based conversation facilitated by system process experts (e.g. front desk, intake, and outreach staff) with a focus on the person seeking LTSS as the content expert. The purpose of this conversation(s) is to learn about the person's unique values, interests, abilities, preferences, concerns, and supports needed. This leads to exploring support options and action planning. Variables within this conversation may be:

- The person seeking LTSS may choose to have a representative from his/her family, community, and/or legal representative assist (focus must remain on person)
- This conversation may occur once or over a series of interactions
- Person and Family Centered tools/templates may assist in facilitation but are not mandatory

Supported Decision Making is a step before action planning to ensure that the person seeking support and services is provided the opportunity by a long-term service and support professional to gain knowledge of resources available to them for current and future supports. Purpose is to ensure that people seeking LTSS have opportunities to make informed decisions regarding what they determine is best for service selection and delivery. Supported Decision Making is to include:

- Assistance with evaluating various resources/services available
- Identification of non-eligibility based supports such as community and private options
- Clear policies and procedures in place per organization to refrain from staff bias and remain free of conflicts of interest

Person-Centered Service Plan (PSCP) refers to an action plan required for home and community based eligibility based services that outlines goals, essential objectives, incremental action steps, timelines, responsible parties, and a plan for follow up/discharge for a person seeking LTSS. The plan is:

- Directed and developed by the person seeking LTSS and designated support team
- Reviewed and provided to person seeking LTSS—often a signature line is included as with IEPs and ISPs as proof of review with person
- Reviewed and provided to enlisted service delivery staff and natural supports (with consent from person)
- Amended or extended promptly and as determined by person supported

Integration of CLC and PCT practices in the intake processes

The goal of the DC Support Link intake process is to braid together CLC and PCT to recognize a person and their family and community's cultural and life experiences, linguistic needs, and best support for achieving the life they envision.

Benefits of Cultural and Linguistic Competency

- Engage diverse communities and disseminate information in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner
- Promote connections that are based on mutual respect and understanding of the culture, laws and customs of a population. Learn about their culture in order to be able to provide the services and supports needed
- Better understand underlying disparities in access to services for under-served populations
- Strengthen valuing diversity
- Effectively addressing the needs and preferences of culturally and linguistically diverse groups
- Develop partnerships that meaningfully involve individuals/families and key community stakeholders
- Improve a person's access to and utilization of services and supports
- Increase person/family satisfaction with services received

Benefits of Person-Centered Thinking

- Respects professional expertise of staff while keeping the person and family at the center of decision making
- Guides exploration of community-based supports—including technology!
- Universally promotes warm linkages/referrals
- Helps support rather than fix people and families seeking information or services
- Works for all people of all ages
- Promotes self-care and empathy
- Encourages a culture of learning, partnership, and accountability
- Offers tools for rights and ability-based advocacy

How PCT and CLC bring our agency partners together for a common intake process

- Strengthening partnerships with shared practices at front door of services
- Seeking understanding of support needs to make meaningful linkages
- Improving communication and trust among partners and individuals/families
- Warm and informed hand offs between agencies
- Consistent practices shared among partners
- Improved information sharing

DC SUPPORT LINK INTER-AGENCY CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND DEFINITION[1]

Cultural and linguistic competence (CLC) is a process that evolves over an extended period. The CLC conceptual framework and definition is based on knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The CLC conceptual framework and definition requires underlying structural components that are critical to both cultural competence and linguistic competence – which are policies, protocols, structures, practices, and procedures.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE:

Cultural competence is the ability of District agencies and personnel that provide support and services to:

- Deliver such services respectfully and effectively, in a manner that affirms worth, preserves dignity, and honors the preferences and choices of people of all cultures and human identities. Services are provided in accordance to the DC Human Rights Act[2], which makes discrimination illegal based on 19 protected traits for people that live, visit, or work in the District of Columbia;
- Incorporate a person's cultural values, beliefs, economic status and practices including sensitivity to the environment from which the person comes and to which the person may ultimately return in all aspects of service delivery;
- Foster positive relationships with diverse cultural groups; and
- Communicate in the person's language or mode of communication.

LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE:

Linguistic competence is the ability of District agencies and personnel that provide support and services to:

- Communicate in a manner that is easily understood by diverse groups, including but not exclusive to persons who have low literacy skills or are not literate, persons with disabilities as in accordance to the American with Disabilities Act of 19903, persons who are blind or have low vision, those who are deaf or hard of hearing, and persons who have limited and non-English proficiency as in accordance to the DC Language Access Act of 20044;
- Make materials available in the person's preferred language in multiple formats and platform;
- Convey information in plain language, in a variety of communication modalities (e.g., videos, symbols, large print), and be responsive to diverse cultural health beliefs and health literacy5; and
- Recognize that a person's preferred language reflects cultural values, traditions, and meanings and is connected with a person's world view and community.

[1] Adapted with permission from Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence: https://nccc.georgetown.edu/foundations/frameworks.html

[2] DC Office of Human Rights: https://ohr.dc.gov/protectedtraits (19 protected traits - race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family responsibilities, political affiliation, disability, matriculation, familial status, genetic information, source of income, place of residence or business, status as a victim of an intrafamily offense)