



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA NO WRONG DOOR INITIATIVE

The District envisions a coordinated “No Wrong Door” System across partner agencies, which is person/family centered and cultural and linguistic competent, that will support people in need of Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS), regardless of where they enter the service system.

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The front door experience in accessing long-term services and supports (LTSS) begins with the first encounter between agency staff and a person seeking LTSS. This issue of the newsletter focuses on the District’s NWD partnering agencies’ collaboration to reach a shared understanding and examine ways to embed cultural and linguistic competence to enhance the “front door” to accessing LTSS. The newsletter also highlights the first-ever DC Interagency Summit focused on enhancing the front door experience for District residents in need of LTSS and their families. The agencies involved are the [Department on Disability Services](#), [DC Office on Aging](#), [Department of Behavioral Health](#), [Department of Human Services](#) and the [Department of Health Care Finance](#).

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Cultural and Linguistic Competence: Collective Action and Impact



A critical part of embedding cultural and linguistic competence within a [No Wrong Door \(NWD\)](#) system involves partnerships and collective action to carry out this very important work. Through the DC NWD initiative, partner agencies formed a working group that meets monthly to learn, reflect, and apply cultural and linguistic competent practices within our NWD system. Since day one, the District's health and human services NWD agency partners (i.e., [Department on Disability Services](#), [Department of Behavioral Health](#), [Department of Human Services](#), [DC Office on Aging](#), and the [Department of Healthcare Finance](#)) coalesced around the vision to advance

and sustain cultural and linguistic competence (CLC). We began by assessing the “front door” to long-term services and supports. Additional key partners include Georgetown University's nationally-recognized [National Center for Cultural Competence](#) (NCCC). NCCC helps guide our transformation into systems with increase cultural and linguistic competence. In addition, many others have joined in this effort, including the [DC Developmental Disabilities Council](#), [DC Department of Parks and Recreation](#), [DC Language Access Program](#), [Mayor's Office of Veterans Affairs](#), [DC Interagency Council on Homelessness](#), to name a few. Together, we have formalized a shared definition for cultural and linguistic competence that reflects values, beliefs and attitudes in reaching cultural and linguistic competence. (*Refer to the article on the shared CLC definition.*) As we continue to move this work forward, the District's No Wrong Door system envisions having cultural and linguistic competence embedded in policies, structures, and practices. Partnerships and collective action will continue to be key helping guide the vision for a more culturally and linguistically competent service and support system in the District – starting at the “front door.”

For more information, please contact Vivian Guerra, NWD Program Development Specialist at vivian.guerra2@dc.gov.

A Journey to define Cultural and Linguistic Competence for a No Wrong Door System



What is cultural competence? What is linguistic competence? How do you define culture? Is being linguistically competent providing translation and interpretation services? Is culture limited to race and ethnicity? What are our shared beliefs and values in becoming more culturally and linguistically competent at the “front door” to long-term services and supports? These are a few of many questions reflected and shared amongst the District’s No Wrong Door (NWD) subcommittee on Cultural and Linguistic Competence (refer to article above). One of the first steps in diving into this work is to

recognize that cultural and linguistic competence is a developmental process that evolves over an extended period of time – and that both individuals and organizations are at various levels of awareness, knowledge, and skills along the cultural/linguistic competence continuum. With technical assistance provided from [Georgetown University’s National Center for Cultural Competence](#), the subcommittee agreed that a shared definition of cultural competence and linguistic competence was necessary on which there is consensus. Much of the foundational work of the subcommittee consisted of developing a [definition for cultural and linguistic competence](#) to be shared across agency NWD partners (visit [NWD website](#)). Now that there is consensus, the subcommittee is utilizing the shared definition to begin a review of their agency’s policies, structures, and practices, looking for opportunities to embed principles and practices of cultural and linguistic competence. The subcommittee is also currently working on developing cultural and linguistic competency reference tools to inform and support the agencies in reframing its cultural and linguistic competency work for a No Wrong Door system.

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District of Columbia Accepted in National Community of Practice on Cultural and Linguistic Competence

The District of Columbia applied for and was accepted in a [National Community of Practice \(CoP\) on Cultural and Linguistic Competence](#) (CLC). This CoP is a project of [Georgetown University’s National Center for Cultural Competence](#) (NCCC). NCCC received a five-year grant from the [Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities](#) (AIDD) to create and implement a multifaceted CLC CoP designed to (a) facilitate peer exchange, share information, provide technical assistance, and leverage resources to increase diversity and advance cultural and linguistic competence in state/territorial systems and (b) foster leadership for system transformation.

The [Department on Disability Services](#) (DDS) applied on behalf of the District. The District was one of 10 states (AZ, CA, CO, DC, IN, MI, NY, UT, VT, WI) to be selected to participate. Our DC team partners includes:

- DC Developmental Disabilities Council
- Georgetown University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)
- Disability Rights DC at University Legal Services
- DC Department of Behavioral Health
- DC Department on Disability Services (Developmental Disabilities Administration and Rehabilitation Services Administration)
- DC No Wrong Door Initiative
- Project ACTION!
- DC Department of Human Services
- DC Office on Aging
- DC Department of Human Services
- DC Department of Parks and Recreation



This initiative builds upon the various District partnerships and enhances the work of our active No Wrong Door interagency CLC subcommittee. On July 31 and August 1, the DC team participated in a two-day meeting with the nine other project states to plan cross-agency transformation activities that will lead to increased cultural and linguistic competence in the District's systems and services. The No Wrong Door staff will provide updates as our work as a Community of Practice progresses.

For more information, please contact Vivian Guerra, NWD Program Development Specialist at vivian.guerra2@dc.gov.

2017 DC Front Door Summit: Enhancing the Front Door Experience through Connections and Collaborations

The DC No Wrong Door Initiative is hosting an interagency summit designed to enhance the "Front Door" experience for District residents and their families in need of long-term services and supports (LTSS).

Intake staff, agency front desk staff, public information officers, and other District employees who are the first point of contact for residents seeking LTSS are invited to attend this event to:

- Discuss approaches to improving customer service with each other and with people in need of services

- Increase knowledge of the services and supports available from other District government agencies and community organizations
- Learn about DC Support Link (also known as No Wrong Door) and the new Resource Portal
- Provide input regarding strategies for improving the customer experience at the Front Door
- Create networks for ongoing collaboration

Participating agencies include the Department on Disability Services, the DC Office on Aging, the Department of Behavioral Health, the Department of Human Services, and the Department of Health Care Finance.

Topics and Facilitators

Cultural & Linguistic Competence: It All Starts at the Front Desk

Tawara Goode and Dr. Vivian Jackson, Georgetown University National Center for Cultural Competence

Charting the Life Course: Reframing the Front Door for ALL

Dr. Michelle Reynolds, University of Missouri-Kansas City Institute for Human Development

DC Support Link: Resource Portal and Internal Marketing Strategies

Seaberry Design and Communications and Trilogy Integrated Services

Agency Speed Dating and Manager Breakout Sessions: Making Connections between Partner Agencies

For more information, please contact Mark Agosto, No Wrong Door Project Manager at mark.agosto@dc.gov.

Did You Know?

- Inclusion and diversity are supported by law under the Equal Pay Act of 1963, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Age Discrimination Act of 1967 and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- According to the 2016 [DC Office of Human Rights/Language Access Program's Annual Compliance Review Report](#), 17% or 103,316 of District residents over the age of 5 speak a language other than English at home.

Visit the No Wrong Door website for more information: <http://dds.dc.gov/page/no-wrong-door>