

NORTHCARE NETWORK

POLICY TITLE: Cultural Competency Policy
POLICY EFFECTIVE DATE: February 7, 2007
BOARD ADOPTED: February 7, 2007
BOARD ADOPTED REVISIONS:

REVIEW/REVISED:

PURPOSE

It shall be the policy of NorthCare and its community mental health agencies and substance abuse providers to provide culturally appropriate services to all consumers.

DEFINITIONS

Culture: a set of traditions, behaviors, values and beliefs held by a group of people defined by race, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation, sensory impairment, or psychosocial background.

Cultural Competence: The ability to deliver services in a manner that is responsive to the norms of a culture. Cultural competence is obtained by the ongoing development of knowledge about cultures whose members may request mental health services. This competency is reflected in the way the policies are written and practices are conducted to attract members of minority cultures who need services.

POLICY

NorthCare Network and its community mental health agencies and substance abuse providers will promote mutual respect and awareness of people of varied cultures. Cultural Competency goes beyond racial bounds to include gender, sexual orientation, abilities and age. NorthCare recognizes the many strengths that people with different backgrounds bring to an organization. NorthCare is committed to environments that respect the perspectives, beliefs and differences of our consumers and staff. NorthCare and the affiliate providers will promote cultural diversity and competency to increase access to care and quality of service. NorthCare and the affiliate staff will understand that beliefs may influence a consumer's likelihood to seek treatment as well as his/her response to health, illness, disease and death.

PROCEDURE

NorthCare and its community mental health agencies and substance abuse providers will communicate with people in the most efficient way possible to accommodate the consumer's cultural needs. (For Limited English Proficiency, Language Line Services are available to help consumer's access services as needed.)

All members of the NorthCare Provider Network will apply acquired understanding of cultural values, beliefs and practices to the service setting and

the care delivered to consumers. NorthCare recognizes the need for, and will continue to encourage and/or facilitate focused trainings on the Native American culture.

Cultural competence will be demonstrated in the following domains.

NorthCare Network will work in partnership with providers to coordinate or facilitate educational trainings regarding access and use of specialty mental health services, which includes Substance Abuse services, as requested.

NorthCare Network has two policies related to cultural competency. The first is the Accessibility Policy and Procedure which reflects the value and practice expectations of cultural competency and limited English proficiency (LEP) services. The second is the Staff Competencies and Staff Education policy which outlines the specific training requirements in this area. All providers are responsible for following the guidelines in both of the policies. The Accessibility Policy/Procedure is reviewed annually by the NorthCare Member Services Committee; their feedback is utilized to update the policy.

NorthCare utilizes a consumer satisfaction survey process to assess whether consumers believed the staff were sensitive to their cultural background. Survey results are reported to the Quality Improvement Council annually.

All providers are required to have Diversity Plans which address accessibility, cultural competency, and LEP services. Ongoing training is required as part of the plans. As indicated above, NorthCare will assist by coordinating or facilitating relevant trainings as requested. Training records are to be retained. Staff training records will be audited by NorthCare to ensure compliance. NorthCare Network will work with the regional training coordinators in the distribution of information about trainings for consumers and staff.

The provision of supports and services within the cultural context of the recipient will be monitored through record reviews at each affiliate provider. If the consumer reports a clear identification with a particular culture, then treatment planning will show evidence of this consideration. For example, if an individual states that he follows the Native American traditions, the plan of service should reflect the natural supports being sought that would foster these traditions.

REFERENCES

NorthCare Accessibility Policy and Procedure

NorthCare Staff Competencies and Staff Education Policy