

# *Counseling Services of Lancaster*

Cultural Competency & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan

*July 2022*



## Introduction

Cultural competence is the ability to understand and interact effectively with people from other cultures. Counseling Services of Lancaster recognizes that Cultural Competence is a key principle that must be integrated within all aspects of services we deliver. Through our attitudes, organizational structures, policies and services, we will strive to respond effectively to the needs of all persons served and their families, stakeholders, employees, the community, from culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

### *Importance of Cultural Competency*

As Counseling Services of Lancaster continues to meet the needs and expectations of increasingly culturally and ethnically varied populations, a better understanding of cultural differences and their relationship to the hallmarks of quality service – respect, inclusiveness, and sensitivity – become essential. Serving diverse populations, after all, is not a “one size fits all” process. Diversity includes all differences, not just those that indicate racial or ethnic distinctions.

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, Counseling Services of Lancaster will respond to the changing needs and expectations of the people we serve and our stakeholders, in conjunction with the changing business needs of our organization. Through ongoing strategic planning, we will ensure that our leadership maintains a viable planning structure focused on our mission, vision and core values that guide our business practices.

The creation and implementation of our Cultural Competency & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan is an essential foundation to ensure that our staff, persons served and other stakeholders develop awareness and sensitivity specific to the diversity of our service delivery areas. Diversity, equity and inclusion in terms of culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status and language are addressed in this plan.

The framework for our Cultural Competency & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan is based on CARF's ASPIRE to Excellence® model and uses the CARF standards as a guide to ensure an ongoing process of continuous quality improvement.

*Counseling Services of Lancaster's mission, vision, values and purpose for creating this Cultural Competency and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Plan:*

#### ***Afford all persons Dignity and Respect***

- Compassion
- Genuineness
- Professionalism

#### ***Treat all persons with Equity and Fairness***

- Inclusiveness
- Cultural Responsiveness
- Social and Economic Justice

#### ***Lead with a sense of Urgency and Accountability***

- Flexibility
- Resourcefulness
- Strategic Thinking

### *Purpose of Cultural Competency & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan:*

To ensure Counseling Services of Lancaster employees will have a greater awareness/knowledge and then be able to successfully respond to the diversity of our stakeholders (including areas such as spiritual beliefs, sexual orientation, age, culture, socioeconomic status, language, etc.)

Our equity vision is to build upon our mission and vision, creating an organization that is welcoming, safe, accessible, and inclusive. We are committed to:

- ongoing implementation of our anti-racism/anti-oppression policy which promotes our vision and includes procedures for handling issues of discrimination
- promoting equity principles as an integral part of our ongoing activities
- developing and maintaining ongoing relationships with diverse populations and communities
- creating and implementing hiring and recruitment practices that are inclusive
- ensuring that all print, visual, and other promotional materials reflect diversity and inclusivity and present positive images
- promoting and conducting ongoing anti-discrimination/equity training
- taking a leadership role in promoting equity within our agency and within the community

All employees, customers and clients have access to Counseling Services of Lancaster Cultural Competency & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion plan, included in our employee orientation manual and on our website at [www.counselingserviceslanaster.org](http://www.counselingserviceslanaster.org)

It is also available upon request.

### *Cultural Competency & Diversity, Equity and Inclusive Practices*

Counseling Services of Lancaster seeks employees that are committed to their community and represent a variety of cultural backgrounds. Discrimination is not tolerated and employees are expected to conduct services and interactions in a manner that recognizes, values, affirms and respects the worth of each individual, protecting and preserving the dignity of each person.

When necessary and requested, translation services to persons served will be provided. The interpreter will assist with translating any intake, performance appraisals or evaluation, and meetings. If a client is in need of interpretive services, Counseling Services of Lancaster makes appropriate arrangements for these services through MasterWord Translator Services.

Comprehensive, theoretically based cultural competency trainings are required, characterized by acceptance and respect for individual differences. Trainings are based upon the following learning techniques:

- Assessment and awareness of personal biases
- Content on general culture-specific attributes, using person centered language

Specific trainings include but are not limited to:

- Cultural Competency training
- Diversity Awareness training
- Mental Health First Aid certification

Counseling Services of Lancaster utilizes informal relationships with a wide variety of traditional and non-traditional organizations to enhance service delivery and maximize resources for our employees, and our clients.

These include community resources such as housing supports, legal aid, social service clubs for community involvement, and mental health services.

### **Policy**

All policies are created from a person-centered perspective, reflective of the employee population and stakeholders we represent.

\*Please also refer to our *Accessibility Policy, Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy*

### **Our Commitment**

As a team, Counseling Services of Lancaster is committed to creating a welcoming, accessible, inclusive environment. We affirm our commitment by making the organization an all-inclusive service provider. We seek the education of culture and diversity from professional trainings and literature as well as learning from our team members. Through these experiences, we learn a great deal about others. More importantly, we learn even more about ourselves.

### **Resources**

National Center for Cultural Competence

[nccc.georgetown.edu](http://nccc.georgetown.edu)

Indigenous Cultural Safety Collaborate Learning Series

[www.icscollaborative.com](http://www.icscollaborative.com)

Human Rights Campaign Tools for Equity & Inclusion

[www.hrc.org/resources](http://www.hrc.org/resources)

National Institutes of Health Cultural Respect

[www.nih.gov/institutes-nih/nih-office-director/office-communications-public-liaison/clear-communication/cultural-respect](http://www.nih.gov/institutes-nih/nih-office-director/office-communications-public-liaison/clear-communication/cultural-respect)

A Practical Guide to Implementing the National CLAS Standards:  
For Racial, Ethnic and Linguistic Minorities, People with  
Disabilities and Sexual and Gender Minorities

<https://www.cms.gov/About-CMS/Agency-Information/OMH/Downloads/CLAS-Toolkit-12-7-16.pdf>