

2.00 Culturally Competent, Multi-lingual Services

I. PURPOSE

To describe the way we provide multilingual and culturally appropriate services to the diverse populations in the County, as detailed in the Cultural Competence Plan

II. POLICY

The County of San Luis Obispo Behavioral Health Department (SLOBHD) continues to develop a system of care that serves an increasing, changing, and diverse population in the County. SLOBHD will follow the guidelines in the Cultural Competence Plan to become a more culturally competent organization and to ensure that each person receives Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS) and Substance Use Disorder Services (SUDS) that are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

SLOBHD will value diversity, reduce disparities, and will not discriminate against or deny admission or services to any person based on age, ethnicity, marital status, medical condition, national origin, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, socio-economic status, literacy level, or any other legally protected status.

III. REFERENCE

- Code of Federal Regulations, Title 45, Part 80
- Code of Federal Regulations, Title 42, §438.6(f)(1), §438.10, §438.100, §438.206
- Welfare & Institutions Code §14727(d), §5600.2(g)
- California Code of Regulations, Title 9, §1810.410
- California Code of Regulations, Title 9, §3200.100, §3200.210, §3320
- Mental Health Plan Contract with DHCS
- Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System contract with DHCS
- SLOBHD Cultural Competence Plan and Updates
- SLO Health Agency Non-discrimination and Language Access Plan

IV. PROCEDURE

A. Language Needs/Informing:

1. Upon initial contact to request services, individuals are informed in a language they understand that they have a right to free language assistance. An offer of free interpretation services is documented on the BH Service Request form and on the Demographic form.

2. Informing materials, including the Beneficiary Handbook, Notice of Privacy Practices, Consent for Treatment and other relevant documents are available in English and Spanish (SLOBHD's threshold language). Large print (72-point font) and audio CD versions of the Beneficiary Handbook are also available. See Policy 4.20, Information Process for Beneficiaries, for more detail.
3. When SLOBHD staff translate written materials into Spanish, every effort is made to provide review by two bilingual staff members to ensure that the translation is clear and culturally appropriate. See the SLO Health Agency Non-discrimination and Language Access Plan for additional detail.

B. Language Capacity:

1. SLOBHD is committed to the recruitment, hiring, and retention of a multicultural workforce from, or experienced with, identified unserved and underserved populations so that beneficiaries are provided with culture-specific and linguistically appropriate services. Our goal is to provide services by, in order of preference:
 - Bilingual/bicultural providers
 - Bilingual providers
 - Bilingual/bicultural interpreters
 - Language Line Solutions
2. SLOBHD will make key hiring and contracting decisions to grow our language capacity in all geographic regions of SLO County.
3. Particular emphasis will be placed on making sure that key points of contact, such as Central Access and SLOBHD afterhours 24/7 Access Line contractor employ staff who are bilingual (English and Spanish).
4. Language Line Solutions will be used to ensure oral interpretation capacity in Spanish if a more preferred option is not available.
5. Language Line Solutions will be used to accommodate consumers who speak non-threshold languages. Information and training in the use of the Language Line Solutions will be provided for all staff.
6. A specialized MHSA program, (Servicios Sicologicos Para Latinos: A Latino Outreach Program (LOP)) will offer culturally appropriate psychotherapy services to monolingual, low-income Spanish speakers and their bilingual children. LOP staff will be bilingual/bicultural.
7. Each clinic site will have the capacity to provide services in Spanish using bilingual staff.

8. Additionally, SLOBHD contracts with a community agency, Center for Family Strengthening, to provide in-person translation by “Promotores”. Promotores are bilingual/bicultural community members who have received training to provide interpretation services.
 9. SLOBHD will maintain an open purchase order with Independent Living Resource Center for the provision of American Sign Language (ASL) services.
- C. Translation and interpretation services will be provided in a confidential manner.
- D. Family members will not be relied on as interpreters due to the extreme difficulty this often creates in treatment and familial relationships. However, upon documented request of the beneficiary, a family member may provide interpretation after the beneficiary is informed of the availability of free interpreter services. Minor children will not be used as interpreters except in emergencies; justification for such action must be well documented in the record.
- E. Bilingual Certification: Bilingual Certification Committee or designee will evaluate language competence. The committee will determine whether oral and/or written language skills are adequate for the staff member’s role. See the SLO Health Agency Non-discrimination and Language Access Plan for additional detail
- F. In addition to ethnic and language considerations, SLOBHD will expand capacity and expertise in serving other underserved populations, including, but not limited to, the LGBTQ community, hard to reach veterans, homeless residents, transitional aged youth, and children aged 0-5.
- G. Cultural Competence Committee and Cultural Competence Training:
1. The Cultural Competence Committee will meet regularly to address issues related to reducing disparities and increasing staff awareness and competence.
 2. Cultural Competence Training will include the following:
 - a. Mandatory annual e Learning cultural competence training
 - b. Periodic live cultural competence trainings
 - c. A Cultural Competence newsletter, which will be published periodically to highlight key issues affecting beneficiaries in SLO County
- H. When culturally appropriate services are unavailable at the clinic site, or upon request of the beneficiary, referrals for such services will be made within the community.

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V. REVISION HISTORY

Revision Date:	Section(s) Revised:	Details of Revision:
10/1/2015	All	Reformatted and expanded
3/15/2018	All	Added references to the SLO Health Agency Non-discrimination and Language Access Plan
09/22/2018	All	Reformatted and updated language
8/21/2020	All	Updated language and procedures
Prior Approval dates:		
02/27/2009		

<i>Signature on file</i>		<i>10/10/2018</i>
Approved by:	Anne Robin, LMFT, Behavioral Health Administrator	Date