

The Horizon: Alliance's Cultural Competency Plan



Prepared by the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council
Effective FY19 – FY21

Why is this important?

The increasing diversity of the nation brings opportunities and challenges for health care providers, health care systems, and policy makers to create and deliver culturally competent services. Cultural competence is defined as the ability of providers and organizations to effectively deliver health care services that meet the social, cultural, and linguistic needs of patients. A culturally competent health care system can help improve health outcomes and quality of care, and can contribute to the elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities. Examples of strategies to move the health care system towards these goals include providing relevant training on cultural competence and cross-cultural issues to health professionals and creating policies that reduce administrative and linguistic barriers to patient care.

The Department of Health and Human Services has provided important guidance on how to ensure culturally and linguistically appropriate health care services. To learn more, [visit their webpage](#).

Cultural Competency at Alliance

In 2011, the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services and the Division of Medical Assistance, under the authority of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, approved Alliance's application to become a managed care organization.

On February 1, 2013, Alliance began the local operation of a 1915 (b)/(c) Medicaid Waiver site for Durham, Wake, Cumberland, and Johnston Counties, which requires cultural competency standards in delivering publicly funded mental health, intellectual/developmental disabilities and substance abuse services.

In compliance with this requirement, Alliance has established an internal committee of employees (i.e. the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council) to oversee the development and assessment of a Cultural Competency Plan that integrates diversity, equity and inclusion practices into existing organizational processes. The committee created a 3-year cultural competency plan that expires in June of 2018. This document is the revision and revamping of Alliance's cultural competency plan that will be in effect through June 2021.

Alliance's Cultural Framework

The purpose of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council is to ensure a respectful and supportive workplace that attracts and retains a talented workforce representative of the communities we serve. Our efforts are focused on providing education, resources and advocacy in the following areas:

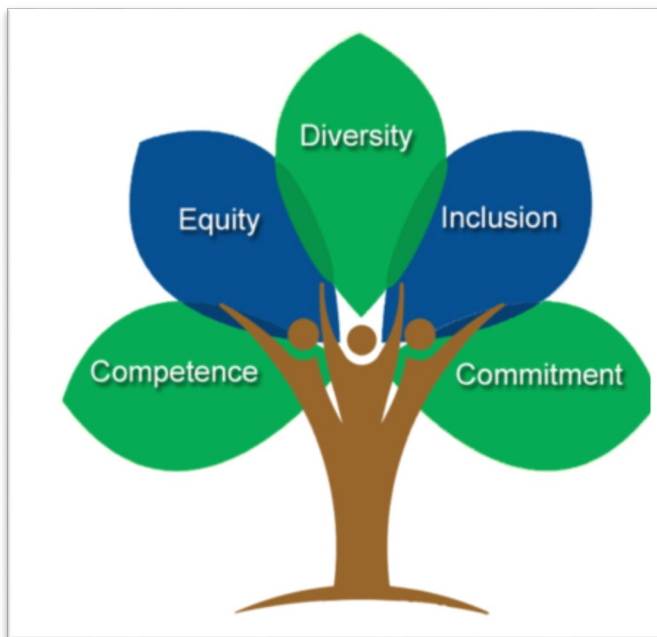
Diversity: We will foster an environment where employees value individual (e.g. personality, learning styles, life experiences) and group differences (e.g. race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability as well as cultural, political, religious or other affiliations).

Equity: We are focused on the fairness in treatment, access, opportunities, advancement, identification and elimination of barriers for under-represented and marginalized groups.

Inclusion: We will actively and intentionally engage employees in ways that increase awareness, content knowledge, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact.

Competence: We are dedicated to ensuring employees, providers and the community possess the knowledge-based skills necessary to provide an inclusive culture.

Commitment: We are committed to do what is needed to transform the organizational climate into a vision of complete cohesiveness.



Alliance's Cultural Competency Goals

Alliance's Cultural Competency Plan is intended to guide the organization in promoting cultural competency within the organization and throughout the provider network. Our priorities include:

- Achieving quality improvement and innovation on our diversity tactics
- Promoting an ideal organizational culture
- Providing opportunities for leadership engagement and visibility
- Reinforcing Alliance's zero tolerance policy for discriminatory behaviors

| Goals | Tactics | Owner | Timing |
|--|--|---------------------|-------------|
| To ensure Alliance establishes and monitors culturally competent organizational processes, infrastructures and practices. | Recognize holidays from various cultures – employees can switch out for personal choice | DEIC | FY19 – FY21 |
| | Ensure ongoing translation of written and electronic documentation; Include diverse audiences in public relations campaigns. | Communications | Ongoing |
| | Include cultural competency principles into community events | Community Relations | |
| | APAC will develop cultural competency guidelines for provider network | Network Development | |
| | Ensure recruitment processes support fair hiring, retention and promotion practices How to address ongoing gaps in diversity particularly at the top. How to measure this, who is accountable and what is plan to remedy gaps. | HR | |
| To provide relevant, timely training on diversity topics. | Ensure training for Alliance employees on diversity-related topics, using diverse examples, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Different religious groups - Culture - Race matters; racial equity - Understanding gender expression and identity - Inclusion and creating welcoming, inclusive environments - Unconscious bias/Implicit bias - Ageism - Ableism | ODL | FY19 – FY21 |
| | Create a Lunch and Learn on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walk in my shoes (hearing stories about stereotypes and ethnicities) - Women’s healthcare awareness, i.e. mammograms, heart disease and breast cancer - Different religious holidays and celebrations | DEIC | FY19 – FY21 |
| | Ensure annual Diversity training for all Alliance staff | ODL | FY19 – FY21 |
| | Ensure biennial cultural competency training for providers in partnership with Recovery University | ODL | FY19 – FY21 |
| To develop an organizational culture where diversity, equity, and inclusion is understood, valued, and demonstrated. | Sponsor employee affinity groups | DEIC | FY19 – FY21 |
| | Sponsor employee activities, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Obstacle “awareness” course, i.e. Black at Work - Create quarterly newsletter - Create video: Why I’m here. What I’ve done. - Host intercultural potluck/cultural heritage day and food festival with music and dress - Create a multicultural display, quiz and parade - Create incentives to show up and participate in events | DEIC | FY19 – FY21 |
| | Partner with HR on diversity-related metrics and plans to improve engagement | HR/DEIC | FY19 –FY21 |

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| | Solicit employee feedback on diversity initiatives and incorporate into future changes | DEIC | FY20 |
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