Project OPEN

CLAS ASSESSMENT

The **NIATx** Foundation

CLAS Assessment Summary

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NIATx Foundation implemented the NIATx CLAS Assessment Tool (NCAT) to assess how the organization is doing in meeting the Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) Standards and to establish an environmental and operational baseline. A summary of the assessment results broken down by category is provided below:

CLAS Leadership: CLAS leadership provides the foundation for applying the CLAS Standards in your organization. Your organization has many CLAS-based strengths, including your mission statement. The presence of a Community Advisory Board is an asset many entities do not have. Opportunities to strengthen CLAS leadership include:

- Establishing CLAS goals and accountability,
- Creating a CLAS sub-committee of the Governing Board,
- Developing a broader set of guiding documents, and
- Training the Governing Board in CLAS.

Structure & Service Delivery: Structure & Service Delivery is where the CLAS Standards intercept with care delivery. The presence of a complete set of policies and procedures that support and promote Human Resources practices to create a culturally and linguistically diverse governance, leadership, and workforce that is responsive to community demographics and informs all individuals of language assistance services is a strength of CLAS service delivery. Opportunities exist to increase the involvement of:

- Groups from the outside in planning, and
- More staff in CLAS design.

CLAS Deployment & Improvement: CLAS Deployment & Improvement is where building and sustaining CLAS Standards occurs. Many opportunities exist for conducting ongoing internal CLAS and regular community health assessments and then mitigating inequities. Strengths that will enhance these efforts include:

- Formal plan to assess the quality of CLAS services to clients,
- Quantity of data sources, and
- Learning-oriented culture.

CLAS Summary Scores			
	Organizational Score	**Average of Similar Orgs**	**Maximum**
CLAS Leadership	24	20.4	40
Structure & Service Delivery	16	10.3	20
CLAS Deployment & Improvement	9	9.1	20
TOTAL	**53**	39.8	**80**

Individuals completing = 6

2. INTRODUCTION

The CLAS Standards create a foundation for organizations to provide respectful and responsive services to diverse patients' health beliefs, practices, and needs. The CLAS Standards set up a blueprint of an organization's action steps to provide Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS).

It can be difficult to identify how an organization is doing in meeting the objectives of the CLAS Standards and, subsequently, in making the necessary changes across the organization to ensure services reflect cultural and linguistic needs. The NIATx Cultural Action Model assesses, implements, and sustains CLAS action through a combination of tools that can be used to create quality improvements and cultural responsiveness.

NCAT is used to develop an environmental and operational baseline for your organization or community system. The NIATx Foundation CLAS assessment evaluates the following categories:

- CLAS Leadership
- Structure & Service Delivery
- CLAS Deployment & Improvement

N = 6 completed this CLAS assessment. Detailed results are included in the sections below. For the Yes/No questions, the majority were reported. Questions were averaged when feasible.

3. CLAS LEADERSHIP

CLAS leadership provides the foundation for applying the CLAS Standards in your organization. CLAS leadership focuses on assessing the organization's efforts in meeting CLAS Standards 2-4:

2. Advance and sustain organizational governance and leadership that promotes CLAS and health equity through policy, practices, and allocated resources.
3. Recruit, promote, and support a culturally and linguistically diverse governance, leadership, and workforce that are responsive to the population in the service area.
4. Educate and train governance, leadership, and workforce in culturally and linguistically appropriate policies and practices on an ongoing basis.

CLAS Emphasis	
We are using a different cultural and linguistic standards model but want to use the CLAS framework moving forward. (Selection for Q9)	
Our organization has successfully advanced and sustained the promotion of CLAS and health equity through policy, practice, and allocated resources. (Q10,1)	Disagree
Our organization has established culturally and linguistically appropriate goals, policies, and management accountability and infused them throughout its planning and operations. (Q10,4)	Disagree

Mission	
Does your organization have a mission statement? (Q1)	Yes
Does the mission statement express a commitment to provide services appropriate to the needs of each cultural and linguistic group represented in the community? (Q1)	No/Don't Know

Guiding Documents	
Does your organization support culturally and linguistically diverse elements through the following documents? (Q2)	
Strategic Plans	Yes
Purpose Statements	No
Vision Statement	No
Organizational Constitution	No
Articles of Incorporation	No
Charter Issued by Outside Authority	No
Bylaws	No
Recruitment Policy	No
Hiring Policy	No
Board Minutes	No

Governing and Community Boards	
Does your Governing Board demographics match the community it serves? (Q3,1)	Yes
Does your Governing Board have a subcommittee responsible for issues involving services provided to cultural, ethnic, and linguistic minority groups? (Q3,2)	No/Don't Know
Does your organization use Community Advisory Boards or other similar entities to help address community and client issues specifically related to the cultural and linguistic groups? (Q3,3)	Yes
How often does your Board meet? (Q5)	Don't Know
Racial Makeup (Q7)	Non-Hispanic White
Age Diversity (Q7)	Don't Know

Governing and Community Boards	
Gender Diversity (Q7)	Don't Know
Geographic Diversity (Q7)	Don't Know
In what ways does your community advisory body assist you in providing services specifically for culturally and linguistically diverse groups? (Q8)	
Planning and designing culturally and linguistically appropriate health services	No
Assessing community and client needs	Yes
Monitoring and evaluating the quality of services	Yes
Developing plans, protocols, and policies related to the provision of services	Yes
Providing input in other agency-wide policy formulation and development	Yes

Governance, Leadership, and Staff Training	
Standardized training is regularly provided in culturally and linguistically appropriate policies and practices to: (Q12)	
Governance Board	No
Leadership	Yes
Professional Staff	Yes
Support Staff	Yes

CLAS Leadership Summary

CLAS leadership provides the foundation for applying the CLAS Standards in your organization. Your organization has many CLAS-based strengths, including your mission statement. The presence of a Community Advisory Board is an asset many entities do not have. Opportunities to strengthen CLAS leadership include:

- Establishing CLAS goals and accountability,
- Creating a CLAS sub-committee of the Governing Board,
- Developing a broader set of guiding documents, and
- Training the Governing Board in CLAS.

CLAS Leadership Scoring (Weighting = 50%)			
CLAS Emphasis	Categories	Score	Scales*
	Have CLAS Model	Yes = 8	Yes = 8 Planning = 2 No = 0

CLAS Leadership Scoring (Weighting = 50%)			
CLAS Emphasis	**Categories**	**Score**	**Scales***
	Promote CLAS through Policy & Practice	No/Disagree = 0	
	CLAS Goals, Policies & Accountability	No/Disagree = 0	
	# of CLAS Mission & Guiding Documents	Level 2 = 6	> 4 = 10 1-4 = 6 0 = 0
	Board Ethnically Represented	Yes = 2	
	Governing Ethnic Subcommittee	No = 0	
	Community Advisory Board	Yes = 2	
	Ethnically Diverse Advisory Board	0 = 0	> 3 = 4 1-3 = 2 0 = 0
	Advisory Board Activities	Yes = 2	
	Board CLAS Training	No = 0	
	Leadership CLAS Training	Yes = 2	
	Staff CLAS Training	Yes = 2	
	Total =	**24**	
	Max =	**40**	

* Items are 2 = Yes and 0 = No, unless marked.

4. STRUCTURE & SERVICE DELIVERY

Structure & Service Delivery is where the CLAS Standards intercept with care delivery. Structure & Service Delivery focuses on assessing the organization's efforts in meeting CLAS Standards 5-8:

1. Offer language assistance to individuals who have limited English proficiency and/or other communication needs, at no cost to them, to facilitate timely access to all health care and services.
2. Inform all individuals of the availability of language assistance services clearly and in their preferred language, verbally and in writing.
3. Ensure the competence of individuals providing language assistance, recognizing that the use of untrained individuals and/or minors as interpreters should be avoided.
4. Provide easy-to-understand print and multimedia materials and signage in the languages commonly used by the populations in the service area.

Policy & Procedures	
Yes, our organization has policies and procedures that support and promote Human Resources practices to create a culturally and linguistically diverse governance, leadership, and workforce responsive to community demographics. (Q11)	
Our organization reliably creates conflict and grievance resolution processes that are culturally and linguistically appropriate to identify, prevent, and resolve conflicts or complaints. (Q10,9)	Agree

Program Planning	
In your role, how much does program design reflect a general understanding of the historical, cultural, medical, and environmental conditions impacting health? (Q18)	Agree
In your work peer network, have you observed or been involved in program design or planning considering historical, cultural, medical, and environmental conditions that impact health? (Q19)	Cultural Environmental Historical Medical
As far as you know or can observe, how much are all levels of staff involved in cultural and linguistic program planning in your organization? (Q20)	Moderate few
What role do you play in making decisions that affect your program or department's efforts to address health inequities?	Have ultimate decision-making for all programs or departments
What groups outside of your organization, if any, are usually involved in program planning processes? (Q21)	
Academic Institutions	No
Businesses	No
Civic Institutions	No
Community Members/Residents	No
Community-based Organizations	No
Faith-based Organizations	No
Other Non-profit Organizations	No
Other Private Institutions	No
Other Public Agencies	No
Project Open Consortium Partners	No

Communication & Language Assistance	
Does your organization offer language assistance to individuals with limited English proficiency and other communication needs at no cost to them? (Q13)	
We offer professional translations for all written materials.	No
We provide localization services for printed material.	No
We offer onsite or remote professional interpretation services.	Yes
We offer onsite or remote professional Language services for the hard of hearing & blind.	Yes
We offer onsite professional cultural and language brokering services.	No
Our organization does provide language assistance but is not professionally certified.	No
Our organization currently depends on the client's family members to provide language assistance.	No
Our organization does not provide language assistance of any sort due to a lack of staff capacity, but we would like to find resources to do so.	No
Our organization informs all individuals of the availability of language assistance services clearly and in their preferred language, verbally and in writing. (Q10,2)	Agree
Our organization ensures the competence of individuals providing language assistance, recognizing that the use of untrained individuals and minors as interpreters should be avoided. (Q10,3)	Agree

Print/ Written Materials and Signage	
Images/signage are visibly posted in the languages of most cultural groups in our service area. (Q14)	Agree

Structure & Service Delivery Summary

Structure & Service Delivery is where the CLAS standards intercept with care delivery. The presence of a complete set of policies and procedures that support and promote Human Resources practices to create a culturally and linguistically diverse governance, leadership, and workforce that is responsive to community demographics and informs all individuals of language assistance services is a strength of CLAS service delivery. Opportunities exist to increase the involvement of:

- Groups from the outside in planning, and
- More staff in CLAS design.

Structure & Service Delivery (Weighting = 25%)			
CLAS Emphasis	**Categories**	**Score**	**Scales***
	CLAS HR Policies	Yes = 2	
	Grievance Resolution Practices	Yes = 2	
	Program Design Has Historical, Cultural, and Environmental Considerations	Agree = 1	Agree = 1 Disagree = 0
	Peer Network Program Design Has Historical, Cultural, and Environmental Considerations	2 = 1	2-4 = 1 0-1 = 0
	All Staff Involved in CLAS	Moderate few = 2	A great deal = 4 A lot = 3 Moderate few = 2 A little = 1 None = 0
	Ability to Impact CLAS	Yes = 2	
	Groups Outside Involved in Planning	2 = 1	>3 = 2 1-3 = 1 0 = 0
	Language Assistance	1-3 = 1	>3 = 2 1-3 = 1 0 = 0
	Inform All of Language Assistance	Yes = 2	
	CLAS Signs	Agree = 2	Agree = 2 Disagree = 0
	Total =	16	
	Max =	20	

= Items are 2 = Yes and 0 = no, unless marked.

5. CLAS DEPLOYMENT & IMPROVEMENT

CLAS Deployment & Improvement is where building and sustaining CLAS Standards occurs. This category addresses how the organization deploys CLAS policy and continually improves CLAS delivery. The items for this category include:

- Formal Plan for Collecting and Reviewing CLAS Information,
- Learning Culture, and
- Addressing Inequities.

CLAS Deployment & Improvement focuses on assessing the organization's efforts in meeting CLAS Standards 9-15:

9. Establish culturally and linguistically appropriate goals, policies, and management accountability, and infuse them throughout the organization's planning and operations.
10. Conduct ongoing assessments of the organization's CLAS-related activities and integrate CLAS-related measures into measurement and continuous quality improvement activities.
11. Collect and maintain accurate and reliable demographic data to monitor and evaluate the impact of CLAS on health equity and outcomes and to inform service delivery.
12. Conduct regular assessments of community health assets and needs and use the results to plan and implement services that respond to the cultural and linguistic diversity of populations in the service area.
13. Partner with the community to design, implement, and evaluate policies, practices, and services to ensure cultural and linguistic appropriateness.
14. Create conflict and grievance resolution processes that are culturally and linguistically appropriate to identify, prevent, and resolve conflicts or complaints.
15. Communicate the organization's progress in implementing and sustaining CLAS to all stakeholders, constituents, and the general public.

Formal Plan for Collecting and Reviewing CLAS Information	
Our organization conducts ongoing assessments of the organization's CLAS-related activities and integrates CLAS-related measures into measurement and continuous quality improvement activities. (Q10,5)	Neutral/Disagree
Our organization conducts regular assessments of community health assets and needs. It uses the results to plan and implement services that respond to the cultural and linguistic diversity of populations in the service area. (Q10,7)	Neutral/Disagree
Does your agency have a formal plan for collecting information on the quality of culturally and linguistically appropriate services provided to clients? (Q15)	Agree
Which of the following activities are used to collect information on the quality of culturally and linguistically appropriate services? (Q16)	
Client Satisfaction Surveys	Yes
Grievance and Complaint Tracking	Yes
Chart Reviews and Audits	Yes
Client Focus Groups	Yes
Demographic Data (Q10,6)	Yes

Community Engagement	
Our organization consistently partners with the community to design, implement, and evaluate policies, practices, and services to ensure cultural and linguistic appropriateness. (Q10,8)	Neutral/Disagree
We communicate our organization's progress in implementing and sustaining CLAS standards to all stakeholders, constituents, and the public. (Q10,10)	Neutral/Disagree

Learning Culture (Q25)	
I know how my role contributes to addressing health inequities in our community.	Agree
I know how work in other parts of our organization contributes to addressing health inequities in our community.	Agree
I collaborate with staff in other programs within my organization to address environmental, cultural, social, and economic conditions that impact the health of underprivileged populations.	Agree
There is support from management for collaborations between programs addressing health inequities in our organization.	Agree
Staff at all levels have the opportunity to become leaders in the work my organization is doing to address health inequities.	Agree
Organizational leaders have the opportunity to reach out to outside entities or within Project Open partners to address inequities in partnership.	Agree
Organizational leaders take the initiative to advocate for policy change to inequities in partnership with others.	Agree

Addressing Inequities	
Does your organization participate in practical efforts to affect the mitigation of inequities for: (Q22)	
Behavioral Health	Yes
Community-based Social Justice	No
Health	Yes
Housing	No
Immigration Systems	No
Incarceration Systems	Yes
Judicial System (Courts and administration of Justice)	Yes

Addressing Inequities	
Legal System (Keeping the Law)	Yes
Nutrition	Yes
Policy Advocacy	No
Transportation	No
Does your organization participate in policy efforts to affect the mitigation of inequities for: (Q23)	
Behavioral Health	Yes
Community-based Social Justice	No
Health	Yes
Housing	No
Immigration Systems	No
Incarceration Systems	No
Judicial System (Courts and Administration of Justice)	No
Legal System (Keeping the Law)	No
Nutrition	No
Policy Advocacy	No
Transportation	No

CLAS Deployment & Improvement Summary

CLAS Deployment & Improvement is where building and sustaining CLAS Standards occurs. Many opportunities exist for conducting ongoing internal CLAS and regular community health assessments and then mitigating inequities. Strengths that will enhance these efforts include:

- Formal plan to assess the quality of CLAS services to clients,
- Quantity of data sources, and
- Learning-oriented culture.

CLAS Deployment & Improvement (Weighting = 25%)			
CLAS Emphasis	Categories	Score	Scales*
	Ongoing Internal CLAS Assessments	Disagree = 0	
	Conducts Regular Community Health Assessments	Disagree = 0	
	Formal Plan to Assess the Quality of CLAS Services to Clients	Yes = 2	Yes = 1 No/Don't Know = 0

CLAS Deployment & Improvement (Weighting = 25%)			
	Quantity of CLAS Data Sources	4 = 2	4 Data Sources = 2 1-3 = 1 0 = 0
	Collaborates with Community Partners on CLAS	Disagree = 0	Agree = 2 Neutral/Disagree = 0
	Communicates CLAS Progress to the Community	Disagree = 0	
	Level of Learning Culture	Level 7 = 3	Levels 6-7 = 3 3-5 = 2 1-2 = 1 0 = 0
	Level of Practical Efforts to Reduce Inequities	Level 2 = 1	Levels 9-11 = 4 6-8 = 3 4-5 = 2 1-3 = 1 0 = 0
	Level of Policy Efforts to Reduce Inequities	Level 2 = 1	Levels 6-11 = 3 4-5 = 2 1-3 = 1 0 = 0
Total =	9		
Max =	20		

* = Items are 2 = Agree and 0 = Neutral/Disagree/Don't Know, unless marked.

6. NEXT STEPS/OVERVIEW

The CLAS Assessment's fundamental purpose is to improve service quality by advancing health equity and helping to eliminate disparities. In the beginning, most organizations are inherently not designed to fully meet the CLAS standards. That provides opportunity. The intent of this exercise is to provide a baseline from which to improve cultural competency. Moving forward, your organization can pick a few items to address or many. The gains made with implementing the CLAS Standards will reflect positively in service quality and people served.

We hope this assessment will prompt positive gains. We encourage your organization to seek assistance with CLAS training or CLAS-related organizational change if you think that will be helpful. Most of all, continue to make positive strides in this important area. Your organization and community will thank you.