

HARFORD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT POLICY

Title of Policy: Cultural Sensitivity in Service Delivery	
Program Area: All Programs	
Approved By: <i>Susan Kelly</i>	Original Effective Date: 4/22/14
Susan Kelly, Health Officer	Revised Dates:

1.0 POLICY

The Harford County Health Department (HCHD) is committed to meeting the needs of Harford County residents from diverse cultures in a manner that affirms the worth and preserves the dignity of individuals, families and communities. HCHD staff will make every effort to ensure cultural sensitivity in service delivery and in programs and policies that are appropriate and accessible to clients who encompass a broad range of human differences, such as ability and disability, age, educational level, ethnicity, gender, geographic origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic class, and values. The HCHD Nondiscrimination Policy (ADMIN# 00-07) will be followed at all times.

2.0 PURPOSE

In order for the HCHD staff to successfully provide services that are accessible to all Harford County residents, staff must be aware of the cultural differences of various populations and be prepared to deliver services in a way that is welcoming, respectful and readily available to clients. This may require staff to improve their cultural sensitivity by expanding their knowledge and understanding of individuals with various abilities, racial, ethnic, cultural and linguistic populations and to learn new skills in the provision of services. HCHD has developed procedures to assist staff in gaining these skills.

3.0 DEFINITION

Cultural Sensitivity embodies the knowledge, understanding, skills, and protocols that allow an individual or system to provide services across cultural lines in the best possible way. Cultural Sensitivity permits individuals to respond with respect and empathy to people of all nationalities, classes, races, religions, ethnic backgrounds, abilities and other groups in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values their worth.

4.0 PROCEDURES

4.1 The HCHD Division Directors are responsible for ensuring that program staff delivers services respectfully and effectively to all clients, with awareness of the cultural diversity of the client population by:

- Providing staff with demographic information about the population being served, including racial, ethnic, socio-economic and cultural groups; the population may be the county population, the targeted population and/or the client population;
- Providing periodic staff training sessions that focus on effectively serving diverse client populations so that staff has the knowledge and understanding necessary to provide effective services, including awareness of the importance of communicating to clients using terminology that they will understand;

- Requiring that all staff who communicate with the public complete the training as specified in the Limited English Proficiency Policy (HCHD Policy ADMIN# 03-03) and the Visual Communication Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Policy (HCHD Policy ADMIN# 00-09) and follows these policies in providing translation services; and
 - Encouraging staff to include Cultural Competency Skills topics in their Core Competency trainings (see attached list from the HCHD Workforce Development Plan).
- 4.2 All HCHD programs will provide written information not only in English but also, where possible, in other languages that are frequently spoken by Harford County residents, as follows:
- Translation of written materials should be carried out consistent with the guidance in the Limited English Proficiency Policy (HCHD Policy ADMIN# 03-03), pages 4 and 5.
 - Translated signs should be placed at key points of contact for clients and other visitors.
- 4.3 Every effort should be made to write materials that are for the general population in language that does not exceed a grade 5 reading level. Written materials targeted to a specific population, such as physicians or other professional groups, may use language at a higher grade level.
- 4.4 Programs will ensure that the diverse communities they serve receive information about the availability of services by reaching out to the communities; for example, by advertising in newspapers put out by a targeted community for its members, other newspapers and local radio stations in the language of the targeted community, providing presentations to community groups, and coordinating efforts with community leaders to “get the word out.”
- 4.5 HCHD will undertake periodic organizational self-assessments of cultural and linguistic competency, and will include measures of access and client satisfaction of cultural and linguistic sensitivity in internal audits of programs.
- 4.6 HCHD will provide cultural competency training for all staff to ensure that each staff member participates in at least one cultural competency training or activity annually.
- 4.7 HCHD staff will follow and comply with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, State and Federal policies, regulations and procedures to address complaints or grievances by clients about unfair, culturally insensitive or discriminatory treatment or difficulty in accessing services, or denial of services.

Harford County Health Department Curricula & Training Schedule 2013 - 2015

The following table describes sample training that staff can utilize to satisfy the requirement of completing four training opportunities by **December 2014**. All of these lessons can be found on-line at Train.org. Staff can log in to Train.org and input the Course ID number to find the selected lesson or individuals can use the keyword search to find training related to the Core Competency of his/her choosing.

This list will be periodically updated to provide more choices for staff that coincide with Core Competencies that are priorities for the Harford County Health Department.

Topic	Competencies Addressed
Leadership & Systems Thinking Skills: What is Strategic Planning and How Do I Prepare? Course ID: 1050173	Leadership & Systems Thinking Skills
Community Toolbox Module 3: Conducting Community Health Assessments Course ID: 1033675	-Leadership & Systems Thinking Skills -Analytic/Assessment Skills -Community Dimensions of Practice Skills
Key Functions of Public Health Financial Management Course ID: 1050172	Financial Planning and Management Skills
Budget Planning and Management Course ID: 1028064	Financial Planning and Management Skills
Create an Epi Curve (Accessible via Mobile Devices) Course ID: 1046704	Analytic/Assessment Skills
Quality Improvement Quick Guide Tutorial Course ID: 1030628	Policy Development/Program Planning Skills
Community toolbox Module 1: Assuring Engagement in Community Health Improvement Efforts Course ID:1033673	-Analytic/Assessment Skills -Community Dimensions of Practice Skills -Policy Development/Program Planning Skills
Federal Regulations and Agencies Course ID:1029954	Policy Development/Program Planning Skills
Introduction to Cultural Competency and Title VI Course ID: 1032904	Cultural Competency Skills
Community Toolbox Module 7: Developing an Intervention Course ID: 1034994	Cultural Competency Skills
Accessibility Online Basics Course ID: 1028750	Cultural Competency Skills
Equipment and Resources to Assist Persons with Disabilities During an Emergency Course ID: 1029915	Cultural Competency Skills
Life Course Nutrition: Maternal and Child Health Strategies in Public Health Course ID: 1031313	Public Health Science Skills
Community Toolbox Module 7: Developing an Intervention Course ID: 1034994	Public Health Science Skills
Family Disaster Planning Course ID: 1009110	Public Health Science Skills
Legal Aspects of Public Health Food Safety Course ID: 1048259	Public Health Science Skills