Paving The Way

a TOOLKIT
for ASSESSING and ADVANCING
CULTURAL and LINGUISTIC COMPETENCY

PAVING THE WAY: A TOOLKIT FOR ASSESSING AND ADVANCING CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC COMPETENCY

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INTRODUCTION

This toolkit has been created by ASIAC for the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Council (PADDC) as the culmination of a multi-year period of work to help grantees of PADDC to achieve greater linguistic and cultural competency in the work they do for the disability community.

ASIAC (formerly AIDS Services in Asian Communities) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) community based organization dedicated to assisting low-income and limited English proficient (LEP) individuals overcome cultural and linguistic barriers to health care and social services. With over fifteen years of experience connecting culturally and linguistically isolated communities to essential health-related services, ASIAC has become a recognized authority on health care barriers faced by Asian & Pacific Islander (API) and immigrant populations.

Federal law established Councils of Developmental Disabilities, including PADDC, in the 55 states and Territories in order to engage in "systems change, advocacy, and capacity building." PADDC, established by Governor's Executive Order, consists of 20 members, the majority of whom are people with disabilities and their family members. PADDC's mission statement explicitly includes the priority to "pursue a cross disability agenda." PADDC recognizes that people with developmental disabilities who are members of minority communities are often multiply disadvantaged. Families and caregivers who are living in low-income communities are also often inadequately supported by service systems, which make no allowance for low levels of literacy or other possible consequences of poverty. Race, ethnicity, and other minority categorizations often influence what human services are made available, how much service is provided, and how long a service is provided to a family or individual.

As part of the original multi-year project, ASIAC worked with PADDC grantees to assess and build capacity to deliver language appropriate and culturally sensitive services in accordance with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health's Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) Standards. (See Appendix A, CLAS Standards). ASIAC worked with grantees to develop "Roadmaps" that responded specifically to each organization's needs and challenges. This toolkit has been created in the effort to extend the impact of this work by providing a framework for future PADDC grantees to assess, and then build their own capacity to meet CLAS Standards for cultural and linguistic competency (CLC).

PADDC has put forth a contextual definition of minority as "a group or individual that is not part of the dominant culture"; this forms the basis of PADDC's commitment to cultural and linguistic competency. This definition highlights the complexities of our social identities and how they impact our daily experiences and access to services. The definition of a non-dominant group is based on systems of privilege and marginalization, operating within a particular social context, not on individual experience. For example, an individual can have pride in his/her identity as a working class immigrant, or as a single parent with a disability, but such an individual is still subject to marginalization within a U.S. context because laws, policies, media, resource distribution, social norms, and other determinants of safety and power are generally set by those who have the most privileged identities.

While the focus of this toolkit is on CLC, it has been created with the spirit of creating the greatest level of accessibility for those most impacted by inequality. We hope that this toolkit will serve as a model to address broader issues affecting minority groups by offering a set of tools for your organization to assess and implement plans to serve all, including the most marginalized, of your constituents.

PART 1: HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

Who should use this toolkit?

- PADDC grantees invested in ongoing improvements in their cultural and linguistic competency (CLC).

- Organizations that would like to establish a baseline from which to continue improving CLC.

- Organizations with limited staffing and resources to identify the skills needed to focus on board development and recruitment.

- Organizations that would like assistance in improving CLC through staffing, staff development, and technology.

- Organizations in transition in leadership or mission in order to clarify areas of growth prior to executive search and/or reorganization.

- Organizations that would like to develop a practice for continuous learning and improvement of cultural and linguistic competency.

- Organizations that want to ensure compliance with federal requirements and the National Standards on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) developed by the Office of Minority Health (OMH).

What is cultural and linguistic competence?

As defined by the United States Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health, cultural and linguistic competence is "a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations. 'Culture' refers to integrated patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, gender, sexual orientation, disability, social or other groups. 'Competence' implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization within the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by consumers and their communities."

How should we use the toolkit?

This toolkit is intended as a diagnostic tool—a first step in assessing and advancing your organization's cultural and linguistic competency. While no single tool is applicable to all organizations or situations, we hope that most PADDC-funded organizations will find this toolkit useful. Some components of the assessment will be available in a flexible template. Once you become familiar with the assessment process, we encourage you to build on our baseline template by adding/editing your own items to tailor the document to your organizational needs.

Using the staff and organizational self-assessment tools in **Part 2: The Self Assessment Process**, you can quickly establish a baseline of where your organization is currently and gauge your organization's effectiveness in crucial areas of cultural and linguistic competency. While the assessment cannot tell you why a certain condition exists or exactly what to do about it, it can serve as a valuable outline for organizational improvement. The assessment can then be used as an annual or even bi-annual report card and can assist you in benchmarking your organization's progress.

The assessment tool can be used to prompt a conversation among a cross-section of stakeholders from your organization. Often it is not the ranking of an item that counts, but the information gained from seeing that different parts of the organization (board and staff, for instance) respond quite differently, or may be unaware of how to respond to some questions.

Part 3: Learning from the Assessment is set up to help you contextualize the information you have gathered from the assessment. The chart provides a menu of potential action steps, which you may or may not have already implemented in your organization. In Part 3, you can check off the items you have already accomplished, and highlight areas you need to focus on and which potential steps are within reach. Completing this part will prepare you for Part 4, developing a CLC action plan. The self-assessment (Part 2) and action menu (Part 3) can provide you with a map of the strengths, weaknesses, and challenges to improving CLC in your organization. You

will learn where there is a need for more communication or education. And this may provide fuel for your first retreat to prioritize the major areas where goal setting, research, and action items need to begin.

In **Part 4: Developing a Cultural and Linguistic Competency Action Plan**, we provide you with a sample action plan to review and a template to then create your own. This is the moment where you must be both most realistic and ambitious. We encourage you to take stock of your resources, financial and human capital, and develop an achievable plan. Remember that assessment is a continuous process. So, once you have "a plan," it does not mean it is the "only plan." You will revisit your plan at a time that you set (perhaps annually, semiannually, or quarterly). Thinking of assessment as a continuous process should both make it less daunting and result in ongoing advancement of your organization's CLC.

Finally, **Part 5: Staying on Target** includes some basic tips for staying on target and keeping your CLC work in perspective. The easiest way to bring your CLC work to a halt is to over-commit your time and resources. Our intention is to close with some things to remember as you begin to implement your CLC action plan.

Key Terms and Definitions

Acculturation: The process by which a cultural group adopts the beliefs and behaviors of another, often times more dominant, cultural group. Acculturation does not signify the rejection of one's own culture as a result of adapting to another culture.

CLAS Standards: Acronym for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services. National CLAS Standards were issued by the US Dept. of Health and Human Services as a response to shifting health care needs of culturally and linguistically diverse groups. (For full text of standards, see Appendix A)

Cultural and Linguistic Competency (CLC): Cultural and linguistic competency is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations.

Cultural Broker: Cultural brokers are individuals or organizations that understand community needs and outreach strategies that will (and won't) work for a given community.

Culture: The thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, shared experiences, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, gender, sexual orientation, disability, social, or other groups. Culture defines how information is received, how rights and protections are exercised, and how individuals understand and react to one another within their defined group.

Interpretation: The communication from one language to another language in spoken form.

LEP: Acronym for Limited English Proficient. A person who is LEP speaks and or understands little to no English. LEP individuals may be able to communicate conversationally, but are unable to understand technical and detail-specific jargon. There is a distinction between foreign language-related and disability-related communication services. This assessment process can be used for both.

Language Assistance Services: Includes use of accessibility devices and all written, silent, and spoken methods of communication.

Rack Cards: Documents used to advertise organization's services. In the context of CLC, these cards can be promotional information about the organization or "I Speak ___" cards that should be translated into multiple languages.

Translation: The communication from one language into another language through written form.

Minority: A group or individual that is a member of a non-dominant group.

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PART 2: THE SELF-ASSESSMENT PROCESS

This section is devised to help you as an organization assess your cultural and linguistic competency. We have included an organizational (administrative-level) and an individual (staff-level) self-assessment tool, each organized in a checklist format. Considering the broad range of organizations that may be utilizing this assessment tool it is set up as a template. We encourage you to use the tools in a manner that better reflects your organization's focus, whether as a direct service provider, non-direct service provider, or advocacy-focused organization. Therefore, some surveys or action steps may not be relevant to your respective organization. Also we would like to emphasize that the purpose of this tool is to both assist you and educate you and your co-workers about CLC.

There are several ways to complete this self-assessment tool and to evaluate the results it brings. Not all organizations will find all sections relevant to their current state of organizational development. We encourage you to think about this as a process. If you find that you have a lower percentage of CLC in a particular area consider assessing the incremental improvement over time rather than viewing this as a deficit. You will be more likely to continue with the process if you celebrate your improvements than if you judge your deficiencies/shortcomings. CLC is an ongoing process, so we expect that your organization will always have work to do. This is a sign of true commitment to CLC!

The self-assessment can be done in a number of ways depending on your organization, the number of people participating, your organization setting, and your assessment objectives. The forms can be handed to individuals to be filled out in private. Or, if your organization has an established collaborative culture, you may want to set aside a 3-hour period of time and invite representative members of all factions of your organization (staff, board, people who receive services, volunteers, etc.) to attend and work together to complete and discuss the results. This will allow for the chance for information sharing and conversation. For shorter time frames, you might edit the form down to focus on a couple of categories, or reduce the number of items under each heading. And, in the long-term, you may find yourself adding or modifying categories, questions, and measurements.

The assessment checklist items are grouped according to the following primary areas:

- **Section A:** Language Access. This section will help you assess your organization's ability to work effectively for people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

- **Section B:** Outreach. This section will help you assess your organization's targeted outreach to LEP/ minority communities and the necessary components to making your outreach most effective, including developing relationships with cultural brokers.

- **Section C:** Strategic Planning. This section will help you assess how your organization has integrated CLC into your strategic plan, including priority setting, reporting, and assessment.

- **Section D:** Staff and Training. This section explores whether the staff and board are representative of your service area, and whether training that is tailored to the local demographics of your service area and inclusive of linguistic services is made available to staff and board.

- **Section E:** Direct Services. Finally, this section is included in the individual survey to help assess the staff's experience of CLC in the organization in relation to service delivery.

We have divided the assessment into these sections in order to enable your organization to assess your capacities, strengths, and challenges in a way that is logical and manageable. Please note that this is not a comprehensive checklist and is intended to give you a baseline assessment/description of where your organization currently is on the road to CLC. We encourage you to ask more questions and go further in depth by utilizing some of the resources located on the ASIAC website, *www.asiac.org*, as well as seeking outside consultation where possible.

Suggestions for Approaching the Assessment:

1. We encourage you to approach this as an opportunity to consider how you are meeting the needs of diverse populations in your service area, rather than as a quiz or ranking. It is helpful to convene an organizational meeting prior to taking the assessment to discuss how to make the process most relevant and useful for your context. This is a developmental process and we recommend revisiting the assessment regularly to evaluate your action steps and movement toward your goals.

2. Communicate with your staff, administrators, and board members that the goal is to find where the organization can make progress, not to assess individual performance. Encourage respondents to be candid and truthful in their responses, regardless of whether the participant thinks it is the "right" or "wrong" response.

3. Coordinate a debriefing meeting after staff have completed the surveys so they can discuss comments or challenges they faced while responding to them. This would be a good opportunity for your administration or a task force (composed of staff, board members and community advisors) to customize and tailor the assessments, i.e. if they find some questions irrelevant to what their organization does.

What are the Organizational and Individual Assessments? The primary focus of both the individual and organizational assessment is on sustainable, long-term improvements. The individual survey focuses on the knowledge and perspectives of individual staff members regarding cultural differences and culturally and linguistically accommodating services. The organizational survey focuses on the demographics, policies, and practices of the organization as a whole that illustrate its approach to CLC.

Who Should Take the Organizational Assessment? Administrators or staff people who know the organization's policies, procedures, strategic plan, and agenda-setting practices should take the organizational assessment.

What is the purpose of the Organizational Assessment? The Organizational Assessment is designed to help you understand the structural pieces that are in place to ensure CLC.

What topics does the Organizational Assessment cover? Topics explored include whether the mission reflects a commitment to CLC; what demographic information is collected about people who receive services; whether the demographics of the staff, administration, and board reflect the demographics of the service area and the people who receive services; how services are made available to people with limited English proficiency; what mechanisms are in place for community input and assessment; and how services are evaluated and subsequently utilized for service planning.

Who should take the Individual Assessment? Staff members with responsibility for connecting people with a resource/service, or generally those who have the most "face time" with people who receive services and community members should take the individual assessment.

What is the purpose of the Individual Assessment? The Individual Assessment is designed to assess the personal attitudes and cultural beliefs of individual staff, their perspectives on potential LEP/minority people, as well as their practical knowledge and awareness of their organization's services that address these underserved groups.

What topics does the Individual Assessment cover? Issues explored in the individual assessment include how linguistic access services are made available to people, knowledge, and involvement in the organization's community assessments, individuals' perception of agencies' CLC, and individual staff members' own views of their own CLC and their perception of the need for it. The distinction is noted between foreign language-related and disability-related communication services, although the assessment covers both; PADDC-funded organizations are likely to have done significant work to make their services accessible to people with disabilities, but may not have fully integrated the needs of people who are living with a disability and are also LEP.

What additional resources are available to complete the Individual and Organizational Assessments? It is recommended that each respondent have a copy of "Key Terms and Definitions" and Appendixes A and B which include a list of the CLAS Standards and case studies of other organizations on their own paths to building greater CLC.

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

The goal of this assessment is to learn where the organization as a whole can make progress in cultural and linguistic competency. Please be candid and truthful in your responses.

SECTION A: LANGUAGE ACCESS

This section will help you assess your organization's ability to work effectively with Limited English Proficient (LEP) people.

Note: In order for this section to be addressed in the most relevant way, your organization may have to conduct research to determine the demographics of and languages spoken in your service area.

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
1. The language diversity of the people who receive services is reflective of the language diversity in our service area.	❏	❏	❏
2. Our organization has a systematized and effective way to inform people of the availability of interpretation services.	❏	❏	❏
3. Our organization has a systematized and effective way to inform people of the availability of translated documents.	❏	❏	❏
4. Translation, interpretation, and disability-related communication services (sign language, Braille transcription, accessibility devices, etc.) are offered to people free of charge.	❏	❏	❏
5. Documents are available in multiple languages, prioritized based on the demographics of the service area.	❏	❏	❏
6. Our organization measures people's satisfaction with translation and interpretation services.	❏	❏	❏
7. Financial resources are available to support translation and interpretation services needed due to LEP and/or disabilities which impact communication.	❏	❏	❏
	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure

SECTION A TOTALS:
Count the # of answers in each column and total here.   #____   #____   #____

SECTION A BASELINE:
Calculate baseline percentage of "Mostly Agree" answers / total # of questions.

SECTION A:

BASELINE ____%

(For example, if respondent answers 5 Mostly Agree, the percentage would be calculated by dividing 5 by 7, which would yield a 71% baseline.)

SECTION B: OUTREACH

This section will help you assess your organization's targeted outreach to LEP/ minority communities and the necessary components to making your outreach most effective, including developing relationships with cultural brokers.

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
8. The cultural diversity of the people who receive services is reflective of the cultural diversity in our service area.	❏	❏	❏
9. We have a community advisory board (or similar entity) to address community issues specifically related to the cultural groups represented by the people who receive our services.	❏	❏	❏
10. We have community partnerships with some of the following: community-based organizations, outreach programs, minority owned businesses, faith-based organizations, and health clinics.	❏	❏	❏
11. We participate in some of the following outreach activities: health/ community fairs, public information sessions at our organization and other community centers, distributing fliers and advertising in the community.	❏	❏	❏
12. We have worked with cultural brokers. *Individuals or organizations who understand community needs and outreach strategies that will (and won't) work for a given community.*	❏	❏	❏
13. We have developed an outreach plan that specifically targets minority/Limited English Proficient communities.	❏	❏	❏

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
SECTION B TOTALS: **Count the # of answers in each column and total here.**	#____	#____	#____

SECTION B BASELINE:
Calculate baseline percentage of "Mostly Agree" answers / total # of questions.

SECTION B:

BASELINE ____%

(For example, if respondent answers 2 Mostly Agree, the percentage would be calculated by dividing 2 by 6, which would yield a 33% baseline.)

SECTION C: **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

This section will help you assess how your organization has integrated cultural and linguistic competency into your strategic plan, including priority setting, reporting, and assessment.

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
14. Cultural and linguistic competency is included in the mission statement, policies, and procedures.	❏	❏	❏
15. A committee, task force or program area addresses issues of cultural and linguistic competency.	❏	❏	❏
16. We conduct periodic assessments of overall community needs including language access.	❏	❏	❏
17. We have a process for determining language access needs amongst groups in the service area.	❏	❏	❏
18. Our programs and policies are regularly reviewed for cultural and linguistic competency.	❏	❏	❏
19. Efforts are made to ensure that members of all advisory boards reflect the cultural diversity of the people in the service area.	❏	❏	❏
20. We collect demographic information for all people who receive services including cultural identity, racial identity, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, English proficiency, preferred spoken language, preferred written language, health literacy/beliefs/values, physical challenges, & socioeconomic info.	❏	❏	❏
21. We evaluate the data periodically and integrate it into our organizational assessments or targeted outreach strategies in identifying unmet needs.	❏	❏	❏
22. We have Board members and staff assigned to assess our service provision and outreach efforts to serve culturally diverse people.	❏	❏	❏

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
SECTION C TOTALS: **Count the # of answers in each column and total here.**	#____	#____	#____

SECTION C BASELINE:
Calculate baseline percentage of "Mostly Agree" answers / total # of questions.

SECTION C:

BASELINE ____%

(For example, if respondent answers 6 Mostly Agree, the percentage would be calculated by dividing 6 by 9, which would yield a 66% baseline.)

SECTION D: STAFF AND TRAINING

This section explores whether the staff and Board of Directors are representative of your service area, and whether training that is tailored to the local demographics of your service area, inclusive of linguistic services, is made available to staff and Board of Directors

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
23. Staff is trained in recognizing the need for translation and interpretation for people with Limited English Proficiency and/or disabilities which impact communication.	❑	❑	❑
24. Staff is given training in accessing and proper use of interpretation services needed for people with LEP and/or disabilities which impact communication.	❑	❑	❑
25. There are strategies in place to recruit/retain a culturally diverse management/administration team.	❑	❑	❑
26. The cultural diversity of our Board of Directors reflects the cultural diversity of our community.	❑	❑	❑
27. The cultural diversity of our staff is reflective of the cultural diversity of our community.	❑	❑	❑

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
SECTION D TOTALS: **Count the # of answers in each column and total here.**	#____	#____	#____

SECTION D BASELINE:
Calculate baseline percentage of "Mostly Agree" answers / total # of questions.

SECTION D: BASELINE
____%

(For example, if respondent answers 3 Mostly Agree, the percentage would be calculated by dividing 3 by 5, which would yield a 60% baseline.)

YOUR TOTAL ORGANIZATIONAL BASELINE:

Calculate baseline percentage of "Mostly Agree" answers / total # of questions.

(For example if respondent answers a total of 11 Mostly Agree to 27 questions, the percentage would be calculated by dividing 11 by 27, which would yield a 41% baseline.)

ORGANIZATIONAL
BASELINE ____%

INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT

The goal of this assessment is to learn where the organization as a whole can make progress in cultural and linguistic competency, not to assess individual performance. Please be candid and truthful in your responses.

SECTION A: **LANGUAGE ACCESS**

This section will help you assess your organization's ability to work effectively with people with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and/or disabilities which impact communication.

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
1. My organization has access to disability-related communication services (sign language, Braille transcription, accessibility devices, etc.).	❏	❏	❏
2. Disability-related communication services are available free of charge to people who receive services.	❏	❏	❏
3. My organization has access to foreign language linguistic services (i.e. language translation and interpretation).	❏	❏	❏
4. Foreign language linguistic services are available free of charge.	❏	❏	❏
5. I inform people of the availability of foreign language linguistic services.	❏	❏	❏
6. I have utilized foreign language interpretation and translation services.	❏	❏	❏
7. Documents are available in multiple languages.	❏	❏	❏
8. I inform people of the availability of translated documents.	❏	❏	❏
9. My organization has a way to measure people's satisfaction with translation and interpretation services and I implement it with the people who receive services from me.	❏	❏	❏
10. Financial resources are available to support translation and interpretation services.	❏	❏	❏
	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure

SECTION A TOTALS:
Count the # of answers in each column and total here.   #____   #____   #____

SECTION A BASELINE: **SECTION A:**

Calculate baseline percentage of "Mostly Agree"   **BASELINE ____%**
answers / total # of questions.

(For example, if respondent answers 8 Mostly Agree, the percentage would be calculated by dividing 8 by 10, which would yield a 80% baseline.)

SECTION B: OUTREACH

This section will help you assess your organization's targeted outreach to LEP/ minority communities and the necessary components to making your outreach most effective, including developing relationships with cultural brokers.

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
11. The cultural diversity of the people who receive services from us is reflective of the cultural diversity in our service area.	❏	❏	❏
12. We have a community advisory board (or similar entity) to address community issues specifically related to the cultural groups represented by our clients.	❏	❏	❏
13. We have community partnerships with some of the following: community-based organizations, outreach programs, minority owned businesses, faith-based organizations, and health clinics.	❏	❏	❏
14. We participate in some of the following outreach activities: health/community fairs, public information sessions at our organization and other community centers, distributing fliers and advertising in the community.	❏	❏	❏
15. We have a relationship with a cultural broker. *(Individuals or organizations who understand community needs and outreach strategies that will (and won't) work for a given community)*	❏	❏	❏
16. My organization makes efforts to reach out to individuals and communities from minority cultural and religious backgrounds.	❏	❏	❏
17. Our organization is a welcoming/comfortable place to culturally diverse client populations.	❏	❏	❏
18. Information is shared among staff regarding specific cultural issues and linguistic needs of the communities in our service area.	❏	❏	❏
19. Conflict resolution procedures are (or are likely to be) handled in a way that is culturally competent and able to deal effectively with cultural misunderstandings.	❏	❏	❏
	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
SECTION B TOTALS: **Count the # of answers in each column and total here.**	#____	#____	#____

SECTION B BASELINE:
Calculate baseline percentage of "Mostly Agree" answers / total # of questions.

(For example, if respondent answered Mostly Agree to 6 of the questions, the percentage would be calculated by dividing 6 by 9, which would yield a 66% baseline.)

SECTION B:

BASELINE ____%

SECTION C: STRATEGIC PLANNING

This section will help you assess how your organization has integrated cultural and linguistic competency into your strategic plan, including priority setting, reporting, and assessment.

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
20. My organization has a strong interest in exploring and addressing potential barriers people may face when trying to access the services we provide.	❏	❏	❏
21. Information from community needs assessments is shared with staff.	❏	❏	❏
22. My organization is receptive to input from staff and clients regarding ways to improve cultural and linguistic competency.	❏	❏	❏
23. Advisory & program planning committees are composed of members representing the diverse cultural backgrounds found in the service area.	❏	❏	❏
24. I consider my organization to be culturally and linguistically competent.	❏	❏	❏

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
SECTION C TOTALS: **Count the # of answers in each column and total here.**	#____	#____	#____

SECTION C BASELINE:
Calculate baseline percentage of "Mostly Agree" answers / total # of questions.

(For example, if respondent answers 2 Mostly Agree, the percentage would be calculated by dividing 2 by 5, which would yield a 40% baseline.)

SECTION C:

BASELINE   ____%

SECTION D: STAFF AND TRAINING

This section explores whether the staff and Board of Directors are representative of your service area, and whether training that is tailored to the local demographics of your service area, inclusive of linguistic services, is made available to staff and Board of Directors

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
25. I have been trained in how to recognize when disability-related communication services should be used.	❏	❏	❏
26. I have been trained in how to access and properly use disability-related communication services.	❏	❏	❏
27. I have been trained in how to recognize when spoken foreign language linguistic services should be used.	❏	❏	❏
28. I have been trained in how to access and properly use spoken foreign language linguistic services.	❏	❏	❏
29. My organization actively recruits employees who can speak languages reflective of the needs of the people who receive services.	❏	❏	❏
30. My organization actively recruits employees from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds that are reflective of the service area.	❏	❏	❏
31. My organization actively recruits employees who have experience working with culturally and linguistically diverse populations.	❏	❏	❏
32. The staff reflects the cultural diversity of the organization's service area.	❏	❏	❏
33. The management and Board of Directors reflect the cultural diversity of the organization's service area.	❏	❏	❏
	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
SECTION D TOTALS: **Count the # of answers in each column and total here.**	#____	#____	#____

SECTION D BASELINE:
Calculate baseline percentage of "Mostly Agree" answers / total # of questions.

SECTION D:

BASELINE ____%

(For example if respondent answered Mostly Agree to 6 of the questions, the percentage would be calculated by dividing 6 by 9, which would yield a 66% baseline.)

SECTION E: **SERVICE PROVISION**

Please respond to the following statements honestly. While some answers may seem more apparent, this section is designed to assist you in reflecting on how you work with and view people who receive services & colleagues from culturally and linguistically diverse populations. If you do not work directly with any people or do not feel that the statements are relevant to your job, please make a note of it in the comments area at the end of Section E.

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
34. I recognize that the people who receive services make the ultimate decisions, even though their values and beliefs may be different from my personal and professional values and beliefs.	❏	❏	❏
35. I respect that my co-workers values and beliefs may be different from my personal and professional values and beliefs.	❏	❏	❏
36. I intervene, in an appropriate manner, when I observe other staff engaging in behaviors that appear culturally insensitive or reflect prejudice.	❏	❏	❏
37. It is acceptable to use a method of communication other than spoken English.	❏	❏	❏
38. English proficiency is not a measure of intellectual capacity.	❏	❏	❏
39. The use of a disability-related communication method/device is not a measure of intelligence.	❏	❏	❏
40. I utilize interpreters when working with people whose method of communication is one in which I am not fluent.	❏	❏	❏
41. I have developed skills to utilize an interpreter effectively.	❏	❏	❏
42. I attempt to familiarize myself with methods of communication (including written, verbal, pictures, and/or diagrams), which will be most helpful to the people who receive our services.	❏	❏	❏
43. I write reports (or any form of written communication) in a style and at a level which people, families, and other program participants will understand.	❏	❏	❏
44. I am flexible, adaptive, willing to initiate changes that I believe will better serve people, families, and other program participants from diverse cultures.	❏	❏	❏
45. I continue to learn about the cultures of the people and families served in the program, including attitudes towards disability; cultural beliefs and values; and health, spiritual, and religious practices.	❏	❏	❏

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
46. I am mindful of cultural factors that may be influencing the behaviors of people who receive services, families, and other program participants.	❏	❏	❏
47. I am aware of socio-economic and environmental risk factors that contribute to health and service-access disparities among the communities in my service area.	❏	❏	❏
48. It is appropriate for people to choose varying degrees of acculturation into another culture.	❏	❏	❏
49. 'Family' can be defined differently by different cultures, and the roles family members play may differ between cultures.	❏	❏	❏
50. Gender roles can vary notably among different cultures.	❏	❏	❏
51. Interpersonal power dynamics can vary significantly among different cultures, and between people of different backgrounds (i.e. relationships between 'expert' and client, etc.).	❏	❏	❏
52. Perceptions of health, wellness, and preventative health services may have different meanings from culture to culture.	❏	❏	❏
53. Perceptions of mental and physical disabilities are culturally based, and what is understood to be the 'proper' or 'accepted' approach of interacting with people can vary significantly.	❏	❏	❏
54. Religious beliefs may influence a person's (or his/her family's) approach to mental and physical disabilities.	❏	❏	❏
55. I seek information from community members and other knowledgeable parties to assist in service adaptation to respond to the needs and preferences of culturally and ethnically diverse groups served by my organization.	❏	❏	❏

Please add any additional comments:

	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Unsure
SECTION E TOTALS: (from previous page) **Count the # of answers in each column and total here.**	#____	#____	#____

SECTION E BASELINE: Calculate baseline percentage of "Mostly Agree" answers / total # of questions.

(For example, if respondent answered Mostly Agree to 17 of the questions, the percentage would be calculated by dividing 17 by 22, which would yield a 77% baseline.)

SECTION E:

BASELINE   _____%

YOUR TOTAL INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT BASELINE:

Calculate your baseline percentage of "Mostly Agree" answers / total # of questions.

(For example if respondent answers a total of 34 Mostly Agree to 55 questions, the percentage would be calculated by dividing 34 by 55, which would yield a 62% baseline.)

INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT BASELINE _____%

Compiling Survey Results

In addition to gathering information from respondents to the organizational and individual staff surveys, the most meaningful information will be demonstrated by compiling all the organizational surveys (if several administrators completed them) or all the staff-level surveys.

Please note that the templates can be expanded to record more than five surveys.

ORGANIZATIONAL SURVEYS (27 Questions)

* Please note that "MA" is used here for "Mostly Agree" answers.

Survey #	Section A: MA	Section B: MA	Section C: MA	Section D: MA
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
Total # of surveys x 27= _____	Total #: _____	Total #: _____	Total #: _____	Total #: _____

COMPILED ORGANIZATIONAL BASELINE=

_____ ÷ _____ × _____27_____ = _____
Total # of "Mostly Agree" A+ B+C+D   # of surveys   # of questions 27

INDIVIDUAL SURVEYS (55 Questions)

* Please note that "MA" is used here for "Mostly Agree" answers.

Survey #	Section A: MA	Section B: MA	Section C: MA	Section D: MA	Section E: MA
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
Total # of surveys x 55 = _____	Total #: _____	Total #: _____	Total #: _____	Total #: _____	Total #: _____

COMPILED ORGANIZATIONAL BASELINE=

_____ ÷ _____ × _____55_____ = _____
Total # of "Mostly Agree" A+ B+C+D   # of surveys   # of questions 55

This section will provide a way to understand and contextualize the results of the self-assessment. The assessment has given you an idea of your organizational strengths, as well as areas for growth. Paralleling the sections A-E used in the assessment, on the following pages we have mapped out a menu of sample actions you can take to enhance cultural and linguistic competency.

This is not meant to be a comprehensive list, but rather a place to start. You may find that these sample action items do not include important steps that your organization has identified. By reviewing the action menu, with a focus on the CLC areas that you have prioritized, you will be able to identify which potential steps are within your organizational capacity. The action menu will prepare you for developing your action plan in Part 4 of this toolkit.

In the left column are symbols that give an initial sense of the kind (indicated by the symbol) and level (higher level indicated by double symbol) of resources—money($), time(🕐) and people(☺)—required to implement the specific action steps. The specific resource mix required in any given instance will of course vary according to each organizational context, but our purpose is simply to provide a starting understanding which can be discussed, tested and made more concrete.

Aim:

Ensure that linguistic services, translation and interpretation, are available to people with limited English proficiency (LEP) and/or disabilities for free

Resource Key

Money $ — **Time** � — **People** ☺
Double symbols represent higher level

	$ Gain access to a telephonic interpretation service. (Visit the ASIAC website *www.asiac.org* for a list of potential providers.)
	$$-�-☺ Gain access to document translation providers. Document translation can take place in-house if you have staff whose native language is the target language. Regardless of who translates documents, it is necessary to verify document translation to ensure accuracy. This can be achieved through input from native speakers and/or back translation into English by native English speakers. The native speaker should only be translating into his/her native language.
	�-☺ Create an information sheet to distribute to staff on how to access and use the various translation and interpretation services, so that a quick reference guide is available when needed. (See the Staff & Training section for more detail.)
	$-� Create an information sheet for people on the interpretation and translation services available and translate this sheet into multiple languages, prioritizing based on your service area. Make these available to all people who receive services. Resources such as "Rack Cards" and "I speak" cards may be available to help the provider identify what language the person speaks. These cards are sometimes distributed free from interpretation companies or from local government agencies.

$-🕐

In common public areas, display posters in primary languages of the service area advertising interpretation and translation services.

$-🕐-☺

Identify (or create) for translation a general informational document that describes the organization's programs with necessary contact information.

Begin with the most frequently spoken languages in your service area. For more advanced organizations, consider additional translations as needed, depending on demographic data.

$-🕐-☺

Have available bilingual and bicultural staff members trained in providing translation and interpretation services.

Begin with the most frequently spoken languages in your service area.

☺☺-🕐🕐-$

It is highly recommended that cultural broker relationships be established. These individuals should be able to serve as intermediaries at the most basic level, communicating cultural differences and similarities as well as recommending ways to bridge gaps and improve service provision. A combination of cultural broker relationship internal and external to the organization is recommended. (An example is a bilingual staff member who is hired specifically to provide translation and interpretation services.) Think broadly about whom they can be; these people can be found among staff, volunteers, people who benefit from your services, community advisors, etc.

$$-☺-🕐
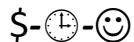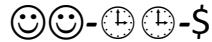
Gain access to disability-related communication services (sign language, Braille transcription, accessibility devices, etc.). Ensure that disability-related communication services are available free of charge to people who receive services. Staff should be trained in how to access these services and documents should be developed for people on their availability.
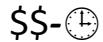
$$-🕐

Gain access to in-person interpretation services.

🕐-☺

Incorporate foreign and disability-related language options as part of an automated phone answering system.

$$-🕐🕐-☺
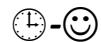
Ensure that your website is accessible in foreign languages (at minimum, the most frequently spoken foreign language in your service area). (This is a more costly endeavor especially when combined with disability access such as audio translation.) Consider resources such as bilingual staff and volunteers, or, as a last resort, adding an automatic translate option (for example a Google translate button) to your website.

🕐-☺
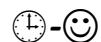
Encourage local county governments and transport providers to access telephone interpretation services (if they have not already done so). With documents available in foreign languages, the likelihood of needing to respond to inquiries in foreign languages increases. (This is for those organizations that have demonstrated a high level of commitment and follow through and are ready to take on an advocacy role.)

SECTION B: **OUTREACH**—Sample Action Menu

Aim:

To work effectively with cultural brokers in conducting targeted outreach among underrepresented groups.

Resource Key

Money $ — **Time** �566 — **People** ☺
Double symbols represent higher level

	�-☺ Identify underrepresented groups in your service area.
	�-☺ Work with cultural brokers to identify effective outreach strategies.
	�-☺ Identify members in the community that would be interested in working with your organization.
	�-☺ Participate in other community and organization events to establish a presence. Establish and build those community and collaborative partnerships.
	��-☺☺ Develop an outreach strategy (this includes identifying where and how to conduct outreach, creating documents, etc.), with clear goals and responsibilities.
	$-�566�566-☺☺ Foster sustainable relationships and recruit effectively by clearly conveying the following when conducting outreach in your target LEP constituencies: • The relevance of the organization's work to the communities they represent; • The interest of the organization in the education and quality of life of the communities they represent;
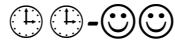
• The capacity for positive change that can result from a
          mutually beneficial relationship;

          • The organization's interest in learning about and responding to the specific needs of the communities they represent.

🕐-☺

Create a space to share with staff regarding cultural and linguistic needs of the communities in your area.

🕐-☺

Increase efforts to support or participate in community events that are not directly related to your field. Encourage mutual goodwill by maintaining a community presence and a willingness to build partnerships even when not directly beneficial to the organization's immediate goals.

$-🕐-☺

Conduct ongoing community needs assessment and work with cultural brokers to conduct surveys and focus groups. This may entail publicizing in other languages and providing translation and interpretation services during the focus groups, or translating the surveys into the target language of the community.

$-🕐-☺
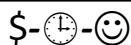
Establish a community/consumer advisory board to evaluate ongoing community projects and services to ensure they are culturally appropriate. Such a board can also be instrumental in providing input for the community needs assessment (mentioned above).

See Strategic Planning for related recommendations.

SECTION C: **STRATEGIC PLANNING**—Sample Action Menu

Aim:

To incorporate and prioritize cultural and linguistic related measures into Strategic Planning.

Resource Key

Money $ — *Time* ☺ — *People* ☺
Double symbols represent higher level

☺-☺

The Office of Minority Health recommends an initial assessment to inventory language- and culture-related strengths (e.g., bilingual staff, relationships with community organizations), weaknesses (e.g., lack of access to interpreters, lack of culturally competent forms for people who receive services), and opportunities for improvement (e.g., recruiting multi-lingual volunteers and staff). If you have gotten this far, you have at minimum conducted an internal assessment. Even after the initial assessment, organizations should periodically continue to conduct internal organizational assessments, which can be integrated into your strategic plan.

☺☺-☺☺-$

If your organization has not conducted an organizational strategic plan, begin by doing so. A strategic plan, with a coherent mission and vision for the organization, is essential for focusing the efforts of everyone in your organization, as well as providing a critical framework for outlining goals, anticipated outcomes, and responsibilities. For instance, if outreach is an organization goal, it is likely to fail if it's unclear what the interim steps are and who is responsible for what.

Although you will have a larger task at hand, it will provide the opportunity for you to integrate cultural and linguistic competency into your plan from the beginning, rather than backtrack. Results from the previously mentioned initial assessment should be used to inform your strategic plan.

☺-☺

Conduct a candid assessment of current regional demographics, including the communities in your service area.

☺-☺

Data collected from ongoing assessments and existing evaluations should be analyzed and used to inform policy/program modifications.

Prioritize language ability in recruitment of staff and volunteers.

Prioritize outreach and recruitment with the goal of increasing the participation of culturally and linguistically diverse community members.

🕐-☺

Invite community members to review the organization's programs, practices, and policies at least once a year. Your organization will receive helpful insight in identifying potential cultural and linguistic barriers, as well as learn new approaches from the input of community members representing diverse backgrounds.

🕐-☺

Ongoing assessments should be integrated into the strategic plan.

• Establish clearly who is responsible for conducting the assessments, the intervals at which they will be conducted, and what will be covered.

• Develop the assessments, using resources and question banks available on the ASIAC website.

🕐

Incorporate cultural and linguistic measures into existing evaluations. Possible approaches:

• Collect basic data on diverse populations (e.g., race, ethnic background, language spoken at home) in satisfaction surveys and evaluate quality of services among different groups.

• For performance reviews, include questions focusing on whether there are differences among ethnic/language/other groups in service utilization (e.g., cancellations and "no-shows"). For example, an examination of "no-show" data could reveal times of day people from specific groups are more likely to break appointments.

🕐🕐-☺☺
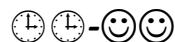
If your organization has already undergone a strategic plan and/or is overdue for the evaluation of an existing plan, this is the place to start.

• Form a small committee charged with developing a comprehensive strategic plan for the organization-wide implementation of the 14 CLAS standards.

• Make all reasonable efforts to include community representation in this committee, in the form of individuals from non-dominant cultural backgrounds.

• Committee members should familiarize themselves with the CLAS standards and related resources (see Appendix A)

• The committee should begin by reviewing the services, policies, and procedures of the organization, using the 14 CLAS standards as a frame of reference. Areas where improvements/modifications can be made should be noted.

$-🕐-☺
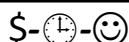
Ensure that community survey instruments are culturally and linguistically appropriate, with translated questionnaires and/or bilingual interviewers.

SECTION D: **STAFF & TRAINING**—Sample Action Menu

⏲-☺

Create an "info sheet" to distribute to staff on how to access interpretation services.

Info sheet and trainings should include the following topics:

• How to access interpretation services;

• Basic interpretation information;

• How to determine if a person is limited English proficient and if the person should be provided linguistic services;

• The internal procedures for requesting an interpreter or accessing telephonic interpretation.

• The differences between telephonic and in-person interpretation, and when each should be used;

• Proper interpretation protocol;

• The different types of disability-related communication services.

Please note that the provider should address the client directly during an interpretation session; separate conversations (between the client/ interpreter or staff/ interpreter) are not appropriate; interpreter must interpret everything the client hears.

⏲-☺

Conduct short 10-minute training sessions for all staff to inform the staff of the availability of these services and how to properly use them (see "info sheet" recommendation). At minimum, any staff member who will have contact with members of the community, either through direct services, outreach, telephone conversations, or the creation of publications should be made aware of these services.

⏲-☺-$

Actively recruit and retain Board and staff members who reflect the demographic composition of your service area.

🕐-☺	Actively recruit and retain Board and staff members who can speak languages in addition to English.
	🕐-☺ Actively recruit and retain Board and staff members from culturally and linguistically diverse populations.
	🕐-☺-$ Staff should receive more in-depth and ongoing training that is tailored to the strengths and challenges of your organization, once those specific strengths and challenges are identified within the self-assessment.
	☺ Hire receptionists and other front line staff with multilingual capacity giving priority to language needs of the local community.
	☺-🕐 Ensure that advisory boards and program planning committees include members of the diverse cultural backgrounds found in the service area.
	☺-🕐-$ Ensure that bilingual/bicultural staff members are trained in providing qualified interpretation.
	$-🕐-☺ Encourage and offer to pay for interpreter certification training to any bilingual staff members interested in advancing their competency. They can receive more specific training, e.g. medical interpretation, legal interpretation, etc. Value diversity and cross cultural skills in organization's hiring and promotion policies.
	☺-🕐 Evaluate your conflict resolution and grievance procedures. Create procedures that increase the likelihood that grievances will be handled in a way that is culturally competent and deals effectively with cultural misunderstandings. If the grievance/conflict involves an LEP individual, ensure that there is a third party interpreter to facilitate the discussion between provider and the individual.
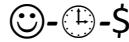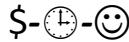
SECTION E: **SERVICE PROVISION**—Sample Action Menu

Improvements in service provision are contingent on addressing the areas that are listed above. Service provision assessment may bring to light certain attitudes that exist within your organization that would allow you to see where most work needs to be done.

Resource Key

Money $ — *Time* ☼ — *People* ☺
Double symbols represent higher level

☼-☺-$$
Implement significant and regular trainings on a variety of topics related to cultural and linguistic competency. Topics could include:

• Introduction to Cultural and Linguistic Competency

• Culture-specific trainings

• Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning (LGBTQ) Trainings

• Harm Reduction 101

• Conflict Grievance Training – Handling conflicts with LEP or culturally diverse communities

• Culturally Competent Crisis Management

☼-☺-$
Plan learning groups and discussions led by "cultural brokers."

☼
Provide opportunities throughout the organization to have regular conversations about cultural and linguistic competency.

☼-☺☺
Invite community and peer organizations to attend annual reviews of organization's policies and practices.

☼-☺☺
Conduct satisfaction surveys and evaluate data to discern how to improve services and overall access.

PART 4:
DEVELOPING A CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC COMPETENCY ACTION PLAN

Identifying your Objectives

Now that you have identified your organization's strengths and areas for improvement, it is time to prioritize. You may find that there are items on the Sample Action Menus in Part 3 that you have already achieved. Check these off and identify the incomplete objectives, prioritizing based on the self-assessment results. If, for example, the self-assessment indicates that your organization can improve Language Access, then indicate that in the prioritization worksheet, "Identifying Your Objectives." Unless you are a linguistic and cultural competency superstar, you will most likely complete charts for each area of competency.

Below is an example of how this chart may look for an organization, followed by a blank template for your organization. This chart focuses on language access and pulls directly from the Action Menu in Part 3. Additional work plan templates can be found on ASIAC's website, *www.asiac.org*.

IDENTIFYING YOUR OBJECTIVES: (EXAMPLE)	
Area of Competency:	**Language Access**
Objective 1:	Gain access to a telephonic interpretation service.
Objective 2:	Identify (or create) for translation a general informational document that describes the organization's programs with necessary contact information. Begin with the most frequently spoken languages in your service area. For a more advanced step, consider additional translations as needed, depending on demographic data.
Objective 3:	Display posters that advertise interpretation and translation services in common client areas.

Duplicate and complete this chart for each relevant area of competency.

IDENTIFYING YOUR OBJECTIVES:	
Area of Competency:	(example: Language Access)
Objective 1:	
Objective 2:	
Objective 3:	
Objective 4:	

Developing an Action Plan

Following your completion of the "Identifying Your Objectives" chart, we recommend developing an action plan for achieving each of these objectives. When completing the action plan, remember that your objectives may require a long-term commitment. Do not be discouraged if there are some items for which the "By When" section is 1 year or even 3 years. However, it is helpful to have a variety of objectives including items that you are able to achieve in the short-term (within 1 year).

Below you will find a sample action plan that is in keeping with the previous example in Part 3. Please review and complete your own for each objective that you have identified. This may seem at first to be a tedious process, but the energy you put into planning will pay off in the implementation stages. Without the breakdown of action steps, you will most likely find yourself putting things off as you become immersed in the multiple demands of your work.

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN (EXAMPLE)						
OBJECTIVE # 1: Gain access to a telephonic interpretation service. COMPETENCY AREA: Language Access Date created: February 1, 2011						
WHO? Primary	Collaborating with	WILL DO WHAT	BY WHEN	EVALUATING MEASURE	ACTION STEPS	RESOURCES NEEDED (staffing & budgetary)
Alexis Hurtado, Language Access Case Manager		Gain access to telephonic & interpretation service.	March 2011 (1 mo.)	Telephonic interpretation services will be available	1. Review resources in section 5 of Toolkit. 2. Create list of potential vendors. 3. Contact vendors and assess services and cost. 4. Propose telephonic & interpretation options to Executive Director for approval. 5. Finalize contract with selected vendors.	A.H. will be primary contact. Will seek assistance from receptionist. A.H. will research cost of services. (unknown at this time, but federal requirement) (See Staff & Training Objectives for development of "info sheet."

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN (EXAMPLE, continued)

OBJECTIVE # 2: Identify (or create) for translation a general informational document that describes the organization's programs with necessary contact information.

Begin with the most frequently spoken languages in your service area. For a more advanced step, consider additional translations as needed, depending on demographic data.

COMPETENCY AREA: Language Access

Date created: February 1, 2011

WHO? Primary	Collaborating with	WILL DO WHAT	BY WHEN	EVALUATING MEASURE	ACTION STEPS	RESOURCES NEEDED (staffing & budgetary)
Alexis Hurtado, Language Access Case Manager	Angel Diego, local Latino church leader

Phi Dang, Vietnamese Business Association leader | Identify (or create) for translation a general informational document that describes the organization programs with necessary contact information.

Begin with the most frequently spoken languages in your service area. For a more advanced step, consider additional translations as needed, depending on demographic data. | May 2011 (3 mo.) | Rack card will be developed and available in Spanish & Vietnamese.

Rack card will be available in minimum of 2 locations (of collaborators) | 1. Update organization general information pamphlet.

2. Contact interpretation and translation vendor selected by organization. Assess cost for pamphlet to be interpreted into Spanish and Vietnamese.

3. Contact Angel and Phi about assisting with back translation.

4. Present pamphlet translation proposal options to Executive Director for approval. (Include cost of thank you gifts for Angel and Phi).

5. Finalize contract including deadlines with vendor.

6. Once translation is complete, share with Angel and Phi for feedback and back translation verification.

7. Finalize design elements and seek final feedback from Angel, Phi, Exec Dir and send to press.

8. Distribute rack card and translated documents to community leaders and display in office. | A.H. will be primary contact. Outreach specialist will assist with design of pamphlet. |

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN (EXAMPLE, continued)

OBJECTIVE # 3: Display posters that advertise interpretation and translation services in common client areas.

COMPETENCY AREA: Language Access

Date created: February 1, 2011

WHO? Primary	Collaborating with	WILL DO WHAT	BY WHEN	EVALUATING MEASURE	ACTION STEPS	RESOURCES NEEDED (staffing & budgetary)
Alexis Hurtado, Language Access Case Manager	Angel Diego, local Latino church leader Phi Dang, Vietnamese Business Association leader	Display posters that advertise interpretation and translation services in common client areas.	April 2011(4 months)	Revisit process for Objective 3.	Revisit steps for Objective 3. Add community review focus groups.	A.H. will be primary contact. Outreach specialist will assist with design of pamphlet and review cultural appropriateness of proposed images.

Duplicate and complete this chart for each objective you have identified.

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

OBJECTIVE #

AREA OF COMPETENCY: (ex: Outreach)

Date created:

WHO? Primary		BY WHEN	EVALUATING MEASURE	ACTION STEPS	RESOURCES NEEDED (staffing & budgetary)
	WILL DO WHAT				
Collaborating with					

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Congratulations on developing a thoughtful, detailed plan of action for improving cultural and linguistic competency (CLC)!

And now that you have a plan, it is time for action. We have included some tips to help you and your collaborators stay on task.

- Remember that where you are today on your journey to improving CLC is simply one point of progress. Culture is moving and changing which means that CLC requires continuous learning.

- Document your process and progress! You will be able to use this information effectively in grant writing both for CLC capacity grants and also for your general service grants.

- Set up a committee to drive this process. (This may already be one of your objectives in the strategic planning section!)

- Ensure that management is involved and committed to the organization's CLC work.

- Schedule regular meetings of this committee (for example, every 2nd and 4th Tuesday at 10am). Be specific and set aside space. Develop a skeletal agenda of report-backs.

- Set times to provide updates on your action plan in staff meetings. It is important that the staff knows of the great work that your committee is doing and feels a part of it too.

- Add markers to the "Developing an Action Plan" worksheet. We did not want to overwhelm you with this chart. However, if you find it useful to do so, you may create additional columns delineating: 1) deadlines for each item listed under Action Steps; 2) dedicated hours/week required for each staff member; 3) a separate space for different types of resources (for example, Staffing, Community, Budgetary Resources).

- After 6 months to 1 year, complete the individual and organizational assessments again and see how far you have come. Have your percentages increased? In which competency areas? This will either provide you motivation as you see the successes or perhaps provide the fuel to get moving if little has changed within the organization.

What about the Money?

Just in case the question of money is still lingering, we want to assure you that this investment in providing equitable and quality services will go a long way. We recommend making a practice of including CLC-related services and practices in your organizational budget - e.g. budget lines for linguistic services, or staff development. In addition to compliance with federal law, you will find that funders will look favorably upon your dedication to cultural and linguistic competency. In difficult economic times, your work on this issue will display your dedication and adaptability.

Currently, grant resources dedicated to implementing CLAS Standards are primarily within Language Access and Outreach. In addition to pursuing grants, nurturing relationships with cultural brokers can play a broader role by connecting an organization to much-needed resources, often in creative ways. Bringing a cultural broker into your organization or working with an existing one will ultimately go a long way, even if it may take some additional time and money.

They can help an organization partner with another organization that may possess needed capacity or expertise. For example, cultural brokers not only are instrumental in conducting outreach but also can assist in connecting providers with linguistic services support. A cultural broker can find volunteers/community members to assist in translating and reviewing the cultural appropriateness of documents. If cultural brokers exist among bilingual/bicultural staff, volunteers or partner organizations, then they themselves may be able to provide interpretation and translation services directly. Ultimately, cultural brokers are connectors to many of these resources that may cost nothing financially or may be significantly less costly than professional outside vendors and consultants.

Similarly, any networks your organization already participates in could function as an invaluable resource in advancing your cultural and linguistic competency without increasing your expense burden. PADDC grantees could connect with one another through the PADDC network and share strategies or plan joint trainings on CLC topics. For developmental disabilities service providers, the Elizabeth Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities is an excellent resource in the region.

Additionally, many CLC resources are available to you on the Internet.

Start Small, Think Big

As you gear up to continue to improve your organization's cultural and linguistic competency, PADDC hopes that this toolkit provides you with an applicable diagnostic tool as well as substantive resources for "paving your way" toward serving the full scope of your constituents, including minority groups who face the greatest barriers.

The toolkit began with an introduction to the history of the project and CLC, and guidelines to maximizing the benefit of this diagnostic tool. Next, we described the framework of self-assessment as a means of identifying gaps in service provision to minority communities and choosing where to focus your organizational resources. Part 3 offered sample action menus according to the primary sections of the assessment: Language Access, Outreach, Strategic Planning, Staff and Training, and Service Provision. And, finally we have provided sample objective and action plans and the templates for your organization to create your own.

Our goal is to provide the tools to take steady, manageable steps towards the broad goal of greatest accessibility to all, including and centering those who are most marginalized. Although the focus of this document is on cultural and linguistic competency, this tool is a template that can be modified to assess and address the needs of various minority groups.

Simply said, we hope you will start small, but think big!

Remember that progress is incremental, and you cannot always predict how it will unfold. But starting small and consciously expanding your grant-seeking, connections to cultural brokers, and participation in networks will help your organization, over time, to gain access to new resources to strengthen your cultural and linguistic competency.

History of CLAS

The CLAS standards were issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of Minority Health (OMH) in 2000 to respond to the need to ensure that all people entering the health care system receive equitable and effective treatment in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner. Although the CLAS standards are primarily directed at large health care organizations, individual providers are also encouraged to use the standards to make their practices more culturally and linguistically accessible. These standards for culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS) were proposed as a means to correct inequities that currently exist in the provision of services and to make these services more responsive to the individual needs of all patients/consumers. The standards are intended to be inclusive of all cultures and not limited to any particular population group or sets of groups; however, they are especially designed to address the needs of racial, ethnic, and linguistic groups that experience unequal access to health services. Ultimately, the aim of the standards is to contribute to the elimination of racial and ethnic health disparities and to improve the health of all Americans.

From the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Competent Services in Healthcare (March 2001).

The 14 standards are organized by themes: Culturally Competent Care (Standards 1-3), Language Access Services (Standards 4-7), and Organizational Supports for Cultural Competence (Standards 8-14).

Culturally Competent Care

Standard 1
Health care organizations should ensure that patients/consumers receive from all staff members effective, understandable, and respectful care that is provided in a manner compatible with their cultural health beliefs and practices and preferred language.

Standard 2
Health care organizations should implement strategies to recruit, retain, and promote at all levels of the organization a diverse staff and leadership that are representative of the demographic characteristics of the service area.

Standard 3
Health care organizations should ensure that staff at all levels and across all disciplines receive ongoing education and training in culturally and linguistically appropriate service delivery.

Language Access Services

Standard 4
Health care organizations must offer and provide language assistance services, including bilingual staff and interpreter services, at no cost to each patient/consumer with limited English proficiency at all points of contact, in a timely manner during all hours of operation.

Standard 5
Health care organizations must provide to patients/consumers in their preferred language both verbal offers and written notices informing them of their right to receive language assistance services.

Standard 6
Health care organizations must assure the competence of language assistance provided to limited English proficient patients/consumers by interpreters and bilingual staff. Family and friends should not be used to provide interpretation services (except on request by the patient/consumer).

Standard 7
Health care organizations must make available easily understood patient-related documents and post signage in the languages of the commonly encountered groups and/or groups represented in the service area.

Organizational Supports for Cultural Competence

Standard 8
Health care organizations should develop, implement, and promote a written strategic plan that outlines clear goals, policies, operational plans, and management accountability/oversight mechanisms to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services.

Standard 9
Health care organizations should conduct initial and ongoing organizational self-assessments of CLAS-related activities and are encouraged to integrate cultural and linguistic competence-related measures into their internal audits, performance improvement programs, patient satisfaction assessments, and outcomes-based evaluations.

Standard 10
Health care organizations should ensure that data on the individual patient's/consumer's race, ethnicity, and spoken and written language are collected in health records, integrated into the organization's management information systems, and periodically updated.

Standard 11
Health care organizations should maintain a current demographic, cultural, and epidemiological profile of the community as well as a needs assessment to accurately plan for and implement services that respond to the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the service area.

Standard 12
Health care organizations should develop participatory, collaborative partnerships with communities and utilize a variety of formal and informal mechanisms to facilitate community and patient/consumer involvement in designing and implementing CLAS-related activities.

Standard 13
Health care organizations should ensure that conflict and grievance resolution processes are culturally and linguistically sensitive and capable of identifying, preventing, and resolving cross-cultural conflicts or complaints by patients/consumers.

Standard 14
Health care organizations are encouraged to regularly make available to the public information about their progress and successful innovations in implementing the CLAS standards and to provide public notice in their communities about the availability of this information.

APPENDIX B:
CASE STUDIES FROM ASIAC'S WORK WITH PADDC GRANTEES

Based on ASIAC's work as a consultant conducting assessments with PADDC grantees, this section highlights three case studies offering a glimpse of the dynamic impact an assessment process can have for organizations on the path to linguistic and cultural competency.

ORGANIZATION A

Background:

Organization A, a partnership of educators, service providers, students and families, employers, consumers, and the community, has a mission to plan and facilitate successful transition of students with disabilities from school programs to adult life. It has no full-time staff and yet has been able to create and sustain long-term projects.

Its service area includes a city that is over 50% Hispanic/Latino, within which there is a significant population of individuals with (or affected by) disabilities. At the time of the assessment, Organization A had made use of its limited resources by producing Spanish-language documents. American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation was also available for events and outreach. Potential stakeholders in the county are plentiful, and the recommendations emphasize building these relationships.

Strengths:

Standards 12 and 2: Organization A recognized the importance of community representation in its work, and has made efforts to recruit Hispanic/Latino members. It has also taken the significant step of hiring a cultural broker to help recruit a more diverse membership and to bolster outreach efforts in the Hispanic/Latino communities. Outreach materials informing parents and other stakeholders of their services are available in Spanish.

Standards 4 & 7: Organization A has made excellent use of limited resources by producing Spanish-language documents. ASL interpretation is currently available for events and outreach. A bilingual cultural broker was recently hired to assist in translation and interpretation in Spanish. Recent efforts have been made to develop an accessible website.

Standard 8: Organization A has clearly written by-laws that delineate its basic structure and hierarchy. General programmatic areas, procedural responsibilities, and governance are well established. Despite lacking full-time staff, Organization A is able to create and sustain long-term projects (no small feat). Council members are enthusiastic and dedicated to making the most of limited resources.

ASIAC's Recommendations:

Outreach: ASIAC recommended that two areas be prioritized: outreach targeting minority populations in the region, and increasing Hispanic/Latino membership of the organization. By working closely with the cultural broker, engaging community organizations, and building a network of interested individuals in the target communities, Organization A could connect with a broader range of stakeholders. ASIAC also recommended hosting informational events targeting Hispanic/Latino communities, as the organization has successfully done in the past, to attract greater community participation. ASIAC underscored the importance of presenting the organization's and community goals as mutually beneficial.

Language Access: Currently, the availability and awareness of translation and interpretation services is unclear. As Organization A steps up efforts to reach out to limited English proficient members of the community, multilingual capability becomes increasingly important. ASIAC recommended that Organization A connect with a telephonic interpretation service capable of providing interpretation when needed; that information on how to access and properly use these services be distributed to organization members; and that the website be made available in multiple languages. For verification of all translations to final products, ASIAC recommended two approaches: review by individuals other than the translator who have strong backgrounds in the target language; and back-translation, where the document is translated by a third party back into the original language, to determine if content was lost.

Strategic Planning: ASIAC recommended Organization A develop a strategic plan, clearly stating its long-term vision, mission and core values, and integrate cultural/linguistic competence goals into this strategic plan. Plan components recommended by ASIAC include a basic analysis of internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats/challenges; and identification of medium- and long-term programmatic goals, specific measurable outcomes, timelines, and responsibilities.

ORGANIZATION B

Background:

Organization B works to promote education that includes all children by providing individual technical assistance, advocacy, and supports to families; to assist institutions of higher education to better prepare teachers to effectively teach all children; and to influence and support schools, policymakers, and the community in effectively implementing inclusive practices and policies. Organization B is a partnership of parents, educators, related professionals and others who believe that children of all backgrounds and abilities should be successfully educated together in their neighborhood schools within the general education curriculum.

Strengths:

Standard 12: Organization B has made a concerted effort to reach new consumers through outreach at community fairs and by contacting supporters through a list serve. The organization also has a relationship with another organization, which provided a Spanish-speaking interpreter for an event sponsored by Organization B. Organization B's staff and board recognize the importance of increasing the cultural competence of their organization and are willing to make changes.

Standard 2: Organization B does have several Parent Consultants who are representative of underserved communities. ASIAC observed from both the site visit and the individual assessments distributed to staff and board that Organization B has a strong interest in diversifying its members.

Standards 4,5,6,7: Members of Organization B have made efforts to expand their translation capacity. Financial resources are available to support translation and interpretation, and these services are available free of charge to consumers. To date, Organization B has used American Sign Language interpretation for a client, translated most of their website and some event flyers into Spanish, and provided a bilingual consultant for an event. Board responses to the organizational survey demonstrated openness to learning more about diverse cultures and interest in initiating changes that will better serve these communities. The board also exhibited a sound understanding of how cultural, environmental and socio-economic factors affect the way consumers will use Organization B.

ASIAC's Recommendations:

Outreach: Organization B should specifically target its outreach efforts to underrepresented communities if the organization wishes to expand the diversity of its consumer base. ASIAC recommended appointing a small committee of board members to spearhead outreach efforts by researching the demographics of its service area and the stigma associated with disability in each community. ASIAC also suggested setting up informational interviews with local community-based organizations to identify effective, culturally relevant outreach strategies and to identify potential cultural brokers including community members, local leaders, business owners and what the organization calls Parent Consultants.

Cultural Brokers: Parent Consultants, although they are not employees, are often the members of Organization B who have the most "face time" with people and community members. In light of this, ASIAC recommended that Organization B recruit Parent Consultants (acting as "cultural brokers") who are representative of underserved communities in order to increase the comfort level of the would-be consumers of Organization B's services.

Language Access: Through the survey process, ASIAC found that awareness of linguistic services was inconsistent: some staff and board members are aware that Organization B provides disability related linguistic services, but others were unsure. Almost all staff reported that they had not been trained on how to access and properly use disability-related communication services or how to recognize when these services should be used. ASIAC recommended that all board members and staff be educated about Organization B's translation and interpretation services. As advocates for the organization, Organization B's board members must make potential clients aware of such services in order to expand into diverse communities. ASIAC suggested that Organization B's board members schedule a meeting to discuss how to recognize when linguistic and translation services are needed and how to use them properly. Because most consumer intake is done through phone or email, ASIAC recommended using a pay-as-you-go telephone interpretation service, which offers short connection times and access to well over a hundred languages. Organization B could also request telephone interpreters who are proficient in the terminology used by the developmental disability service community. Instructions to use telephonic interpretation should be typed out and given to each staff/board member for reference. Board members and staff should also be briefed on how to use in-person translation, should the need arise.

For a past event, Organization B used a volunteer to translate a flyer into Spanish. ASIAC recommended that Organization B hire a professional translator for future documents to assure quality and accuracy. A related recommendation was that translated documents should be back-translated to the original language, reviewed by target audience groups to make sure that the language is culturally appropriate, and periodically updated. Any documents handed out to consumers should be translated into languages most commonly used in the community, which would require Organization B to research cultural and ethnic demographics of the areas they serve. ASIAC emphasized that not only should these documents contain translated information about Organization B, but they should also plainly state that interpretation and translation services are available for any client.

ORGANIZATION C

Background:

Organization C is an established advocacy organization concerned with the human, civil, and legal rights of people with disabilities.

Strengths:

Standards 2,4,5,7,8,10,11,12: Overall, ASIAC observed that Organization C has many resources in place for linguistic services and there is a strong emphasis on outreach and community involvement. In addition, Organization C is already aware of and has experience addressing many issues that ASIAC has found to be critical for a culturally and linguistically competent organization. The specific strengths that Organization C has in cultural and linguistic competency include the following:

- Organization C has multilingual staff and has hired staff with backgrounds similar to people in the service area in order to improve outreach efforts. (Standard 2)

- Linguistic services are available for free to people who receive services and multilingual documents have been developed. (Standard 4.5.7)

- The Outreach Committee from Organization C has developed a strategic plan outlining priorities for Organization C's cultural and linguistic competence. (Standard 8)

- Organization C monitors service area demographics and consumer demographics. (Standards 10 & 11)

- The Outreach Committee works with partner organizations and communities to collaborate on programs and services. All staff members are required to conduct outreach activities. (Standard 12)

ASIAC's Recommendations:

Even for an organization with significant strengths, the assessment uncovered areas where improvements can be made.

Staff awareness and training: Although Organization C had access to both in-person and telephonic multilingual interpretation services and had hired multilingual staff in various capacities throughout the organization, the assessments and site visits indicated that improved information dissemination and/or training would lead to improved quality of services, addressing CLAS Standards 3 and 6. Of primary concern to ASIAC was the lack of a cohesive system of training and information sharing relating to interpretation services. Translation and interpretation resources were available, but a significant percentage of staff reported being unaware or unprepared to make use of these language-related resources. ASIAC recommended that short training sessions be held to inform staff of the availability of these services and how to properly use them. ASIAC recommended that information sheets on how to use the various linguistic services be produced and distributed, so that a quick reference guide is available when needed.

Ongoing Assessments of Linguistic and Cultural Competency: Another area where Organization C can utilize its preexisting infrastructure and procedures to improve its linguistic and cultural competency is by incorporating CLAS Standards into the current measures Organization C's Outreach Committee takes to reduce barriers to access. Organization C does not currently conduct any regular, structured internal assessments of the organization, and therefore does not have a formal way of detecting emerging or hidden problems. Additionally, it does not appear that any specific cultural and linguistic standards are being used by the Outreach Committee. In the interest of employing

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a strengths-based approach, ASIAC has suggested that the Outreach Committee do this work because the Committee is already involved in CLAS-related activities. Organization C's Outreach Committee has the capacity to conduct annual or biannual internal assessments, along with the ability to integrate cultural and linguistic competency measures into existing evaluations (which do solicit organizational input and seek to identify areas where services can be modified/improved.)

Community Involvement: In addition to prioritizing strategic planning and ongoing assessment (Standard 9), ASIAC encouraged community involvement in this process (Standard 12). Organization C has experience in developing community partnerships that can be extended to include cultural stakeholders. Representatives from community organizations (or other similar individuals) can be a valuable resource for developing the assessments and identifying potential weaknesses.

Sharing Linguistic and Cultural Competency Work: Because Organization C has developed some notable strengths and experience in this area, it is positioned well to make publicly available its linguistic and cultural competency work (Standard 14) and help improve the services of organizations that share common goals through the release of information and "best-practices" data. The benefits of publishing information about CLAS-related progress and achievements are twofold:

Supporting peer organizations. By releasing information about how cultural and linguistic issues were identified and addressed, Organization C can provide invaluable resources to other organizations wishing to improve their services.

Public accountability. Releasing information on the efforts and successes of CLAS-related activities supports a continuous quality improvement process and informs the public of how the institution uses public funds to serve their communities.

By sharing this information with the public, Organization C will establish itself as a leader in the field, and create an incentive to make continuous self-improvements. This information will also help reinforce the organization's public image with potential consumers and partner organizations as an organization dedicated to overcoming a wide range of barriers.