

Culturally Competent Care for Oral Health Professionals

As part of our mission, we strive to provide health care in a respectful, understandable, and effective manner to an increasingly diverse population.

Provide quality dental care to our increasingly diverse membership by taking a health disparities and cultural competency training course. Cultural competency training is an integral component, long-term goal, and critical success factor to Participants' access to and receipt of quality services.

Why is culturally competent care important?

As the population becomes more ethnically diverse, health care systems and providers need to respond to patients' varied perspectives, values, and behaviors about health and well-being. Failure to understand and manage social and cultural differences may have significant health consequences for minority groups in particular.

The culture of different ethnic groups may influence:

- An individual's health, healing, and wellness belief systems.
- How a patient perceives illness and disease, and their causes.
- The behaviors of patients who are seeking health care and their attitudes toward health care providers.

The provider who looks at the world through his or her own limited set of values or experiences can compromise the delivery of services to patients from other cultures.¹

Learning about culturally competent care

If you have not taken a health disparities and cultural competency training course in the past three years, there are many online, no-cost accredited programs and courses for continuing education credits.

You can take the course offered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health, **Cultural Competency Program for Oral Health Professionals**, to help improve access to care, quality of care, and oral health outcome for all your patients. This free online program can be accessed at <https://oralhealth.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov>. You can earn up to six continuing education credits.

Visit Think Cultural Health at www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/education for more information on resources to bring cultural competency to your dental practice.



If you have questions about providing culturally competent care, the Cultural Competency Program for Oral Health Professionals, please contact your dental Account Executive:

Southwest Pennsylvania

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¹ Betancourt JR, Green AR, Emilio Carrillo J. Cultural Competence in Health Care: Emerging Frameworks and Practical Approaches. The Commonwealth Fund, October 2002. Available at: www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/fund-reports/2002/oct/cultural-competence-in-health-care--emerging-frameworks-and-practical-approaches.

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