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Title

The Attitudes of Mental Health Agency and CBO Leaders Towards a CLAS Organizational Assessment

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8t5288vp>

Authors

Rodriguez Hernandez, Zuleica
Aguilar-Gaxiola, Sergio

Publication Date

2021

Data Availability

The data associated with this publication are not available for this reason: N/A

Zuleica Rodriguez, MPH; Sergio Aguilar-Gaxiola, M.D., Ph.D.

Introduction

Culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS) play an essential role in addressing health disparities. While experts recognize the importance of self-assessments for improving CLAS, the attitudes of organizational leaders towards CLAS organizational assessments are not well understood nor are their experiences with developing plans to better meet the National CLAS Standards.

Objectives

1. Understand leaders' attitudes towards the assessment and understand the value of the CLAS organizational assessment in planning and implementing CLAS.
2. Explore the actions organizations are taking to operationalize the CLAS standards.
3. Evaluate the impact of COVID-19 on delivering CLAS.

Methods

- Solano County Behavioral Health and their contracted mental health agencies and CBOs were contacted.
- A total of 7 in-depth interviews were conducted with the organization leaders.
- A code book was created after reviewing the interview transcripts. Major themes and subthemes were identified.

Results

Major themes and subthemes:

Attitudes towards the assessment:

- Helpful for prioritizing CLAS Standards
- Comprehensive/Informative
- Inapplicable assessment/results

Operationalizing CLAS:

- Language assistance
- Increasing knowledge of CLAS
- Cultural diversity

Compromise of services during COVID-19

- Limited access to services
- Temporary halt on CLAS initiatives

Recommendations for improving the assessment

- Including organizations during the development of the assessment tool
- More inclusive of sexual and gender identity in the assessment
- Condense the assessment

Illustrative quotes:

"We are able to pinpoint areas that we are doing well in and then those areas that we need to focus on."

"The areas that were highlighted or suggested for improvement I think were areas that we just really had questions about or weren't sure of during the assessment that we compiled."

"We need to hire people in leadership positions who will create cultural diversity."

"Very resilient clients are now left to access even more limited resources out in the community."

"We have seen a noticeable decline in attendance across the board with virtual services."

Discussion

- The CLAS organizational assessment helped County, mental health agency, and CBO leaders identify which CLAS Standards should be prioritized within their organization.
- CLAS initiatives were put on a temporary hold during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Participants concluded the CLAS organizational assessment could be improved.

Abstract here:



Acknowledgements:

Special acknowledgement to Dr. Duong and Maria Alaniz, MPH, of the UC Davis Center for Reducing Health Disparities and Dr. Rainwater, director of the UC Davis Schools of Health Evaluation Unit. Special thanks to the SCBH leader and CBO leaders who provided their valuable time during such unprecedented times.