

Cultural competency and patient engagement

Background: As an element of our provider directory, Amerigroup District of Columbia, Inc. includes whether a participating provider has taken cultural competency training. This is based in part on Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services requirements. Please find the *Cultural Competency Training* on our DC provider website at <https://providers.amerigroup.com/DC> > Provider Resources & Documents > Provider Training. After you complete the training, you must complete and sign the *Cultural Competency and Disability Sensitivity Training Attestation* located at the end of the slide deck to get credit and be updated in our provider directory. You may email the attestation back to us at dcproviderdata@amerigroup.com or fax it to 1-855-875-3629.

We are committed to cultural competency

As a contracted health care provider with Amerigroup, our expectation is for you and your staff to continually increase your knowledge and skill, as well as improve your attitude, about the sensitivities of diverse cultures. This results in effective care and services for all people by taking into account each person's values, reality conditions and linguistic needs.

How does culture impact the care provided?

Culture informs us of:

- Concepts of health and healing.
- How illness, disease and their causes are perceived.
- The behaviors of patients who are seeking health care.
- Attitudes toward health care providers.

Using professionally trained interpreters:

- Hold a brief introductory discussion with the interpreter:
 - Introduce yourself and give a brief nature of the call/visit.
 - Reassure the patient about your confidentiality practices.
- Be prepared to pace your discussion with the patient to allow time for interpretation.
- Avoid interrupting during interpretation.

Disability sensitivity and awareness

Title II and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 Rehabilitation Act of 1973 require that medical care providers offer individuals with disabilities:

- Full and equal access to their health care services and facilities.
- Reasonable modifications to policies, practices and procedures when necessary to make health care services fully available to individuals with disabilities unless the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the services.

From the first contact a member has with your office, the staff should be knowledgeable about not refusing services, not providing separate or unequal access to health care services to any individual with a disability, and not giving the appearance of discrimination against any person.

Accommodations for those with disabilities

You must deliver services in a manner that accommodates the needs of members by:

- Providing interpreters or translators for members who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Having an understanding of disability-competent care.
- Ensuring individuals with disabilities and their companions are provided with reasonable accommodations to ensure effective communication (including auxiliary aids and services).
- Having accessible facilities.
- Providing reasonable modifications/accommodations.

The *Disability Etiquette* publication from the United Spinal Association offers tips on interacting with people with disabilities. For more information, visit <https://www.unitedspinal.org/pdf/DisabilityEtiquette.pdf>.