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January 8, 2024

Dear Bureau of Prevention Treatment and Recovery contract grantee:

This letter provides an update on the Bureau of Prevention Treatment and Recovery's (BPTR) expectations for contract grantees to implement the Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) Standards.

The purpose of implementing the CLAS Standards is to make Wisconsin's behavioral health system more equitable and inclusive. For BPTR, the CLAS Standards are one way to improve the quality of behavioral health services provided to all individuals, which will ultimately help reduce health disparities and achieve health equity. The CLAS Standards are about respect and responsiveness: respect the whole individual and respond to the individual's health needs and preferences.

Our goal was to begin implementation of the CLAS Standards across contract grantees last year. The initial plan was released in a memo distributed to all contract grantees in March 2022. The guidance in the March 2022 memo is no longer current. We've removed this memo from our website.

The information contained in this letter is our new guidance.

The implementation of CLAS Standards across BPTR contract grantees is scheduled to begin **January 1, 2024**.

We are requiring all contract grantees to:

- **Learn about the CLAS Standards.** Use the "[Behavioral Health Implementation Guide for the National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services](#)," a publication of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, as a reference to understand how the CLAS Standards can be incorporated into the work of your program/agency.
- **Form a team.** Consistent with CLAS Standards, create a team, either at the program level or agency level, dedicated to CLAS Standards implementation. Teams with a diverse membership that include program/agency leadership work best.
- **Complete the CLAS Standards Assessment Planning Tool.** Use [this tool](#) to assess the current application of CLAS Standards within your program/agency.
- **Create a CLAS Standards implementation plan.** Based on the results from the CLAS Standards Assessment Planning Tool, create an implementation plan that identifies up to two CLAS Standards to strengthen or implement in your program/agency.

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- **Put the implementation plan in place.** Once the program/agency team and implementation plan are identified, begin your CLAS Standards implementation efforts.
- **Review the implementation plan.** The CLAS Standards Assessment Planning Tool should be reviewed periodically and completed each year. Your BPTR contract administrator will ask to review the completed CLAS Standards Assessment Planning Tool and your implementation plan during annual site visits.

Contracts initiated and renewed after January 1, 2024, will include a revised [Exhibit 4](#) that outlines all the requirements for CLAS Standards implementation.

Your BPTR contract administrator is available to support you in implementing the CLAS Standards.

If you have more than one contract with us, you can choose to create a CLAS Standards implementation plan for your entire agency or plans for each program funded by us.

Thank you for being one of our valued community partners in protecting and promoting the health and safety of the people of Wisconsin. We look forward to working with you on implementing the CLAS Standards.

Sincerely,



Teresa Steinmetz

Director

Bureau of Prevention Treatment and Recovery