Cultural Diversity

Overview

Anthem identifies health disparity trends for Covered Individuals based on key clinical quality metrics, evidence-based research, or member experience metrics and conducts research on best practices to help educate Providers, Facilities and others about how to reduce health disparities. Specifically, Anthem:

1. Monitors the quality of health care for actionable health and health care disparities trends
   a. Identifies clinical and geographic areas exhibiting health and health care disparities and designs appropriate interventions to help close the disparity gaps
   b. Establishes baseline data and measures/evaluates the results of program interventions
   c. Supports Covered Individual access to equitable treatment, standards of care and services based on their Plan benefits
2. Promotes Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (“CLAS”)
   a. Offers education, tools and subject matter expertise to Providers and Facilities that may help them achieve the shared goal of providing quality care and service equally to their patients
   b. Facilitates cultural competency of Anthem associates to meet the Covered Individuals’ needs for culturally sensitive, linguistically appropriate care and service
   c. Offers education, tools and subject matter expertise to Covered Individuals that may help them improve their health literacy, allowing better communication with their doctors and Anthem about their health care and service
3. Develops programs to help improve health status and outcomes
   a. Promotes consumer-centered care that addresses the Covered Individuals’ values, needs and preferences in reaching optimal health care and outcomes standards
   b. Supports communities in which Anthem does business with cultural and linguistic programs and services
   c. Collaborates with other industry and government efforts to help reduce and eliminate health disparities

Anthem strives to promote the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health’s National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services in Health and Health Care (the National CLAS standards). [https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas/standards](https://www.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/clas/standards)

Learning Opportunities

Anthem recognizes that Providers and Facilities can encounter challenges when delivering health care services to a diverse population. Those challenges arise when Providers and Facilities need to cross a cultural divide to treat patients who may have different behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs concerning health care.
In response, Anthem offers online educational experiences for providers – e.g., “Moving Toward Equity in Asthma Care.”

Built upon extensive research and data analytics, the experience offers 1 hour of Continuing Medical Education (“CME”) credit through the American Academy of Family Physicians, and includes scenarios that fulfill the following learning objectives:

- Describe common racial and ethnic asthma disparities – and their effects on diverse patients’ ability to successfully control their asthma.
- Describe ways providers may unknowingly contribute to poor asthma care for diverse populations.
- Explain ways providers can improve the quality of asthma care to enhance outcomes among African Americans, Hispanic and Asian patients.
- Explain the importance of using spirometry to assess the severity of asthma accurately.
- Explain the concept of “unconscious bias.”

A “Resources” section contains additional information on asthma disparities, as well as culturally relevant asthma materials to print and share with diverse patients.

The experience was developed in an effort to address the substantial gaps in asthma care and outcomes for diverse populations.

Primary Audiences include: Physicians (Family Practice, Pediatrician, Pulmonologist, Allergist Immunologist), Nurse Practitioners, Registered Nurse (RN), Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN), and Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN).

The course is available at www.anthem.com/asthma.equity (on demand) and is accessible from any mobile device, laptop, or desktop computer. Users must have access to Internet Explorer (9 or later), Google Chrome (38 or later), Safari (5 or later), Mozilla Firefox (32 or later).

**Toolkit**

In addition, a Toolkit, called "Caring for Diverse Populations," was developed to give Providers’ and Facilities specific tools for breaking through cultural and language barriers in an effort to better communicate with their patients. Sometimes the solution is as simple as finding the right interpreter for an office visit. Other times, a greater awareness of cultural sensitivities can open the door to the kind of interaction that makes treatment plans most effective: Has the individual been raised in a culture that frowns upon direct eye contact or receiving medical treatment from a member of the opposite sex? Is the individual self-conscious about his or her ability to read instructions?

This toolkit gives Providers and Facilities the information needed to answer those questions and continue building trust. It will enhance Providers and Facilities’ ability to communicate with ease, talking to a wide range of people about a variety of culturally sensitive topics. And it offers cultural and linguistic training to office staff so that all aspects of an office visit can go smoothly.

We strongly encourage Providers and Facilities to access the complete toolkit:


The toolkit contents are organized into the following sections:
Improving Communications with a Diverse Patient Base
- Encounter tips for Providers and their clinical staff
- A memory aid to assist with patient interviews
- Help in identifying literacy problems

Tools and Training for Your Office in Caring for a Diverse Patient Base
- Interview guide for hiring clinical staff who have an awareness of cultural competency issues
- Availability of Medical Consumerism training for health educators to share with patients

Resources to Communicate Across Language Barriers
- Tips for locating and working with interpreters
- Common signs and common sentences in many languages
- Language identification flashcards
- Language skill self-assessment tools

Primer on How Cultural Background Impacts Health Care Delivery
- Tips for talking with people across cultures about a variety of culturally sensitive topics
- Information about health care beliefs of different cultural backgrounds

Regulations and Standards for Cultural and Linguistic Services
- Identifies important legislation impacting cultural and linguistic services, including a summary of the “Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services” (“CLAS”) standards which serve as a guide on how to meet these requirements.

Resources for Cultural and Linguistic Services
- A bibliography of print and Internet resources for conducting an assessment of the cultural and linguistic needs of a practice’s patient population
- Staff and physician cultural and linguistic competency training resources
- Links to additional tools in multiple languages and/or written for limited English proficiency

The toolkit contains materials developed by and used with the permission of the Industry Collaboration Effort (“ICE”) Cultural and Linguistics Workgroup, a volunteer, multi-disciplinary team of providers, health plans, associations, state and federal agencies, and accrediting bodies working collaboratively to improve health care regulatory compliance through public education. More information on the ICE Workgroup may be obtained on the ICE Workgroup website: http://www.iceforhealth.org/home.asp

Cultural competency training available on anthem.com

Creating an LGBT-Friendly Practice: Bridging Multicultural Health Care Gaps

What you may not know about your Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Transgender (“LGBT”) patients may be putting their health at risk. Studies have shown that many LGBT patients fear they will be treated differently in health care settings and that this fear of discrimination prevents them from seeking primary care. Anthem joins you in striving for the best clinical outcomes for everyone, including LGBT populations. That’s why Anthem has created an online experience that provides strategies, tools, and resources to Providers and Facilities interested in attracting or maintaining an LGBT patient panel. Hopefully, as a result of increasing
LGBT-friendly practices, we will see an increase in primary care and prevention among LGBT patients. Like you, Anthem strives to meet the needs of our diverse membership and upholds access to consistently high quality standards across our networks. We believe that by offering our Providers and Facilities these types of experiences, we can help keep all our Covered Individuals healthy. In addition, this online experience reinforces our commitment to equality for our LGBT Covered Individuals as referenced in our Provider and Facility contractual non-discrimination provisions.

Visit the provider pages online at www.anthem.com/lgbt for free 24/7 access to the experience – either via your computer, tablet or smartphone. You will gain an increased understanding of how to create an LGBT-friendly practice, which may improve the health of your patients. Approved for 1 AAFP Prescribed credit, which is equivalent to AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™.