

CLAS Implementation Plan

TMF Quality Innovation Network

Problem

In order to improve the equity of patient outcomes, quality improvement strategy must be multi-faceted and leverage the engagement of patients, families and community members to create culturally and linguistically appropriate care delivery.

Methods

The TMF Quality Innovation Network-Quality Improvement Organization (QIN-QIO) Health Equity Improvement Strategy builds awareness of health disparities through educational programs, and uses stratified data to identify health disparities and provide technical assistance to health care providers and stakeholders across four states, the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Interventions

Key to this strategy is leveraging tools and resources that support the delivery of equitable, patient-centered care, such as the National Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) standards tool for effective cross-cultural communication, and demonstrating results of the impact patients, families and community members have experienced. For example, Patient and Family Advisory Council members are key partners in the development of patient-facing resources, such as zone tools and patient hospital admission guides (Figure 1).

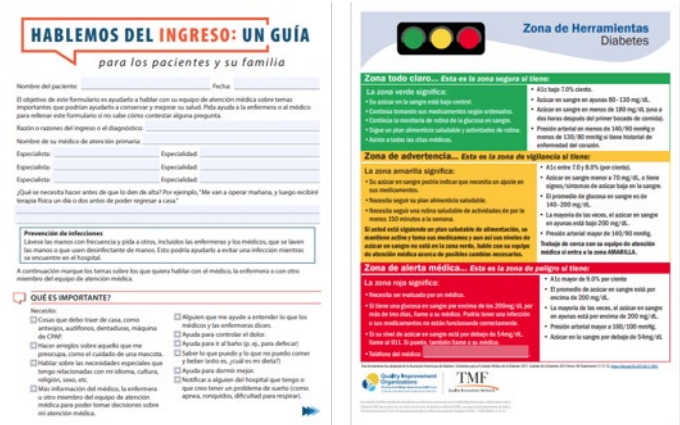


Figure 1

Results

The TMF QIN-QIO will use the following metrics to track progress:

- Number of providers who develop a CLAS implementation action plan using the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' CLAS checklist: An Implementation Checklist for the National CLAS Standards
- Number of providers trained on updating their health education, communication and Medicare beneficiary-engagement products to ensure that CLAS considerations are included to advance health equity

Next Steps

The TMF QIN-QIO will continue to leverage CLAS standards by:

- Educating health care organization leaders on how to communicate effectively with patients with diverse communication needs and preferences, specifically targeting CLAS theme 2 Communication and Language Assistance, standards 5 – 8.
- Evaluating its member organization's implementation of the CLAS standards to better understand areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. Findings will provide a baseline measure of CLAS implementation that can be tracked and monitored, and will inform and focus the TMF QIN-QIO's technical assistance.
- The TMF QIN-QIO also uses health equity data from claims data and consumer data to drive action at the community level, track progress and evaluate the improvements health care providers in our region have made.

