



# One Size Does Not Fit All: Meeting the Health Care Needs of Diverse Populations

As the diversity of our nation continues to grow, the multiplicity of languages, dialects, and cultures that hospitals and their staff encounter can be overwhelming. *Hospitals, Language, and Culture: A Snapshot of the Nation* (HLC) is a cross-sectional qualitative study, funded by The California Endowment, designed to explore how 60 hospitals across the country provide health care to culturally and linguistically diverse patient populations. Their latest report, *One Size Does Not Fit All: Meeting the Health Care Needs of Diverse Populations* provides a framework for hospitals to develop and employ practices for meeting diverse patient needs.

There is no “one size fits all” solution, and the road map to cultural competence is unique for each organization. However, based on data gathered from the HLC study, this report recommends that organizations:

- Identify the needs of the patient population being served and assess how well these needs are being met through current systems
- Bring people across the organization together to explore cultural and language issues by sharing experiences, evaluating current practices, discussing barriers, and identifying gaps
- Make assessment, monitoring, and evaluation of cultural and language needs and services a continuous process
- Implement a range of practices spanning all four themes in a systemic manner aligned with patient needs and organizational resources

## Framework Overview

The thematic framework presented in this report was derived from *current practices* that hospitals are employing to provide care and services to diverse patients.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Building a Foundation</b></p> <p>Policies and procedures that systemically support efforts to meet the needs of diverse patients can help elevate the priority of these issues within the organization, drive efforts, and draw staff support</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Collecting and Using Data to Improve Services</b></p> <p>Data collection and use allows the effectiveness and utilization of cultural and language services to be monitored, measured, and evaluated, which can be useful for planning and designing services</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Accommodating the Needs of Specific Populations</b></p> <p>Developing practices that address the challenges of certain populations contributes to providing safe, quality care and decreasing health disparities</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Establishing Internal and External Collaborations</b></p> <p>Collaborations can provide hospitals with additional opportunities for developing cultural and language programs and services when resources are limited or help them engage the community to share information and resources</p>

To help hospitals and other health care organizations tailor initiatives to meet the needs of their diverse patient populations, this report includes a self-assessment tool that organizations can use to initiate discussions about the needs, resources, and goals for providing the highest quality care to every patient served .

Please visit [www.jointcommission.org/PatientSafety/HLC](http://www.jointcommission.org/PatientSafety/HLC) to download a free copy of the report.