

### Background

Oregon's racial and ethnic populations are growing at a faster rate than the nation, with one in five (21.5%) or 800,000 Oregonians identified as people of color (US Census 2010). According to the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), up to 40% of Oregon Health Plan enrollees may be people of color (Aug 2014). In 2010, at least 137 languages were spoken in the state, making Oregon one of the 15 most language-diverse states in the nation. With Oregon's growing diversity and strong evidence of racial and ethnic health disparities, it is important that health care professionals are educated to work effectively with diverse groups. A key strategy within Oregon's Action Plan for Health (2010) is to ensure that health care providers receive ongoing training in cultural competence.

### Benefits of Cultural Competence Continuing Education

Studies show that cultural competence training can help improve health outcomes for diverse populations who are disproportionately affected by health disparities and inequities and reduce costs for health systems. Key benefits include:

- Improved patient-provider communication and patient adherence to treatment
- Improved provider self-reported perception and understanding of cultural competence
- Increased ability to provide patient-centered care
- Cost savings due to increased access to appropriate care and higher levels of patient engagement.
- Cost savings through improved service delivery and the reduction of costly inpatient and urgent care costs
- Cost savings through the reduction of liability issues

### Recommendations From National Health and Health Care Professional Organizations

Efforts to advance cultural competence continuing education in Oregon align with national health and health care professional organization efforts. Organizations that have recommended cultural competence trainings for their providers include, but are not limited to:

- American Medical Association
- American Nurses Association
- American Dental Association
- American Dental Education Association
- Association of American Medical Colleges
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Academy of Family Physicians
- Oncology Nursing Society
- Society for Public Health Education

Since 2003, The Joint Commission has recognized that issues of cultural competence should no longer be considered simply a patient's right, but an essential component of quality care and patient safety. In 2011, The Joint Commission began requiring cultural competency as a condition of their accreditation.

The Patient Protection and Care Act of 2010 includes provisions for promoting cultural competency in health care service delivery through training of the health care workforce. The Act intends to provide support for development of model curricula in cultural competence training.

### Development of Recommendations

#### 2012 Cultural Competence Continuing Education Committee

Informed by 2011 legislative efforts through [Senate Bill \(SB\) 97](#) to advance cultural competence continuing education for health care professionals, Oregon Health Authority Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) worked with community stakeholders to explore opportunities to promote cultural competence continuing education for health care professionals. The Committee developed a definition of cultural competence and identified "essential" and "advanced" standards for culturally competent practice. The Committee also produced a list of available continuing education options, and provided recommendations to advance cultural competent continuing education in Oregon. The final report and recommendations are available at: [www.oregon.gov/oha/oei](http://www.oregon.gov/oha/oei) (see Data and Reports).

## 2014 House Bill 2611 Rules Advisory Committee

During the 2013 legislative session, [House Bill \(HB\) 2611](#) passed into law (ORS 413.450). This [law](#) creates requirements for OHA, through OEI, to provide resources and support for improving the cultural competence of regulated health care professionals in Oregon and to report to the Oregon Legislative Assembly about the level of participation in cultural competence education among these professionals. Stat. Auth.:ORS 413.450, 2013 Oregon Law.

In 2014, OHA worked with community stakeholders through the Rules Advisory Committee to develop permanent rules for HB 2611.

The [Oregon Administrative Rules](#) (943-090-0000 to 943-090-0020) requires OHA to:

- Establish an advisory committee to:
  - ◇ Develop and update criteria and process for approving cultural competence continuing education opportunities;
  - ◇ Recommend cultural competence continuing education opportunities to OHA for approval;
  - ◇ Work with OHA to implement the process;
- Establish and maintain a list of OHA approved CE opportunities; and
- Beginning August 2018, report to the Legislative Assembly biennially on participation levels of health care professionals in cultural competence continuing education.

The rules also require health professional licensing boards to report biennially to OEI on cultural competence continuing education participation levels, specifically:

- The number of regulated health care professionals who completed cultural competence continuing education;
- The number of audited health care professionals who completed cultural competence continuing education [from the OHA approved list](#);
- Licensee requirements for participation in cultural competence continuing education, as determined by each board; and
- The level of reporting each board requires of member related to participation in cultural competence continuing education.

The first report is due Aug 2017 to include Jan 1 to June 30, 2017 data at a minimum.

## 2015 Cultural Competence Continuing Education Approval Committee (Advisory Committee)

OHA convened the Cultural Competence Continuing Education Approval Committee in February 2015 to advise OHA on the development of criteria and process to approve a list of cultural competence continuing education opportunities, and to work with OHA to implement the process.

### What are licensed health care professionals required to do through ORS 413.450?

- Check with your licensing board to determine if cultural competence continuing education is now a requirement of your license. (Not all boards require this CE);
- Track your cultural competence continuing education completion. Note if the CE course is on the OHA approved list, which will be available at: [www.oregon.gov/oha/oei](http://www.oregon.gov/oha/oei).

### If the cultural competence training I take is not on the OHA approved list, will I be in violation of the new law?

No, it is not legally required that the cultural competence training health care professionals take come from the OHA-approved list.

### What are the benefits of taking cultural competence training from the OHA approved list?

The purpose of creating the list is to provide cultural competence CE opportunities that have met specific criteria for high quality and standards of excellence in cultural competency education.

### When will the OHA approved list of cultural competence CE opportunities be available?

A list of initial trainings will be available by Spring 2016 at: [www.oregon.gov/oha/oei](http://www.oregon.gov/oha/oei).