Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS)

* *CLAS is an important way to help eliminate health care disparities because CLAS helps overcome cultural and linguistic barriers, which can lead to miscommunications and therefore poorer quality of care.*
* *The enhanced National CLAS Standards, published in 2013, are organized into one Principal Standard — to provide effective, equitable, understandable, respectful, and quality care and services that are responsive to diverse cultural health beliefs and practices, preferred languages, health literacy, and other ...*
* *Why Is Cultural Respect Important?*

*Cultural respect is critical to reducing health disparities. It helps improve access to high-quality health care that is respectful of and responsive to the needs of diverse patients.*

* *What are some examples of cultural barriers in healthcare?*

*“These challenges are diverse and include insecurity to engage with patients, misunderstanding of patients, more directive communication, negative impacts on shared decision making, more time-consuming communication, perceived power distance between patients and physicians, etc.,” the researchers reported.*

* *What does culturally and linguistically appropriate mean?*

Culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS) are respectful of and responsive to the health beliefs, practices and needs of diverse patients. AHRQ has tools, training, and reports to help health systems deliver CLAS so that all patients receive high quality care and achieve good health outcomes.