



MILIEU

Cultural Competency & Diversity Report
2016-2017

Introduction

Milieu reviews and revises the Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan annually. Cultural Competency refers to a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes and policies that enables human service organizations to work effectively with various racial, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups.

Milieu looks at trends within the agency and community to determine the needs of the organization, individuals served, and our stakeholders. The report demonstrates an awareness of, respect for, and attention to the diversity of the people we serve, families, personnel, caregivers, volunteers, and a variety of community members. Cultural planning is based on consideration of; culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status, and language.

Vision

Milieu recognizes that the proper use of Cultural Competency and Diversity planning will assist the organization in improving the delivery of services to individuals and families. It is our vision that all stakeholders are respected and their diversity celebrated.

Purpose and Objectives of Cultural Competency and Diversity Planning

- Identify ways to improve the delivery of services and operations to ensure the organization is responsive to stakeholder's cultural and diverse needs.
- Identify training needs.
- Identify how to support individuals, staff, volunteers, and families with specific cultural or diverse requirements.
- Identify financial resource requirements and staff development strategies so the plan is sustainable (if applicable).
- Address how Milieu responds to the diversity of its stakeholders.
- Address how knowledge, skills and behaviours will enable personnel to work effectively cross culturally by understanding, appreciating, and respecting differences and similarities in beliefs, values and practices within and between cultures.
- Develop an action plan identifying timelines and responsibilities.

Responsibility

The Executive Director delegates the responsibility for Cultural Competency and Diversity planning to Quality Assurance. Senior Management is responsible for development, implementation and monitoring. Cultural Competencies are given out twice a year, usually in August and February.

Elements of the Cultural Competency and Diversity Planning Process

1. Ongoing assessments of the organization awareness and knowledge of diversity of the organization's stakeholders, internal and external. This is done through annual competency training.
2. Ongoing assessment of current policies, procedures and practices that demonstrate the organizations commitment to cultural sensitivity.
3. Developing recommendations and action plans to address areas that require improvement (as documented in the HR OMR and IS OMR as needed).
4. Implementing the action plan as outlined by the HR OMR and IS OMR (as needed).
5. Quality Assurance and HR conduct an ongoing review of the action, and update and modify as needed.
6. Annually assess the plan's success and results in the Cultural Competency and Diversity Report
7. Review the Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan annually.

The Human Resources (HR) Committee and the Individual Services (IS) Committee work together to choose which cultural diversity trainings to concentrate on by looking at a number of items including: individuals served demographics, Staff surveys, feedback from staff meetings, and noted trends within each community that individuals live in.

The goal of these competencies are to assist the agency to be equipped and empowered to build skills and gain the tools necessary to be culturally flexible and sensitive to the needs of different people. The Agency implements Cultural Diversity Competency trainings semi-annually. The cultural training is determined and based on the demographics of the individuals served and the staffing teams. Training is facilitated to the staffing teams through monthly staff meetings. During these meetings, a comprehensive training worksheet is handed out describing the historical and present day information that encompasses information regarding a specific culture. Staff completes a competency test following the training which is marked and analyzed to identify trends that the Agency can focus on if needed.

Cultural Report 2016-2017

This year the Cultural Competency focused on Refugee and Immigrants as well as Homelessness. Since Fall 2015, Canada has welcomed over 27,000 Refugees from Syria. Canadians across the country have provided support to help these newcomers settle. Resettling Refugees is a proud and important part of Canada's humanitarian tradition. Milieu has taken an active interest in welcoming Syrian Refugees, as some of these newcomers represent an untapped source of potential workers and person served. Milieu employees showed a good awareness of how to effectively support refugees and immigrants in relation to their beliefs and family practices. Employees showed great understanding that creating and fostering environments where people feel safe and secure. Staff built capacity in understanding barriers that refugees and immigrants may face such as difficulty speaking and learning a new language, raising

children, securing work and housing and accessing services. Staff found the Refugee competency to be very informative and there was an average score of 97%.

The amount of individuals that Milieu serves that are homeless has increased over the last few years, particularly within our Outreach services (where 12 people served are homeless). Many people do not realize how pervasive homelessness is and have preconceived notions of who would be affected by being homeless. It was found that staff had many strong opinions on Homelessness identifying their beliefs as to the causes of homelessness, including deinstitutionalization, the baby boom, the shrinking housing market, reduction in government benefits, and unemployment. The competency discusses the myths of homelessness. Staff teams had an average score on the Homelessness competency of 96%.

Cultural Plan 2017-2018

When analyzing a number of items including: individuals served demographics, staff surveys, feedback from staff meetings, and noted trends within each community that individuals live in, the data from 2016-2017 has shown that Milieu employs a large age range of staff and supports individuals who range from youth to seniors. It is important that the agency foster this diverse group to develop understanding as each other's generation. We must consider that persons receiving service have come from various backgrounds ranging from institutionalized living to inclusive education and community living. This societal shift plays a big part on how services may be delivered to a person served. There are cultural differences attributable to employees' generations. A diverse workplace includes employees considered Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y and Millennials. Each generation has distinct characteristics. For example, employees considered baby boomers tend to link their personal identity to their profession or the kind of work they do. Baby boomers are also characterized as being committed, yet unafraid of changing employers when there is an opportunity for career growth and advancement. Employees considered belonging to Generation Y, on the other hand, also value professional development, but they are tech-savvy, accustomed to diversity and value flexibility in working conditions. The Agency will be delivering a Generational Gap Competency.

More than half of Canada's Aboriginal population now lives in cities. They sometimes call themselves "Concrete Indians". And they are challenging stereotypes. In the opening episode of the four-part series *8TH Fire*, host Wab Kinew, from the Ojibways of Onigaming First Nation in Northern Ontario, and now a Winnipeg-based TV journalist, invites us to come "meet the neighbours". It's about time, since many Canadians say they have never met an Aboriginal person. This creative, and vibrant kaleidoscopic documentary introduces a diverse cast of Indigenous people living in Canadian Cities. The documentary takes a close look at stereotypes of First Nations people and how that impacts their inclusion when living off reserve. This is a modern look at the First Nation youth of today.

