

# Cultural Competence

## OVERVIEW

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Healthfirst services a diverse member population, and it is important that our network providers understand and are prepared for the cultural context of the communities they service. Cultural competence refers to the ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and conditions. Healthfirst providers must exercise sensitivity on religious, ethnic, and cultural differences of the members they serve.

## Service Coordination Responsibilities of Providers for Dual Member Products

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*CompleteCare (HMO SNP), AssuredCare (HMO SNP), Maximum Plan (HMO SNP), Life Improvement Plan (HMO SNP), AbsoluteCare (Medicare-Medicaid Plan)*

It is the responsibility of Providers who manage dual members to accept both Medicaid and Medicare products, and assist in care coordination for this member population to ensure that benefits are enhanced under both programs related to the special needs of these members. These providers are highlighted in the provider directory.

## Linguistic Competency

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Providers must ensure that services and information about treatment are provided in a manner consistent with the member's ability to understand what is being communicated. Members of different racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds, as well as individuals with disabilities, should receive information in a comprehensible manner that is responsive to their specific needs.

### Language and Interpreter Service Availability

- If foreign language barriers exist, a family member, friend or healthcare professional who speaks the same language as the member may be used (at the member's discretion) as a translator.
- Healthfirst Member Services and Medical Management Departments can provide assistance for members who do not speak English, either through their multi-lingual staff or by facilitating a connection with a telephone-based language interpretation service.

It is essential that all efforts be made to ensure that the member understands diagnostic information and treatment options and that language, cultural differences or disabilities do not pose a barrier to communication.

## ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Guidance for Physical Accessibility

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Accessibility of doctors' offices, clinics, and other health care providers is essential in providing medical care to people with disabilities. All medical, behavioral, and community-based and facility-based Long Term Services & Support (LTSS) network providers should be knowledgeable and adhere to the physical accessibility standards as defined by the U.S. Department of Justice ADA guidance for providers, in the following areas:

- Obligation to provide reasonable accommodations to those with hearing, vision, cognitive, and psychiatric disabilities.
- Utilizing waiting room and exam room furniture that meets the needs of all Participants, including those with physical and non-physical disabilities.
- Utilizing clear signage and way finding (e.g., color and symbol signage) throughout facilities.