

# Shelter Pulse

## Cultural Safety Policy Primer

The guidelines and checklists below provide indicators of best/promising practices from research and serve as recommendations and benchmarks for ongoing policy evaluation and evolution

### *Policy Primer*

Cultural safety requires healthcare professionals and their associated organisations to examine themselves and the potential impact of their own culture on clinical interactions and healthcare service delivery (Curtis et al., 2019). In doing so, cultural safety encompasses a critical consciousness where healthcare professionals and organisations engage in ongoing self-reflection and self-awareness and hold themselves accountable for providing culturally safe care, as defined by the Shelter seekers and their communities, and as measured through progress towards achieving health equity. This is crucial for immigrant and refugee shelter seekers because these individuals occupy various identities that intersect. IPV in immigrant and refugee populations may also result from gender-related power imbalances. Immigration laws, language proficiency opportunities, and cultural support should be considered in shelter policy.

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## *Policy Checklist (Adapted from: Family Violence Prevention Fund, 2005)*

The following criteria may be considered in assessing or evolving policy using a culturally safe approach:

- Policies value having multiple stakeholders involved in the development of programs and services that are culturally safe and appropriate for shelter seekers.
  - Policies stating an organization's mission, vision and values acknowledge the value of cultural diversity and a commitment to cultural safety.
  - The policy states cultural safety as a core service standard.
  - The agency's leaders/board of directors involve the community in the facilitation of culturally safe organizational activities and seek feedback from culturally diverse participants, staff, and volunteers for appropriate revisions on activities.



Policies address human resource management with respect to culturally safe practices among internal staff.

- Policies incorporate cultural diversity and safety into human resource management including: recruitment, staff retention, professional development & training, staff responsibilities, supervision and complaints process/procedures.
- Policies require cultural awareness, diversity and inclusion, or anti-racism training for all new staff, and on an ongoing basis.
- Policies confirm an organization's staff reflect and practice cultural diversity in their work and project action plans.
- Policies regarding job descriptions include a cultural diversity/safety requirement.
- Policies include cultural safety funding allocations and integrate cultural diversity into proposed budgets.
- Policies focused on the integration of cultural safety in all aspects of VAW-related activities including program and service preparation, promotion and provision.

#### References:

Curtis, E., Jones, R., Tipene-Leach, D., Walker, C., Loring, B., Paine, S., & Reid, P. (2019). Why cultural safety rather than cultural safety is required to achieve health equity: A literature review and recommended definition. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 18, 174. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-019-1082-3>

Family Violence Prevention Fund. (2005). *Culture Handbook*. <http://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/ImmigrantWomen/Culture%20Handbook.pdf>