

# Louisiana Native American Indian Tribes

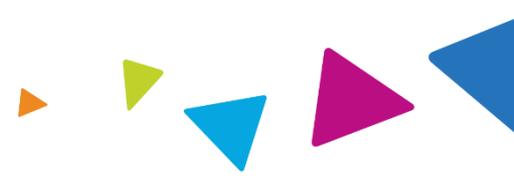
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CULTURAL COMPETENCY NEEDS AND  
POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

REVISED: JUNE 2019

**Magellan**  
HEALTHCARE<sup>SM</sup>

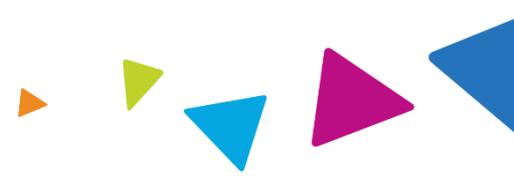
# Objectives



The learner will:

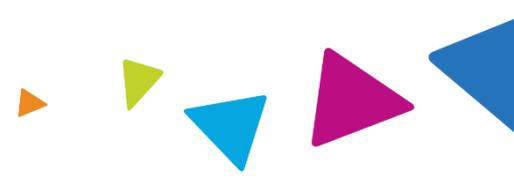
- be able to name Federal and State recognized tribes that are found in the state of Louisiana.
- identify treatment and access issues related to mental health.
- be able to state how historical trauma may impact current mental health needs and be a barrier to treatment.
- name two strengths commonly found in Native American families/communities that can be leveraged for effective mental health treatment.
- identify one way through best practices or communication tips that their agency or practice might implement to better serve their Native American clients.

# 10 Recognized Tribes in Louisiana

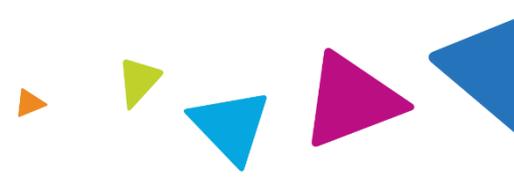


- Adai Caddo Tribe
- Biloxi-Chitimacha Confederation of Muskogee
- Choctaw-Apache Community of Ebarb
- Clifton Choctaw
- Four Winds Tribe Louisiana Cherokee Confederacy
- Grand Caillou/Dulac Band
- Isle de Jean Charles Band
- Louisiana Choctaw Tribe
- Pointe-Au-Chien Indian Tribe
- United Houma Nation

# Current Federally Recognized Indian Tribes in Louisiana



- The four federally recognized Indian tribes are:
  - Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana**
  - Jena Band of Choctaw Indians**
  - Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana**
  - Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana**

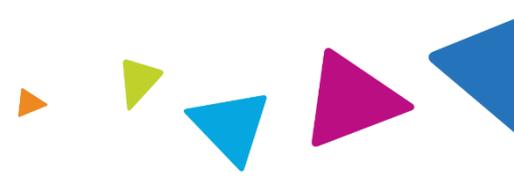


***Map of Native American Tribes in Louisiana***

Native American Tribes of Louisiana, [www.native-languages.org/louisiana](http://www.native-languages.org/louisiana)



# Federally Recognized Indian Tribes in Louisiana



# What is a Federally Recognized Tribe?

- A federally recognized tribe is an American Indian tribal entity that is recognized as having a government-to-government relationship with the United States, with the responsibilities, powers, limitations, and obligations attached to that designation, and is eligible for funding and services from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- Federally recognized tribes are recognized as possessing certain inherent rights of self-government (i.e., tribal sovereignty) and are entitled to receive certain federal benefits, services, and protections because of their special relationship with the United States.

# Jena Band of Choctaw Indians



- The earliest record of the Choctaw Indians inhabiting what is present day New Orleans, Louisiana is believed to be in the early 1700s.
- Eventually the Choctaw located between present day Monroe and Natchitoches, Louisiana, joined the group in Catahoula Parish. They are located in La Salle, Catahoula, and Grant parish.
- In 1974, the first tribal election of Tribal Chief was held. Subsequently, the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians was officially recognized by the State of Louisiana as an Indian tribe. Federal recognition through the federal acknowledgement process in 1995. Tribal membership now totals 327.
- The Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana (ITCLA) is a consortium of Tribes in the State of Louisiana. The five tribes who belong to the consortium are: The Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, The Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, the Jena Band of Choctaw Tribe of Louisiana, The Tunic Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana, and the Houma Tribe of Louisiana.

# Jena Band of Choctaw Indians (Cont'd)



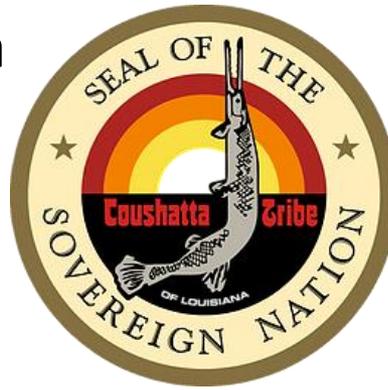
- The purpose of ITCLA is to provide leadership, advocacy, and educational services and needs assessment on behalf of All Native Americans within the geographic area of the state of Louisiana.
- The ITCLA provides special emphasis to the employment and training needs of the American Indian Community. Services include assisting with job searching, resume creation, interview preparation, and consultation to educational or technical training options.
- Other areas of assistance include:
  - Education (Higher Education Assistance, Vocational Training, Tutoring, and Back to School Assistance)
  - Health (Physical, Mental, and Emotional well-being of tribal members, spouses, and families)
  - Social Services (Domestic counseling, psychological evaluations, individual and family counseling and intervention)
  - Housing (Manage and administer Tribal Housing Program, provide adequate housing for low-income Tribal members)
  - Transportation (Provide safe travel way and network of transportation and infrastructure needed)

# Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana



- The Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana is the only tribe to still occupy a portion of their aboriginal homeland. The Chitimacha Tribe currently maintains a reservation adjacent to the town of Charenton, in St. Mary Parish, Louisiana.
- The Chitimacha Tribe was federally recognized by the United States government in 1916.
- Tribal enrollment today is approximately 1,300, with the majority residing in Louisiana. There are others who live in other states and around the globe.
- The Tribal Council consists of five elected officials: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary/Treasurer and two Councilman-at-Large. As a sovereign nation, The Chitimacha Tribe shares a unique government-to-government relationship with the United States.
- Today, the tribe has many enterprises including but not limited to, Cypress Bayou Casino and Hotel, Tiya Construction Services, & Raintree Market.
- The tribal government has its own police & fire department, health clinic, pharmacy, museum, cultural/historic preservation office, elderly assisted living facility, housing & scholarship programs.

# Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana



- The Coushatta Tribe was initially recognized in 1935 by the Federal government but the Bureau of Indian Affairs terminated all services in 1953. Federal recognition was regained in 1973 and Louisiana Legislature granted the Coushatta official recognition in 1972.
- The Coushatta people live primarily in Louisiana, with the most living in Allen Parish, north of Elton and east of Kinder. There are approximately 865 members.
- The tribe invested in a variety of enterprises to provide revenue for the tribal government and jobs for community members. Coushatta Casino Resort has grown into the second largest private employer in the State of Louisiana. The tribe also operates health, educational, social and cultural programs that have economic and social impact on the tribal community.
- The Coushatta people work to preserve their Koasati language, traditional crafts, and their cultural traditions.
- The tribe is governed by a democratically elected five-member council that includes the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary Treasurer, and two Council Members.

# Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana



- There are 1,226 enrolled Tunica-Biloxi tribal members throughout Louisiana, Texas, Illinois, and other parts of the United States. The majority of tribal families in Louisiana reside in Avoyelles and Rapides parishes. The reservation is located just south of Marksville.
- The Tunica-Biloxi Tribe received federal recognition in 1981 and have developed municipal buildings including social and health services, a police station, cultural and education center, gymnasium, and pow wow grounds amidst utility resources, paved roads, and residential communities.
- The tribe is governed by a tribal council made up of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary-Treasurer, and four council members elected by tribal citizens. The tribal administrator oversees various departments of tribal government.



# State of Louisiana Recognized Tribes



# State Recognition of Native American Indian Tribes

- State recognition is most commonly authorized by state legislatures
- State tribal recognition does not confer the same benefits as federally recognized tribes. It acknowledges tribal status within the state but does not guarantee funding from the state or federal government.
- Tribes often seek state recognition because it acknowledges their historical and cultural contributions.

# Adai Caddo Tribe & Biloxi Chitimacha Confederation of Muskogeans



- **Adai Caddo Tribe**

- Adai is the name of a Native American people of northwestern Louisiana and northeastern Texas with a Southeastern culture.
- Evidence indicates the Adai Caddo Indian Nation first appeared in the early 1500s but it would be more than 400 years subsequent to the early writings that the Adai Caddo Indian Nation would be officially be recognized as an authentic tribal nation by the State of Louisiana.
- Very little is recorded in American History books regarding the Adai Caddo Tribe.

- **Biloxi Chitimacha Confederation of Muskogee**

- The Biloxi-Chitimacha Confederation of Muskogeans is an alliance of three Indian communities located in Lafourche and Terrebone parishes.
- The Biloxi-Chitimacha Confederation of Muskogeans, Inc is a 501©(3) nonprofit organization. The Confederation is supported by contributions from tribal members and non-members that support the efforts for federal recognition.
- The governing body of the Confederation is the Grand Council. The Grand Council is comprised of one representative from each of the three tribal bands of communities.

# Choctaw-Apache Tribe of Ebarb & Clifton Choctaw



- Choctaw-Apache Tribe of Ebarb

- The Choctaw-Apache Tribe of Ebarb was officially recognized by the State of Louisiana in 1978 and is the second largest in the state. The tribe is currently seeking federal recognition by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- Many members of the tribe live within Sabine Parish. The two primary schools in which children are enrolled (Ebarb and Zwolle) have a combined tribal student population of over 700.
- Today, there are 1100 enrolled members.

- Clifton Choctaw Tribe

- The Clifton Choctaw were recognized as a tribe by the State of Louisiana in 1979.
- The tribe combined from several small family groupings scattered throughout Rapides and Natchitoches parishes.
- Beadwork earrings, bracelets, and necklaces have become popular tribal crafts.

# Four Winds Tribe Louisiana Cherokee Confederacy & Grand Caillou/Dulac Band



- Four Winds Tribe Louisiana Cherokee
  - The tribe received recognition as an American Indian tribe from the state government in Louisiana in 1997.
  - The geographical description is portions of or the entire following parishes: Vernon, Beauregard, Allen, Rapides, Natchitoches, Jefferson Davis, and Sabine.
  - The tribal council is made up of a Principal Chief, Vice Chief, Secretary, three council members and three alternates.
- Grand Caillou/Dulac Band
  - The tribe received Louisiana State Tribal Recognition in 2004.
  - The governing body of the Grand Caillou/Dulac Band is the Tribal Chief, Tribal Council and the Council of Elders. The Tribal Council is comprised of seven council members and the Council of Elders is comprised of four senior members.
  - Education is impacted by limited assistance or funding for tutors and limited funds for non-federally acknowledged tribes.
  - Medical care is obtained through local university hospital, housing is sub-standard and there is a reliance on government assistance programs.

# Isle de Jean Charles Band & Louisiana Band of Choctaw Indians



- **Isle de Jean Charles Band**

- Isle de Jean Charles is a narrow ridge of land between Bayou Terrebonne and Bayou Pointe-aux-Chene in Terrebonne Parish.
- Indian population on Isle de Jean Charles today is approximately 230 persons in 60 homes.
- The governing body of the Isle de Jean Charles Band is the Tribal Council and the Council of Elders. The Tribal Council is comprised of eleven council member, four of which are alternates. The Grand Council has five serving members

- **Louisiana Choctaw Tribe**

- The Louisiana Band of Choctaw Indians is based in Prairieville.
- There is otherwise little information about the group and does not appear they have petitioned for federal recognition through the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

# Pointe-Au-Chien Indian Tribe & United Houma Nation



- **Pointe-au-Chien Indian Tribe**

- The Pointe-au-Chien inhabit the southern part of Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes along Bayou Pointe-au-Chien.
- In 1993, the Tribe adopted a Constitution filed its Articles of Incorporation with the Louisiana Secretary of State. Because of the cost to submit a petition for federal acknowledgement, the Tribe incorporated as a 501(c)(3) to become eligible for donations, grants, and other assistance in documenting its history, culture, and traditions.
- The Tribe is governed by an Executive Body, the Tribal Council, and Council of Elders.

- **United Houma Nation**

- The Houma have lived in Louisiana for over 300 years, migrating from central to southern Louisiana.
- The petition to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) for federal status was first filed in 1987 but was denied in 1994 despite an enrollment of 11,000 at the time. Although acknowledged by the BIA that the Houma had Native American ancestry, it was unable to find sufficient evidence that they were actual descendants of the Houma tribe.
- The United Houma Nation is severely affected by coastal erosion and the rising of the sea level.

<http://pactribe.tripod.com/>

<https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/grant-federal-recognition-to-the-united-houma-nation>

<https://nativeheritageproject.com/2012/10/27/houmas-indians-of-terrebonne-parish-louisiana/>

<http://www.dickshovel.com/hou.html>



# Mental Health & the Native American Community

# Native American Communities & Mental Health



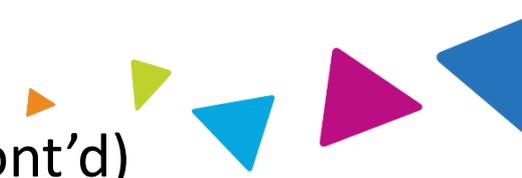
- Treatment Issues

- Physical complaints and psychological concerns are not distinguished and Native Americans can express emotional distress in ways that are not consistent with standard diagnostic categories.
- Native Americans appear to use alternative therapies at rates equal to or greater than whites. Research indicates those who meet criteria for depression, anxiety (including PTSD), or substance abuse are more likely to seek help from a spiritual healer.
  - Some research has found that a greater percentage of Native Americans actively seek services than the general U.S. Population, especially when traditional healing and 12-step programs were included.
- Due to high levels of poverty, many Native Americans face economic barriers that prevents receiving treatment.
- Lack of awareness can also prevent Native American from receiving treatment for mental health issues.

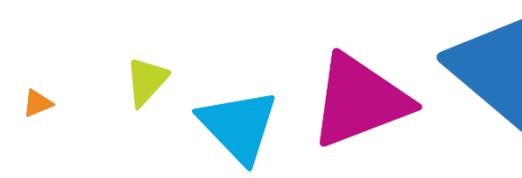
- Access Issues

- Access to mental health treatment is severely limited by the rural and isolated location of many Native American communities.
- Access is limited because most clinics and hospitals of the Indian Health Service are located on reservations and the majority no longer reside on reservations.
- Due to high levels of poverty, many Native Americans face economic barriers that prevents receiving treatment.

## Native American Communities & Mental Health (cont'd)

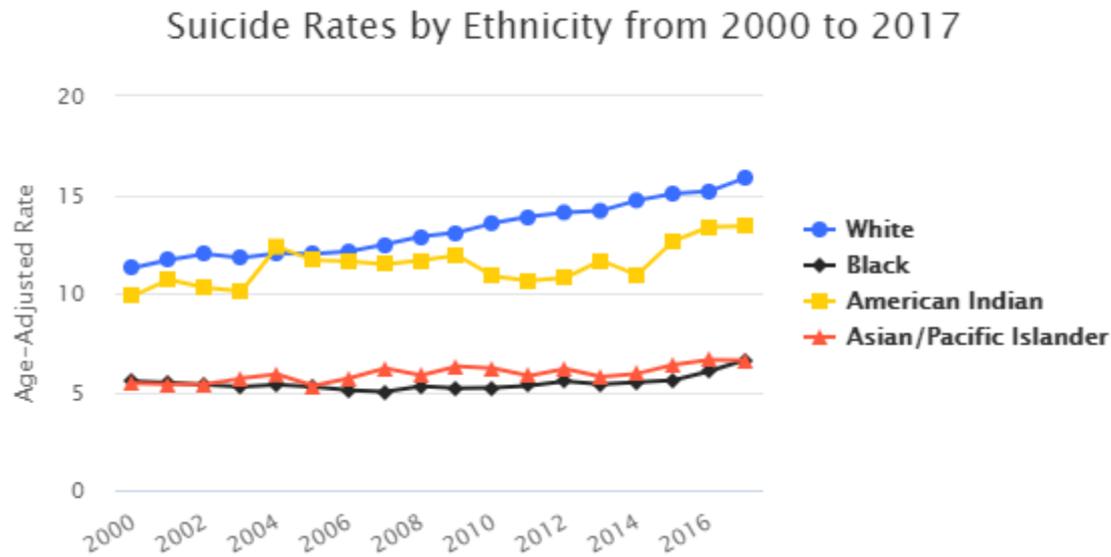


- Existing research suggests that American Indian youths and adults suffer a disproportionate burden of mental health problems and disorders.
- The most significant mental health concerns today are the high prevalence of depression, substance use disorders, suicide, and anxiety, which includes Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).
- American Indians experience PTSD more than twice as often as the general population.
- Although overall suicide rates among American Indians are similar to whites, there are significant differences among certain age groups. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among 10-34 year olds.



# Suicide Among American Indians/Alaska Natives

- American Indian/Alaska Natives (AI/AN) have the highest rates of suicide of any racial/ethnic group in the United States. The rates of suicide in this population have been increasing since 2003.
- In 2015, AI/AN suicide rates in the 18 states participating in the National Violent Death Reporting System (NVDRS) were 21.5 per 100,000, more than 3.5 times higher than those among racial/ethnic groups with the lowest rates.

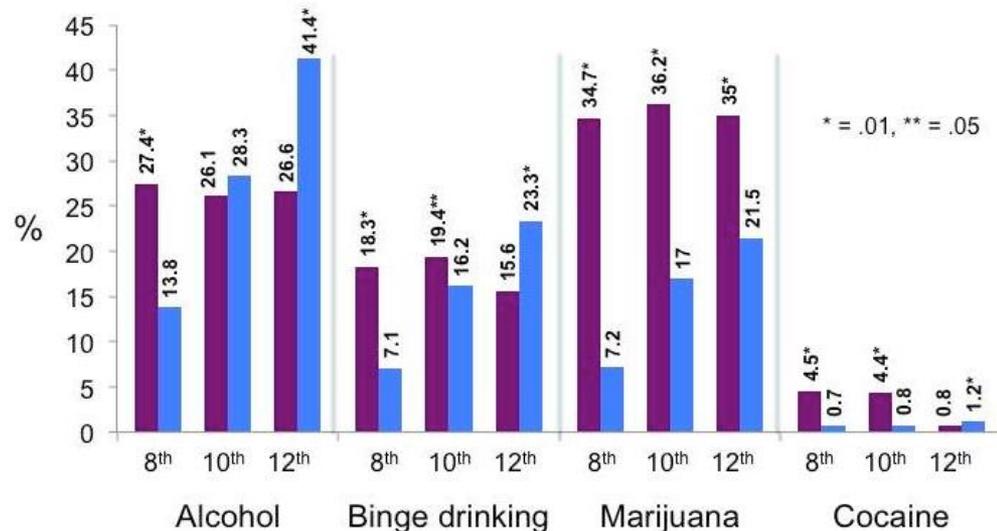


# Alcohol & Substance Use in American Indian Youth



- American Indian (AI) adolescent substance use rates for alcohol, marijuana, inhalants, and other drugs have been consistently higher than their Euro-American counterparts since at least 1975.
- Prevalence rates for American Indian (AI) students were significantly higher than national rates for nearly all substances, especially for 8th graders. Rates of marijuana use were very high, with lifetime use higher than 50% for all grade groups.
- Studies show American Indian youth are initiating alcohol and drug use earlier than their non-native counterparts.

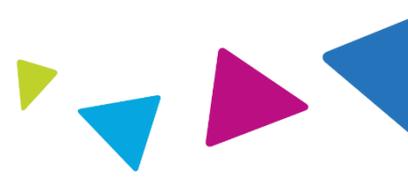
## Past-month Prevalence Results



American Indian/  
Alaskan Native

Monitoring the Future  
Survey

# Factors of Under-Utilization of Mental Health Services



- Attitudes toward mental health services and beliefs about mental illness are also an integral element in models of service utilization.
- American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) cultures emphasize the balance of mind, body, and spirit, with a focus on a holistic approach to healing, making little distinction between mental and physical health. Such beliefs and attitudes may, in turn, lead AI/AN older adults to turn to traditional health practices or spiritual healers rather than formal mental health care providers.
- AI/AN adult primary care patients were least likely to be convinced about the benefits of psychotherapy, believing that one in three persons with mental illness would recover without treatment.
- Mental health service use among AI/AN older adults is further complicated by the stigma attached to mental illness, mental health beliefs, and preferred treatment modalities.
- Prior negative experiences with mental health services is likely to influence subsequent treatment behaviors and to result in a decrease in willingness to seek professional help.

# Strengths of Native American Communities and Families



- Resiliency is a complex part of Native American families due to the importance and extent of family and kinship roles.
- The foundational belief system of Native Americans is:
  - Mental
  - Physical
  - Spiritual
  - Contextual
- Native American family strengths include:
  - Tribal identity and culture
  - Extended family and view of children
  - Language, traditions, and rituals
  - Maintain family cohesion while supporting the development and well being of the individual family members



# Barriers to Mental Health Treatment

NATIVE AMERICAN POPULATIONS

# Barriers to Mental Health Treatment



- Issues such as workforce recruitment and transportation barriers are common in rural areas.
- A range of behavioral health services that are not reimbursable (e.g., prevention, intervention, and indigenous traditional healing services).
- Reimbursements are often limited to Medicaid-recognized and approved providers, with reimbursement rates at a minimal level. Restrictive reimbursement processes can limit patient access to best practice models that are available and accessible within their regional and rural areas.
- The lack of a unified credentialing process and/or reciprocity process for behavioral health providers among the current national and State credentialing boards. Certain States will only honor the certification or the licensure behavioral health service providers possess and will limit them in providing the comprehensive services that a rural area client needs.
- A focus on individualized analysis and treatment in the mental health field that obscures the role of community and historical factors.



# Things to Consider When Providing Care

# Historical Trauma



- Providers must acknowledge behavioral health issues within the context of the American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) experience.
- Historical trauma includes such experiences as forced relocation, removal of children from their homes, being prohibited to practice their language and cultural traditions, the outlawing of traditional religious practices, racism, and victimization.
- Historical trauma and its impact on AI/AN communities must be acknowledged and respected in order to deliver appropriate behavioral healthcare. The trauma is experienced by and rooted in communities.

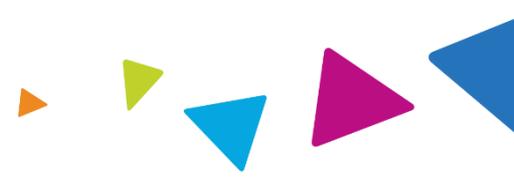


# Best Practice Tips when working with Native American Patients

- Avoid stereotypes and misdiagnosis during evaluation.
  - PTSD is often missed or misdiagnosed as depression or borderline personality. Due to historical trauma, a PTSD diagnosis should not be ignored.
  - Avoid assuming Indigenous people do or don't practice their native religion.
- Create a receptive environment that is inviting and welcoming. Keep in mind there is a mistrust of clinics run by the federal government due to the history of ulterior motives.
- Encourage patients to share their cultural identity. Native patients report stronger therapeutic alliances when providers have shown an interest to understand tribal identification and how culture plays a role in their lives.
- Be prepared if the need for a translator or translated forms arise.

<https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/cultural-competency/treating-diverse-patient-populations/working-with-native-american-patients>

# Communication Tips



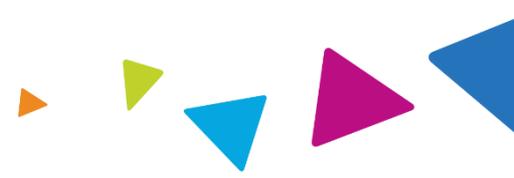
- Consider the holistic view when assessing, diagnosing, and treating an illness.
- Ask the patient if he/she uses traditional healings or practices. Acknowledge the value of traditional practices and when possible, incorporate beneficial and/or neutral remedies into the plan of care. Consider potential drug/herb interactions.
- When scheduling appointments, allow for more flexibility. Transportation issues may impact patient's time of arrival.
- Ask the patient who they would like to have included in their medical decisions. Also consider, lack of family support due to location of the family, may be a source of stress for the patient.
- Explain the purpose of an informed consent if it is the patient's first experience. Due to the history of misuse of signed documents, some patients may be unwilling to sign informed consent.

# Reducing Communication Barriers



- Direct eye contact may be avoided out of respect or concern for soul loss or theft.
- Understand that in the American Indian culture, they have been taught to resist any expression of pain. The patient may use storytelling instead of direct expression.
- Listen for a few minutes without speaking. Let patients talk or let them be silent. Be aware that it may take 3-4 encounters before trust and dialogue occur.
- Storytelling and circular conversation may be used to build trust or describe symptoms. Listen for signs that your patient may not be expressing directly. Sharing a personal experience is a way to build trust with your patient.
- Touch can be very personal for your patient. In some cultures, the head and hair are considered sacred. Before touching, always explain what will be done and why.
- Hair, jewelry, and other regalia may have spiritual meaning. If there is a need to remove an object from the patient's body, have the patient or family member remove the item. When possible, keep it close to the patient until it can be worn again.

# SUMMARY



- Understanding the history, culture, and needs of Native Americans helps to improve the overall delivery of health care by:
  - Helping to communicate medical information and treatment options
  - Tailoring health care treatments for Native American patients
  - Incorporating factors such as cultural and linguistic into the plan of care
  - Exercising respect for cultural values, beliefs, and practices
  - Recognizing the role of family and community support
  - Establishing providers and facilities as people and places where Native Americans can receive appropriate care
  - Considering religious beliefs when providing health care services
  - Assisting staff with awareness of Native American culture and its people

# Cultural Competency & Magellan's Responsibility

*(From the Magellan National Provider Handbook)*



Magellan is committed to providing effective services that incorporate the cultural beliefs, values, and worldviews of all individuals seeking services.

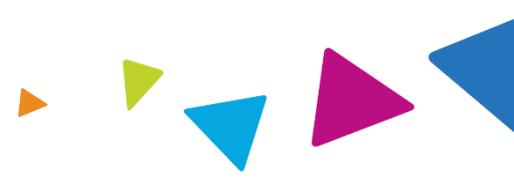
Magellan has a responsibility to:

- Provide ongoing education to deliver competent services to people of all cultures, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions and those living with disabilities;
- Provide access to language assistance, including Braille for the visually impaired, and bilingual staff and interpreter services to those with limited English proficiency, during all hours of operation at no cost to the consumer;
- Provide easily understood member materials, available in the languages of the commonly encountered groups and/or groups represented in the service area;
- Provide access to TDD / TTY services for the deaf community and those with hearing impairment; and
- Monitor gaps in services and other culture-specific provider service needs. When gaps are identified, Magellan will develop a provider recruitment plan and monitor its effectiveness.

**Need language assistance?**

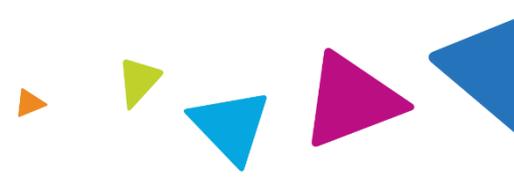
**Contact Magellan of Louisiana at 1-800-424-4489**

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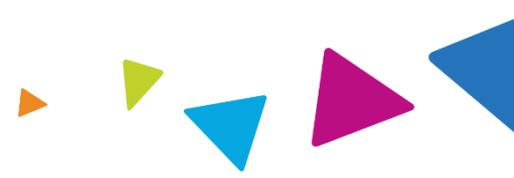
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