

2.1 Cultural Competency, Diversity and Inclusion

Spectrum Society embraces the cultural diversity of the communities we are a part of, the people we serve, and the staff, volunteers and caregivers providing supports. Our commitment to cultural competence and diversity is reflected in our policies, practices, mission and values statements, and will inform all aspects of strategic and operational planning.

Cultural competence encompasses four major components: Awareness, Attitude, Knowledge and Behaviour:

- Awareness involves understanding that we live and work in communities that are very diverse. It involves understanding that people have different life experiences, different customs, different beliefs – and that these differences enrich us all.
- Attitude involves paying attention to our personal beliefs about cultural differences. It involves being open to changing our beliefs as we learn more about each other.
- Knowledge involves learning about cultural differences. It involves understanding what's important to each other, for example using appropriate terminology and avoiding language or labels that may cause offense.
- Behaviour involves practicing cultural competence every day. It involves communicating and behaving in ways that show respect for all people.

Spectrum's cultural competence planning will consider the needs of persons served and personnel with regard to:

- Culture
- Age
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Spiritual beliefs
- Socioeconomic status
- Language
- Race

Upon start-up of services, we spend time with the person, their family and significant others developing a detailed Service Plan. The Service Plan covers all aspects of the person's support, including support for the person's culture, religion, sexual orientation and other areas as applicable. This information informs the Support Plan, which provides staff with information on how best to support the person. The Service Plan and Support Plan will be reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain current and relevant to the person.

Upon hiring, employees will provide HR with an awareness of any special considerations, so that we can discuss any accommodations that may be needed.

The Society's Cultural Competency, Diversity and Inclusion Plan will be reviewed annually and updated as needed. The over-arching goal of the Cultural Competency, Diversity and Inclusion Plan is to foster a culture of mutual respect, trusting relationships and continuous learning and improvement within Spectrum and across all of our services.