



## CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND DIVERSITY PLAN 2021/22

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### PURPOSE

- SSICS is committed to respecting cultural practices and ensuring cultural safety. Being culturally competent enables us to provide equitable, individually focused services. Having a plan means we are committed to action.
- The organization demonstrates an awareness of, respect for, and attention to the diversity of the people with whom it interacts (persons served, personnel, families/caregivers, volunteers and other stakeholders) that are reflected in attitudes, organizational structures, policies and services. Cultural activities are incorporated into service plans as wanted by those served. Staff must demonstrate respect for unique culture and heritage. As part of the service intake process individuals are asked if there are cultural customs, beliefs, behaviours or traditions that it would be helpful for us to know about.
- Employees are encouraged and supported to assume an attitude of cultural humility, where they have a curiosity in learning about the cultures of others and self-reflection about their own cultural identity and how it may impact her work.
- The plan identifies where barriers may exist and how they may be addressed. The plan is to be linked with other SSICS plans including the strategic plan, the accessibility plan and the business performance goals and objectives.
- The plan aims to assist the creation of a climate of respect, inclusion and acceptance of all people who access services with SSICS, are employed by SSICS, who volunteer with SSICS and with whom SSICS partners in the geographical area we serve. SSICS will consider the following factors in the development of this plan: heritage, race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, criminal status or income.

**Community demographics and the people served by SSICS:** The communities of Salt Spring and the Southern Gulf Islands continue to grow in diversity and multiculturalism. As part of the Cultural Competency and Diversity plan, SSICS commits to making continued and meaningful efforts to develop relationships with local Indigenous communities of the Wsanec



and Hul'qumi'num speaking peoples. SSICS strives to respect individual rights and respectfully supports individuals to self-identify as Indigenous if they choose.

Families who access services at SSICS have a rich diversity of cultures – whether this be ethnicity, language, gender, family composition, spirituality, religion or other practices or beliefs. Each individual is respected for their culture.

SSICS has adopted the approach to promote Cultural Safety used by the First Nations Health Authority. The cornerstone of this approach is a commitment to building cultural humility.

*“When health care professionals engage with First Nations peoples from a place of cultural humility, they are helping to create a safer health care environment where individuals and families feel respected. First Nations peoples are therefore more likely to access care when they need it and access care that is appropriate to their wellness beliefs, goals and needs.”*

## **TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

**Cultural Humility** Cultural humility is a **process** of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner when it comes to understanding another's experience. Cultural humility builds Cultural Competence and enables Cultural Safety.

**Cultural Competence** is the **ability** of individuals and systems to engage respectfully and effectively with people of all cultures, classes, races, disabilities, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientation, faiths and religions, economic, social and linguistic backgrounds in a manner that recognizes, affirms and values the worth of individuals, families, communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

**Cultural Safety** is an **outcome** based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in the service system. It results in an environment free of racism and discrimination, where people feel safe when receiving services.

**Diversity** is the range of human characteristics found in any workplace or community. The diversity of identifying characteristics includes race, culture, language, disability, faith and religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability, income, family status, literacy level, educational background,



housing, immigration status, personal health behaviours, HIV status, mental health status among many other characteristics. Groups and individuals are both visibly and invisibly different from each other. These differences shape and have significant impact on our experiences and expectations in many given situations.

### **Values and Awareness:**

- Awareness and respect of the wide range of values, beliefs, traditions, customs and parenting styles of different communities
- Awareness of the impact of our own culture and worldviews on interactions with others in cross cultural situations.
- Awareness that cultural differences exist within different cultural groups.
- Understanding that different cultures have different attitudes about health issues and health seeking behaviours.
- Understanding that differences may impact the provider/receiver relationship.
- Commitment to developing interventions that are compatible with the needs, values, and customs of the diverse individuals and families we serve.
- Utilizing cultural information to adapt services (where services are offered, communications, decor, staffing, etc.)
- Reflection on one's own cultural programming when encountering a cross cultural difference.



Objective	Desired Outcome	Who	Activities	Responsibility	Frequency
To have a Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan that identifies how SSICS will work to achieve and monitor effectiveness of the plan.	SSICS has an enhanced commitment to having a culturally safe environment inclusive of heritage, education, beliefs, race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, criminal status or income.	All – persons served, staff, volunteers and other stakeholders	Implementation of Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan	Executive Director  Board of Directors	Ongoing. Review annually as part of operational reviews, and as part of Strat Plan
To create a safe and inclusive environment that fosters respect for, and acknowledgement of different needs and approaches.	SSICS will work towards having facilities that are welcoming and accessible to all.  SSICS commits to safe and supportive spaces for Directors, staff and others to explore diversity	All SSICS sites	Annual inspection of facilities to assess cultural friendliness  Make periodic changes in decor to reflect diversity and cultural friendliness  Provide regular communications about culture and diversity	Program Directors and Managers	Annually



	issues.				
To adhere to the legal Acts that guide all actions of SSICS.	All persons served and all staff and volunteers have a working knowledge of the legal guidance for all our work and actions.	All Board and staff	<p>Include information on Rights in publications for those served.</p> <p>Establish and monitor client rights concerns and complaints.</p> <p>Annual review of personnel management including the implementation of fair hiring practices, assessing the diversity of our staffing.</p> <p>SSICS will develop and implement a human resources strategy to retain and recruit staff from culturally diverse backgrounds who are culturally competent, and have a working knowledge about diversity.</p>	Board of Directors and all staff	<p>Annual review of complaints and concerns.</p> <p>Annual persons served questionnaires.</p> <p>Annual review of employment hiring policies and practices.</p>
SSICS will acknowledge the diverse perspectives of individuals and families and incorporate	Individual cultural differences will be recognized in individual service plans. A diversity lens will be used in our approach	All board and staff	Annually monitor the demographics of those served for demographic diversity. In our client feedback questions ask if those served felt safe (comfortable). From this monitoring, identify if there	Executive Director, Management Team and all staff	Annual demographic report of those served prepared for the annual report



<p>include these into all programs and services.</p>	<p>that focuses on individual specific needs.</p>		<p>need to be changes in staffing (to be culturally reflective of the population we serve).</p> <p>All service providers will consider cultural variables including heritage, education, beliefs, race, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental capabilities, criminal status or income in their work with families.</p> <p>To address diversity (oppression etc.) staff will seek advice from community partners when planning and implementing services.</p>		<p>Review of participant surveys and exit surveys</p> <p>Review of service plans</p> <p>Feedback from community partners.</p>
<p>To improve interpersonal communications within SSICS.</p>		<p>All staff</p>	<p>Encourage staff to reflect on their own cultural values and beliefs and how those might impact on their work.</p>	<p>Executive Director, Management Team and all staff</p>	
<p>To align all agency plans, policies and procedures with culturally</p>	<p>All SSICS plans, policies and procedures</p>	<p>Board and staff</p>	<p>Annual review and revision of all agency plans, policies and procedures to reflect SSICS commitment to cultural</p>	<p>Board of Directors Executive Director and Management Team</p>	



<p>competent principles and practices.</p>			<p>competency and diversity.</p> <p>In recruitment of new board members the board may consider recruiting members to reflect / represent the diversity of those served by SSICS.</p>		
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