

California Brief Multicultural Competence Scale

(CBMCS)

Scoring Guide and Administration Packet

A tool for self-evaluation of multicultural
competence of providers of behavioral health
services

Description

The CBMCS is an evidence-based, replicable 21-item scale that was developed by researchers at the University of La Verne in response to the request of the California Mental Health Directors Association for a standardized cultural competency assessment tool. It measures individual, self-reported multi-cultural competency and training needs of behavioral health staff in the following four areas: Multicultural Knowledge (5 items); Awareness of Cultural Barriers (6 items); Sensitivity and Responsiveness to Consumers (3 items); and Socio-cultural Diversities (7 items).

The areas of the CBMCS survey measure the following aspects of cultural competence:

Cultural Knowledge	Includes recognizing deficiencies in research conducted on minorities; psychosocial factors to consider when providing services to a culturally diverse consumer population; providing a culturally competent mental health assessment; diagnosis and understanding; and evaluating wellness, recovery, and resilience.
Awareness of Cultural Barriers	Includes awareness of self (cultural self-awareness, worldview, racial/ethnic identity) and awareness of others (oppression, racism, privilege, gender differences, sexual orientation).
Sensitivity & Responsiveness to Consumers	Includes acknowledgement and understanding of divergent social values; communication styles; and ability to understand consumers' experiences of racism, oppression and discrimination.
Socio-cultural Diversities	Includes knowledge of socio-cultural groups in which ethnicity may not be the major or immediate focus of professional attention (i.e., age, gender, sexual orientation, social class, physical-mental intactness, and disability status); awareness of bias, oppression and discrimination experienced by members of socio-cultural groups; and knowledge about best practices and treatment considerations for members of socio-cultural groups.

The names of the areas were somewhat modified to be more descriptive than what appears in the original source.

Scoring

The answers to each of the 21 survey questions are assigned a number based on a Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, and 4=Strongly Agree) and totaled according to the pre-determined areas of cultural competence. The scores are then analyzed based on thresholds to identify proficiency levels and training needs. CBMCS yields four individual scores from each area of cultural competence.

For training purposes, the four individual area scores can be obtained by adding the ratings of the items as follows:

1. **Multicultural Knowledge** items are 7, 12, 15, 17, and 19
2. **Awareness of Cultural Barriers** items are 1, 8, 10, 11, 14, and 16
3. **Sensitivity and Responsiveness to Consumers** items are 2, 4, and 9
4. **Socio-cultural Diversities** items are 3, 5, 6, 13, 18, 20, and 21

Administration in San Diego

The survey will be administered electronically for SDCBHS by the Quality Improvement Performance Improvement Team. Staff will be asked to fill in all the subunits for which they work. Each staff member will only have to fill out the survey once, and the data will be incorporated into each of their designated subunit's returns.

To obtain information on the demographics of staff, questions on the following areas have been included:

- Gender:
- Race and ethnicity
- County of origin
- Languages spoken
- Highest Degree or Diploma
- Years of experience in the field of behavioral health since highest degree

Questions on staff training will include:

- Course work on multicultural counseling while in school
- Skill training skills desired
- Training needed in cultural competence content areas
- Training needed on specific ethnic and racial groups
- Training needed by age group

California Brief Multicultural Competence Scale (CBMCS)

Below is a list of statements dealing with multicultural issues within a mental health context. Please indicate the degree to which you agree with each statement by circling the appropriate number.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I am aware that being born a minority in this society brings with it certain challenges that White people do not have to face.	1	2	3	4
2. I am aware of how my own values might affect my client.	1	2	3	4
3. I have an excellent ability to assess, accurately, the mental health needs of persons with disabilities.	1	2	3	4
4. I am aware of institutional barriers that affect the client.	1	2	3	4
5. I have an excellent ability to assess, accurately, the mental health needs of lesbians.	1	2	3	4
6. I have an excellent ability to assess, accurately, the mental health needs of older adults.	1	2	3	4
7. I have an excellent ability to identify the strengths and weaknesses of psychological tests in terms of their use with persons from different cultural, racial and/or ethnic backgrounds.	1	2	3	4
8. I am aware that counselors frequently impose their own cultural values upon minority clients.	1	2	3	4
9. My communication skills are appropriate for my clients.	1	2	3	4
10. I am aware that being born a White person in this society carries with it certain advantages.	1	2	3	4
11. I am aware of how my cultural background and experiences have influenced my attitudes about psychological processes.	1	2	3	4
12. I have an excellent ability to critique multicultural research.	1	2	3	4
13. I have an excellent ability to assess, accurately, the mental health needs of men.	1	2	3	4
14. I am aware of institutional barriers that may inhibit minorities from using mental health services.	1	2	3	4
15. I can discuss, within a group, the differences among ethnic groups (e.g. low socioeconomic status (SES), Puerto Rican client vs. high SES Puerto Rican client).	1	2	3	4
16. I can identify my reactions that are based on stereotypical beliefs about different ethnic groups.	1	2	3	4
17. I can discuss research regarding mental health issues and culturally different populations.	1	2	3	4
18. I have an excellent ability to assess, accurately, the mental health needs of gay men.	1	2	3	4
19. I am knowledgeable of acculturation models for various ethnic minority groups.	1	2	3	4

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| 20. I have an excellent ability to assess, accurately, the mental health needs of women. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 21. I have an excellent ability to assess, accurately, the mental health needs of persons who come from very poor socioeconomic backgrounds. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Gamst, G., Dana, R. H., Der-Karabetian, A., Aragon, M., Arellano, L., Morrow, G., & Martenson, L. (2004). Cultural competency Revised: The California Brief Multicultural Competency Scale. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, 37, 3, 163-187.*