



National Standards of Care

for Anti Trafficking Service Providers

Themes for the National Standards of Care for Anti-Trafficking Service Providers

As part of the Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) and the Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Trafficking in Persons (OTIP)'s Standards of Care initiative, and in collaboration and consultation with the Technical Working Group (TWG) of subject matter experts, Freedom Network USA (FNUSA) has identified seven consensus-derived themes for the National Standards of Care for Anti-Trafficking Service Providers project. Through extensive research, the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) identified 15 themes based on the most commonly referenced standards, guidelines, principles, models, and frameworks in existing anti-trafficking literature. The Literature Review is available for public access through the FNUSA Resource Library. The TWG, which includes representation from subject matter experts, including survivor leaders, social service providers, legal providers, and researchers with diverse perspectives and expertise, reviewed, discussed, and proposed seven themes derived from the initial 15.

The 15 Themes Initially Proposed by RTI:

1. **Accessibility and Cultural Competence**
2. **Organizational Ethics**
3. **Collaboration**
4. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**
5. **Interactions with Survivors**
6. **Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals Statements**
7. **Privacy and Confidentiality**
8. **Professional Conduct and Standards**
9. **Program Evaluation**
10. **Safety and Safety Planning**
11. **Self-Care**
12. **Survivor-Informed/Survivor-Led**
13. **Trauma-Informed Care**
14. **Survivor Self-Determination**
15. **Survivor Services**

In the literature review's Process Guidance, RTI proposed using the Delphi Model, a consensus-based approach to finalize the themes and draft the Standards of Care within the Technical Working Group. The process involves the TWG engaging in anonymous surveys, systematic conversations, and successive draft versions until the group reaches a consensus. Consensus is defined by at least 80% of the TWG voting to retain each theme. The most common feedback was to streamline and identify alternative theme titles. None of the 15 themes have been removed but rather reorganized for clarity.

As a next step, FNUSA invites stakeholders to provide feedback on the themes that will guide the Standards of Care. Below are the seven themes and a brief description of what topics might be addressed within each theme. The 15 themes initially proposed by RTI are in bold. The examples of what each topic will include come from the RTI literature review and the TWG's suggestions.

Seven Consensus-Driven Themes Identified by the Technical Working Group

1. Accessibility

- This theme was initially proposed in the RTI literature review as **Accessibility and Cultural Competence**.
- The TWG recommended separating these themes because Accessibility and Cultural Competence have significant distinctions.
- This theme may include, but is not limited to, topics such as:
 - Accommodations for disability and neurodiversity
 - Informed consent
 - Low-barrier services and participation
 - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)

2. Cultural Responsiveness

- This theme was initially proposed in the RTI literature review as **Accessibility and Cultural Competence**.
- The TWG recommended separating these themes because they have significant distinctions (See 1. Accessibility).
- The TWG recommended renaming this theme to cultural responsiveness or cultural humility to emphasize continued learning and awareness of power imbalances among people of different cultures.

- This theme may include, but is not limited to, topics such as:
 - Linguistically appropriate services
 - Variation in religion
 - Relational dynamics
 - Positionality
 - DEIB

3. Organizational Ethics

- This theme was initially proposed in the RTI literature review as **Organizational Ethics, Professional Conduct and Standards, Self-Care, Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals**, and **Program Evaluation**.
- The TWG recommended combining these themes to reduce repetition as each falls into different aspects of organizational culture.
 - It was important to members of the TWG that Self-Care should be embedded into professional standards so that staff well-being is not solely the responsibility of those providing direct services.
- This theme may include, but is not limited to, topics such as:
 - **Professional Conduct & Standards** for staff, interns, and volunteers
 - **Self-Care** and community care for vicarious trauma
 - Staff wellbeing, trauma-informed practices, fair compensation
 - **Privacy and Confidentiality**
 - **Mission, Values, & Goals**
 - **Program Evaluation**
 - Continuous training and improvement/professional qualifications of staff
 - DEIB

4. Collaboration

- This theme was initially proposed in the RTI literature review as **Collaboration**.
- This theme may include, but is not limited to, topics such as:
 - Collaboration with social services agencies, law enforcement, and community organizations
 - Centering survivor agency
 - Awareness and prevention efforts
 - DEIB

5. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)

- This theme was initially proposed in the RTI literature review as **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**.
- The TWG recommended that DEIB should be included in every theme. There were differing opinions about whether or not DEIB should be one of the seven themes or embedded in every theme. Currently, the approach is to include DEIB as a theme and embedded in each theme.
- This theme may include, but is not limited to, topics such as:
 - Anti-racism
 - Social and cultural context
 - Systemic causes of vulnerability
 - LGBTQIA2S+

6. Survivor Engagement

- This theme was initially proposed in the RTI literature review as **Survivor-Informed/Survivor-Led** and **Interactions with Survivors**.
- The TWG recommended that themes should be combined to avoid repetition. This theme involves interactions with survivors that don't involve the survivors receiving direct services.
- This theme may include, but is not limited to, topics such as:
 - **Survivor-Informed/Survivor-Led**
 - **Interactions with Survivors**
 - Non-judgmental and affirming
 - Peer support
 - DEIB

7. Survivor Services

- This theme was initially proposed in the RTI literature review as **Survivor Services, Trauma-Informed Care, Safety and Safety Planning**, and **Survivor Self-Determination**.
- The TWG recommended that this theme be overarching and include other proposed themes to avoid repetition and highlight the importance of centering harm reduction practices.
- This theme may include, but is not limited to, topics such as:
 - **Trauma-informed care**
 - **Safety & safety planning**
 - Harm reduction

- **Survivor self-determination**
- DEIB

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