

For Immediate Release

January 30, 2024

(Alexandria, VA) – The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization’s (NHPCO) Diversity Advisory Council (DAC) published *Culturally Sensitive Communications to Enhance Care Delivery: A Resource Guide for Healthcare Professionals*. This guide offers linguistic considerations to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in health, hospice, and palliative care. It contains information from a multitude of NHPCO resources, such as the Hospice Through The DEI Lens report, Inclusion and Access Toolkit, Black and African American Outreach Guide, Chinese American Resource Guide, Latino Outreach Guide, and LGBTQ+ Resource Guide, as well as information from additional external research sources.

Key findings and recommendations include:

- Some common language used in conversation can have a negative effect on the patient experience and create a barrier to engaging hospice care.
- It is important for clinicians and community support members to familiarize themselves with fundamental American Sign Language skills as 80% of individuals aged 80 and above encounter hearing loss, along with 63% of those aged 70 and older.
- Utilizing culturally sensitive language is integral to aiding in the completion of advance care planning materials and providing a high-quality patient experience.

NHPCO COO and Interim CEO, Ben Marcantonio, said, “For the last two decades, we’ve continued to see white Americans choosing hospice at higher rates than Hispanic, Black, Asian, and Native Americans. This guide provides best practices for culturally sensitive communication in healthcare, recognizing that advancing health equity through language is an essential aspect of promoting inclusive and accessible healthcare practice.”

NHPCO DAC Chair, Nicole McCann-Davis, said, “Through this language guide, our goal is to provide information, guidance, and technical expertise to all providers, especially those serving diverse communities, that will advance health equity in end-of-life care. We aim to create a common lexicon, enable organizations to operate from the same values, and foster diverse, equitable, and inclusive approaches.”

To access the guide and other NHPCO DEI resources, visit nhpco.org/diversity.