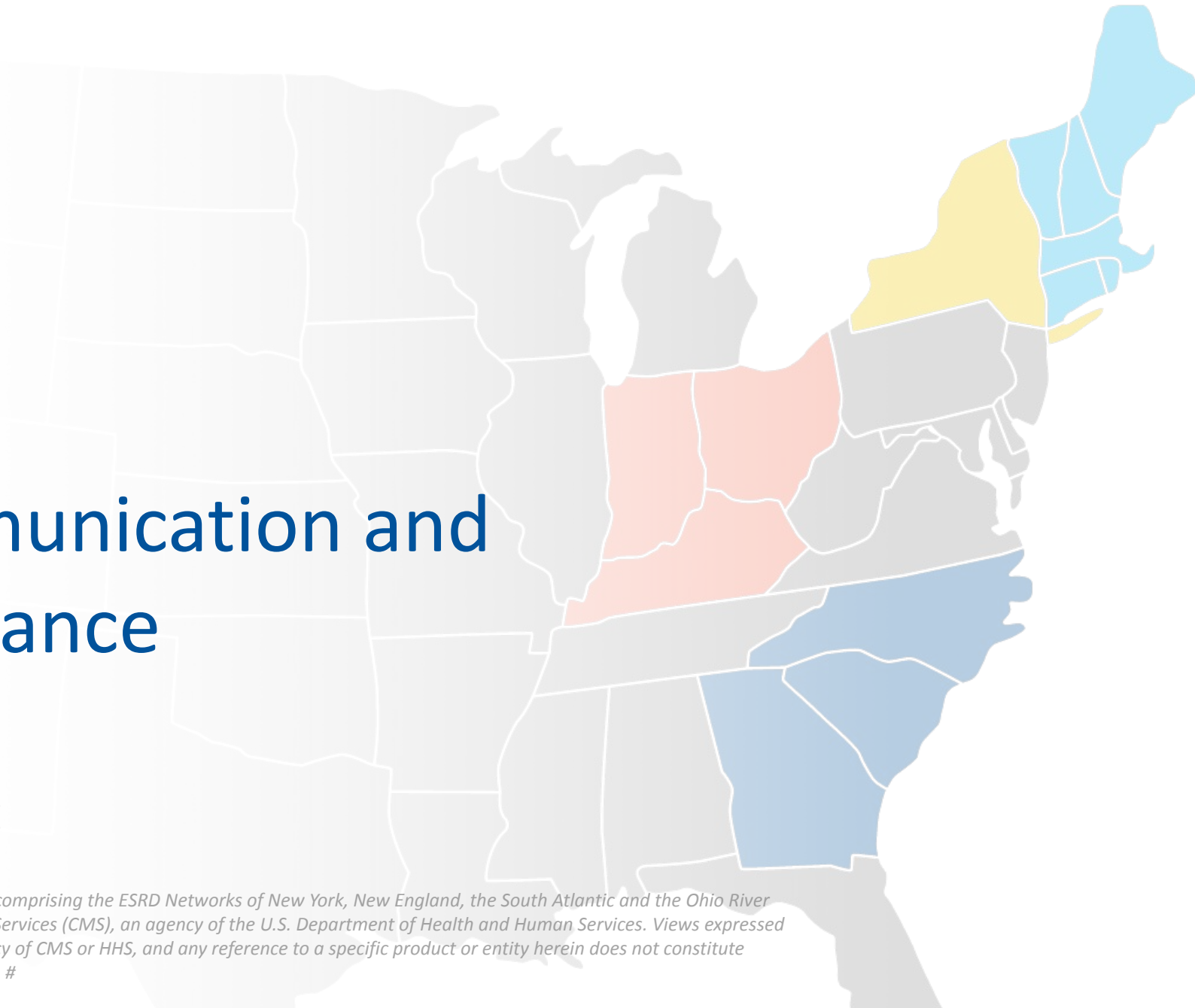End-Stage Renal Disease
Network Program

IPRO

CLAS Module 4
Theme 2: Communication and Language Assistance

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Principal Standard

The Principal Standard is the first standard that frames all of the National CLAS Standards. Once the following standards, Standards 2-14, are adopted, implemented, and maintained, then the Principal Standard will be achieved.

Provide effective, equitable, understandable, and respectful quality care and services that are responsive to diverse cultural health beliefs and practices, preferred languages, health literacy, and other communication needs.

Theme 2: Communication and Language Assistance
Communication and Language Assistance

The standards that fall under Theme 1 are standards 5 through 8.

This theme broadens the understanding and application of appropriate services to include all communication needs and services, including sign language, braille, oral interpretation, and written translation.

Theme 1: Standards 5-8

Standard 5

Offer language assistance to individuals who have limited English proficiency and/or other communication needs, at no cost to them, to facilitate timely access to all health care and services.

Standard 6

Inform all individuals of the availability of language assistance services clearly and in their preferred language, verbally and in writing.

Theme 1: Standards 5-8

Standard 7

Ensure the competence of individuals providing language assistance, recognizing that the use of untrained individuals and/or minors as interpreters should be avoided.

Standard 8

Provide easy-to-understand print and multimedia materials and signage in the languages commonly used by the populations in the service area.

Standard 5 Implementation Strategies

1. Complete an organizational assessment specific to language assistance services
   - Identify current language assistance services
   - Survey the patient population and the language assistance needs
   - Determine areas of improvement to create efficient care

2. Standardize language assistance procedures for staff members and train staff in those procedures
   - Provide staff with a script to introduce patients to available language assistance services
   - Streamline process to determine which patients will need to utilize language services

Standard 6 Implementation Strategies

1. Clearly display the availability to provide language assistance services at all times
   - Patients should be aware that language services are free and always accessible
   - Verbally inform clients of the availability of language services

Standard 7 Implementation Strategies

1. Require that all individuals serving as interpreters complete certification
   - Assess translators knowledge of linguistic and medical terminology skills
2. Build organizational capacity to provide competent language assistance.
   - Hire or train staff to gain certified translation skills

Standard 8 Implementation Strategies

1. Offer easy to understand multimedia materials, patient resources, and signage in the languages used within the service community
   - Continuously evaluate the quality of these translations by testing materials with the patient population