



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
 Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services



Commissioner's Policy Statement and Implementing Procedures

SUBJECT:	Promoting a Culturally Competent Service System
P & P NUMBER:	Chapter 6.21
APPROVED:	Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, Commissioner Date: 10/15/2015
EFFECTIVE DATE:	October 15, 2015 <i>Miriam Delphin-Rittmon</i>
REVISED:	5/1/2011, Replaced Commissioner's Policy Statement No. 76
REFERENCES:	
FORMS AND ATTACHMENTS:	

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to formally designate cultural competence as an essential characteristic that must be embedded in all aspects of the Department of Mental Health and Addition Services (DMHAS) system of care. The single overarching DMHAS goal of promoting and achieving a recovery oriented system of care is possible if cultural competence is an integral part of all service system design, delivery and evaluation.

DMHAS and the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) defines cultural competence as knowledge and information from and about individuals and groups that is integrated and transformed into clinical standards, skills, service approaches, techniques, and marketing programs that match an individual's culture and increase both the quality and appropriateness of healthcare and health outcomes.* Further, DMHAS/OMA conceptualizes cultural competence multi-dimensionally and is committed to promoting skills and competencies for addressing culture at the direct care, program, organizational and system levels.

POLICY: The DMHAS healthcare service system shall function with cultural competency that responds effectively to the needs and values of all individuals, based on their race and ethnicity, gender, age, religion and spirituality, affectional/sexual orientation, physical or mental health status, linguistic proficiency, and socioeconomic status. This is an essential component needed to ensure that services and supports are recovery oriented. Findings in the professional literature point to patterns of care that indicate disparities in access and other indices of quality of healthcare for some racial, cultural and low-income groups in systems of care. A focused effort must be made and strong steps must be taken to eliminate disparities and assure equity in access, retention and engagement, service quality and outcomes for all served within the DMHAS system of care and supported by the Multicultural Advisory Council (MCAC). Support and education related to

cultural competence must exist to assist the public/private workforce to be culturally competent. DMHAS is also committed to a diverse workforce that reflects the diversity of individuals being served.

DMHAS Tools for Implementing the Policy

To promote effective implementation of this policy all services shall be culturally appropriate and supported by the tools listed below, which can also be found on the DMHAS website:

- Policies and procedures for evaluating cultural competence
- Multicultural Behavioral Healthcare Standard Practices
- Addressing disparities and improving cultural competence
- Development and implementation of culture specific programs
- Development and implementation of DMHAS /OMA strategic plan
- Facilitation of multicultural training for DMHAS facilities and funded agencies
- Provision of technical assistance and resources for enhancing organizational cultural competence

The Multicultural Advisory Council (MCAC)

The DMHAS Multicultural Advisory Council was established in 1995. Since that time, The MCAC has served the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services as a creative resource in the area of multiculturalism that develops and recommends culturally appropriate system change. This specially chosen group of professionals shall continue to take initiatives that promote embedding cultural competence into the language, spirit, and structure of the DMHAS service delivery and management system.

The MCAC shall be comprised of a diverse membership, especially with representation of underserved populations throughout the regions, agencies and consumers/persons in recovery populations across Connecticut. It shall help foster best culturally appropriate health practices. It will be supportive of multicultural training of the DMHAS system workforce. It shall identify opportunities to be used as instruments to permeate cultural competence throughout the DMHAS public/private network of services.

The MCAC shall provide support to DMHAS' Office of Multicultural Affairs in the search and recognition of individuals qualified for appointment to the MCAC membership and shall emphasize the diversity of membership and be representative of the persons/populations who should entrust their care and recovery to the DMHAS healthcare service system.

The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services is fully and enthusiastically committed to adhering to the principles and spirit of this Policy Statement. It will be critical in assisting us to improve the health of Connecticut's population and in helping those who develop mental illness or substance-use disorders to be treated with respect and to recover their lives.

* Davis, K. (1998). Race, health status, and managed health care. In F. L. Brisbane (Ed.), *Cultural competence for health care professionals working with African American communities: Theory and practice* (pp. 145–163). Rockville, MD: Center for Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.