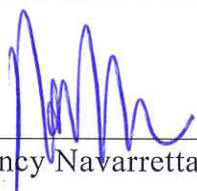




STATE OF CONNECTICUT
Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services
Commissioner's Policy Statement and Implementing Procedures



SUBJECT/POLICY NAME:	Promoting a Culturally Competent Service System
POLICY CHAPTER:	Chapter 6
APPROVED BY:	 Nancy Navarretta, MA, LPC, NCC <div style="text-align: right;">1/18/22 Date</div>
EFFECTIVE DATE:	5/1/2011, Replaced Commissioner's Policy Statement No. 76
LAST REVISED DATE :	1/7/2022
POLICY OWNER:	Office Of The Commissioner - Office of Multicultural Health Equity

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to formally designate cultural competence as an integral quality 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.

DEFINITIONS:

"Cultural Competence" means 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 outcomes¹.

Further, the DMHAS Office of Multicultural Health Equity (OMHE) 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.

Support and education related to cultural competence must exist to assist the DMHAS workforce to be culturally competent. DMHAS is committed to a diverse workforce that reflects the diversity of individuals being served.

Findings in 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. Therefore, focused efforts 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. The DMHAS Multicultural Advisory Council (MCAC), which was established in 1995 serves as the department's supportive and creative resource in the area of multiculturalism and cultural competency. The MCAC comprises of a group of professionals who continue to develop and recommend culturally appropriate systems initiatives that promote cultural competence into the language, spirit, and structure of the DMHAS service delivery and management system.

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 Office of Multicultural Health Equity homepage on the DMHAS website:

- Policies and procedures for evaluating cultural competence
- Instituting, the culturally and linguistically appropriate services (CLAS) standards
- Multicultural Behavioral Healthcare Standard Practices
- Addressing disparities and improving cultural competence
- Development and implementation of culture specific programs
- Development and implementation of DMHAS /OMHE strategic plan
- Facilitation of multicultural training for DMHAS facilities and funded agencies
- Provision of technical assistance and resources for enhancing organizational cultural competence

Multicultural Clinical/Rehabilitation Best Practices provide guiding principles for culturally-competent treatment and recovery services to individuals of ethnic/cultural/racial populations living with mental illness and addictive disorders. Such best practices reflect the view that multicultural competence is both a value and a set of skills that must be incorporated in every

aspect of our system of care. DMHAS Service Providers are expected to be sensitive to the cultural values of diverse groups, acknowledge cultural strengths associated with people, their families, significant others, and communities, while recognizing and respecting individual differences. Our prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and recovery services all need to be culturally appropriate for all individuals served.

The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services recognizes that multicultural competence is a developmental process. It occurs along the entire continuum of care and requires the ongoing participation of all stakeholders to bring about a multicultural system of care. Therefore, this document is intended to serve as the guiding policy for our practice, training and service system development. Continuous multicultural training of the workforce will stimulate the initiation of service interventions, strategies, policies, and program development necessary to assure a culturally competent system of care throughout the State of Connecticut.

REFERENCES:

¹ 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.