



Eliminating Structural Racism in Behavioral Health

June 7, 2021

Time (1:00 – 2:00)

Location: Zoom Meeting

Meeting Summary

Goal of Project: On June 24, 2020, the ADAMHS Board of Directors passed RESOLUTION NO. 20-06-01 declaring Racism as a Public Health Crisis. The ADAMHS Board is working with partners to plan immediate, short-term and long-term goals for eliminating structural racism in the behavioral health community by upholding the recommendations in the resolution. The ADAMHS Board and its partners will create a strategic plan for addressing racism and implementing solutions to eliminate structural racism in behavioral health care. The group currently has five subcommittees: Workforce; Health Equity; Policy and Advocacy; Data and Research; and Community Collaboration/Education and Stigma.

Goal of Today's Meeting

- Presentation from LaToya Logan, LISW-S, founder and Executive Director of Project LIFT Services about the impacts of structural racism in behavioral health care practice.
- Review subcommittee progress

Agenda Items

Welcome/Introduction – Carole Ballard, ADAMHS Board

- Thanked all for coming.
- Introduced Rev. Benjamin Gohlstin, ADAMHS Board Chair
 - o Rev. Gohlstin thanked all for being present and said, “We are endeavoring to ensure that we are giving the people the best possible services that we can garner. I hope that you can work and walk with us.”
- Introduced Scott Osiecki, CEO, ADAMHS Board
 - o Mr. Osiecki thanked all for attending.
 - o Announced that the ADAMHS Board has released a Request for Proposals for our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consultant.
 - o Proposals were accepted until June 15. Staff, Board members and individuals involved in ESR Work Group will review the proposals. Once a vendor is selected, the contract will run through the ADAMHS Board meeting cycle in July. A consultant should be approved by August.
 - o Juneteenth is now considered a holiday for the ADAMHS Board and the office will be closed on June 18. This is a further commitment to diversity and understanding different cultures made by ADAMHS Board members and the executive team.

- Introduced LaToya Logan, LISW-S, founder and Executive Director of Project LIFT Services.
 - o Ms. Logan is also the Region 3 Director of The National Association of Social Workers; and the author of Two Books: *The Case of The Brownie* and *It's Not About the Damn Brownie*.

Speaker – LaToya Logan, LISW-S, author, and founder and CEO of Project LIFT Services

- *“Project LIFT Services is a prevention and social justice agency providing behavioral health services, targeting the needs of Black teens and fathers most at-risk for homelessness, economic instability, and incarceration who live within Cuyahoga County. Project LIFT provides a continuum of services including linkage and referral to community resources, psychoeducational groups to build parenting skills, and prevention workshops to the community.”* From the website: <https://www.projectliftservices.org/>
- Ms. Logan saw a gap in services and connection to resources for young Black males ages 14-25, who are more likely to die by homicide, have the 3rd highest suicide rate in the nation and are more likely to be involved in the criminal justice system at a very early age (as young as 10).
- Project Lift Services offers many resources to help overcome these systemic barriers and disparities including:
 - o Free HIV testing
 - o Food giveaway
 - o Free prevention services
 - o Connection to resources (legal, financial, parenting, etc.)
- Ms. Logan mentioned Project LIFT’s upcoming Life Skills Summit on Saturday June 19th 10am-2pm. Programming at Project LIFT Services is focused to assist young Black males ages 14-25.
- Shared a PowerPoint Presentation (included in email) that covered:
 - o An overview of racism and Critical Race Theory
 - o Acknowledging the History of Racism
 - Juneteenth
 - Resisting revisionist history that eliminate systems for oppression (poverty, family dynamics, education, lack of ownership of self, ideas and property, economic disenfranchisement and geographical constraints).
 - o Racial trauma – what it is, how to recognize it and how to treat it with trauma-informed and personalized care
 - o Clinician bias and its consequences on clients
 - o Reviewing racist policies and practices
 - o Understanding implicit bias and the process by which to address it
 - o Representation and inclusion, where she shared the following quote: “If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time, but if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.” — Lilla Watson
- **Questions for Ms. Logan**
 - o Melinda D. shared her personal story and how Ms. Logan’s presentation resonated with her.
 - o Khalid S. – “We had a discussion yesterday with some young men. How do you approach the younger men that don’t see spirituality as a tool to use?
 - I never try to assign what will work for everyone. Letting them be who they are, has proven to be most effective.
 - o Mr. Osiecki thanked Ms. Logan and shared that this has been the clearest presentation we have had thus far.
 - She said she provides ongoing education that can help change hearts and minds when it comes to discussing racism in behavioral health care.

- Someone asked, “Can you talk about language and how that might cause bias?”
 - The language I choose is something on a wider scale. Depression might come out as aggression. We must think about all the iterations on how we choose to speak. For example, I might say, “Explain to me in your words about what you’re going through, and I will do the rest of the work from here.”
 - Clinicians must look beyond their perspectives and truly listen to clients. What they hear as aggression may be fear but showing vulnerability or emotions in the Black community can be seen as a weakness. Clinicians can be the connector by just listening to what the person is saying and not assuming what the client is going through.

Committee Report Outs

- Health Equity in Behavioral Health – Erin DiVincenzo, ADAMHS Board, (Co-chair) presented

- Discussed the Medicaid Reentry Act of 2021.
- Reviewed and discussed proposed survey questions.
- Explored health literacy levels and language barriers that may impact services.
- Looking to find ways to make the committee’s work actionable.

Meets the last Friday of every month at 10:00 a.m.

- Community Collaboration/Education and Stigma – Erika Losse, AmeriCorps VISTA, presented

- Group discussed the importance of keeping the survey short in length.
- Group confirmed that the survey will be geared towards providers and current clients, specifically BIPOC in treatment.
- Group discussed the possibility of using the Likert or numeric scale for survey.
- The subcommittee will meet on the third Wednesday of each month. The invitation through email will have the statement of purpose and goals attached.

Meets the third Wednesday of every month at 1:00 p.m.

- Workforce – Carmen Gandarilla, ADAMHS Board, (co-chair) presented

- Divided up into little groups to tackle different topics.
- Ashley and Jerome are working on collecting data.
- Spence, Sue and Orion are meeting with state representatives.
- Specifically looking at students, the group participated at a job fair at school. The students asked really great questions during the job fair. Hope this is the first of many presentations.
- Looking to have a panel of professionals to speak about their careers for community outreach.
- Considering if work group can provide opportunities such as interns, shadowing, agency tours, cultural humility training, anti-racism, and sharing resources on cultural humility.

Meets the third Friday of every month at 11:00 a.m.

- Data and Research Thomas Williams, ADAMHS Board, and Jeanne Mattern, JFSA, (co-chairs) presented

- Looking at current data sources for race. There is no standard on how to identify race or who identifies race. This makes it challenging to take the next step.
- If we standardize categories for race can we better assess outcomes to services, treatment modalities, etc.
- Looking to identify where discrimination may occur with current data is difficult.

Meets the second Friday of every month at 11:00 a.m.

- **Policy & Advocacy**, Carole Ballard and Karen Kearney (co-chairs) presented

- The group is working on a time that Senator Antonio and her aide can meet with committee regarding the licensure legislation.
- Hopefully training will evolve so that we can provide professional training for social workers and counselors that is part of their certification process and must be ongoing.

Meets the third Friday of every month at 1:00 p.m.

Closing

- Scott Osiecki – Thanked all and emphasized how impactful LaToya's presentation was.
- Carole Ballard – Thanked all and wished us a happy Juneteenth. Encouraged all to check out local education resources to learn more about Juneteenth.
- Information about the larger work group meetings and the subcommittees can be found on our website: adamhsc.org in the Current Initiatives section.

Next meeting is Monday July 12 at 1:00 p.m. Meetings are the first Monday of each month, except in July and September when the meetings will be held the second Monday because of holidays.