



Eliminating Structural Racism in Behavioral Health Work Group Meeting

November 1, 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

- Meet India Harris-Jones and Brenda Stevens from Rice Education Consulting (REDCon), the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion consultant for the ADAMHS Board.
- Discuss this group's goals and aspirations.

Agenda Items

Welcome/Introduction – Beth Zietlow-DeJesus – ADAMHS Board Director of External Affairs

- Thanked all for joining and informed the group that this meeting would be recorded.
- Introduced Rev. Benjamin Gohlstin, ADAMHS Board Chair
 - o Thanked all for being present today, and for joining this movement. Rev. Gohlstin said that the ADAMHS Board is a pioneer in this movement. He also reminded us that he is uncomfortable with the word racism; there is only one race – the human race.
- Introduced Scott Osiecki, CEO, ADAMHS Board
 - o Scott welcomed India and Brenda from REDCon, the DEI consultants with which the ADAMHS Board has contracted, who will be helping to facilitate this group's meetings. He thanked both India and Brenda for being at the meeting.
 - o Scott thanked Clare Rosser, the Chief Public Affairs Officer and Starlette Sizemore, the Director of Special Projects, both of whom organized the relationship and will be working closely with REDCon. He also thanked Beth and Carole for their work in this group.
- India introduced herself. India has been with REDCon for over four years and has been doing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion work for over 12 years.
- Brenda introduced herself. Brenda has been with Redcon for three years now, she is a retired educator and has over 25 years of DEI experience.

- India told the group that REDCon will be facilitating these meetings for at least the next six months. Today, they will start with grounding and will explain the roles REDCon will have in reaching the group's goal of eliminating bigotry in the behavioral health field.
- REDCon will start every meeting with "Elephants of Expectations." Brenda explained that the expectation for today's meeting is to ground the group and determine roles. She asked each participant on the call what they aspire to gain from these meetings?
 - o The audience gave many personal and professional aspirations. The consensus is to create an equitable, inclusive, culturally competent and person-centered system of care in Cuyahoga County.
- India thanked everyone for their participation. Now that the group has shared their goals, India suggested the need to determine how to achieve them. India asked, regarding structures in behavioral healthcare, what are some things that they would like to avoid? What are some things that they would like to eliminate?
 - o Beth said most people are using a "European-minded" model of care. Those are, models that are not created specifically for each person, rather, created for one type of person and applied broadly to everyone. She would like to see other models of treatment being explored that would engage people based on culture and experience, especially that are trauma-informed.
 - o India asked, what about from the committee level?
 - o Beth said that once the group has identified issues and knows what structures it wants to eliminate, how does the group go about making the change?
 - o Scott said this group is currently called Eliminating Structural Racism, but it is really a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion group. He would like to achieve a name change to more align with the group's intentions.
 - Rev. Gohlstin agreed and said the word "racism" must be removed.
 - The ADAMHS Board will internally discuss possible name changes and will report back to the group.
- India wrapped the conversation by reviewing actionable steps:
 - o Change the name of this group.
 - o Review and determine what this group's role will be: will this group be an accountability partner, or a program partner? An accountability partner is one that motivates others to make a change. A program partner is one that provides training and development to others. The group needs to determine which role it will take, so the consultants know how to implement decisions.
 - Rev. Gohlstin asked why this group cannot be both an accountability partner and a program partner?
 - India said that will need to be determined. This group can be both, but decisions will be based on that identification. She urged the group to think, "Is there a reason we can't be both?" She reiterated that this discussion will be ongoing for the next six months and at that time we will begin to implement.
- India said herself and Brenda will be the lead contact on this process. She asked the audience if they have ideas, information, or questions they would like to share?
 - o Tom asked, how do we know this group is making progress? Will there be something that we can compare month to month?

- India answered that it's a broad question and this group should set their goals based on what we want the progress to be. We will develop metrics to measure against and will use those to establish where we are and where we want to be. She said that the group's goals can be developed, changed and added. REDCon wants to leave this group with skills and tools and in five months we can more define what success and progress looks like.
- India ended the meeting by asking the group to contribute "one word" on what we are leaving this meeting feeling. India said she is feeling *energized*.
 - Scott said his word is *understanding*, because he is leaving with a much better understanding of where this group is going and how.
 - The audience added words in the chat like: *Hopeful, important, grateful, determined, movement, inclusion, helpful, necessary, intention, refocused, patient...*
- Brenda said she is impressed with this group's commitment.
- Beth thanked the audience, India and Brenda for participating in the meeting. Information about this initiative can be found on the ADAMHS Board website: adamhsc.org in the 'Current Initiatives' section.

The next large group meeting will be on Monday, December 6 at 1 p.m.