



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in Behavioral Health Care Work Group Meeting
March 7, 2022 at 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm
Location: Zoom

Goal of Project: The ADAMHS Board is working with partners to plan immediate, short-term, and long-term goals for eliminating discrimination in the public behavioral health system. This 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: Discuss accountability for the DEI Work Group regarding the DEI Strategic Plan.

Meeting Summary

Welcome/Introduction

- Rev. Benjamin F. Gohlstin, Sr., ADAMHS Board Chair, welcomed the group. Referencing the reinstatement of the original wording in the ADAMHS Board's "Racism is a Public Health Crisis" resolution, Gohlstin stated: "I want to apologize to everyone for not standing my ground. We have made a change again, and I'm not suggesting that we make another change. What's more important is that the work gets done, rather than my views. However, I do want you to know that I've talked with a local anthropologist who has also shared with me that racism is a cultural construct that cannot exist. I have conferred with a Dean of Forensic Science at a major university, African American, who also says that racism biologically cannot exist. Along with my logical reasoning, of those things and some other things biologically, I don't want to go into now. But I do want you to know that my assertions have been right and are documented and confirmed and to continue in that process of saying this in spite of the facts is like some people in this country refuse to accept that the world is round. Some people still think its flat, instead of all of the facts. Again, what's more important is the work. So let's move forward. Thank you."

DEI Work Group Session

- Scott Osiecki, ADAMHS Board Chair, welcomed the representatives from REDCon, DEI consultant.
- REDCon is facilitating these meetings while also conducting an assessment of the DEI needs in our behavioral health system and creating a DEI plan.
- Since the DEI assessment phase is now complete, the ADAMHS Board and REDCon are in the planning phase of the three-year DEI Strategic Plan.
- On March 1 and 2, a group of Board members and Board staff were involved in strategic planning sessions with REDCon to begin developing the plan.
- Lesli Rice and Brenda Stevens are the main facilitators of today's meeting. Rice asked the group to identify any "elephants in the room."
- A participant mentioned the rationale for using the word racism versus discrimination that was discussed at the last meeting. Osiecki said that the Board reinstated the original resolution. Another participant thought the name of the group was going to change too. Rice noted both concerns.
- Rice shared the agenda: discuss Strategic Planning Framework, visualize the future, and identify focus areas for the DEI action plan.
- Rico Rice facilitated a culture-building activity, asking participants for five different aspects of culture that begin with the letter P.

- The 5P Framework is a tool to evaluate an organization's culture of inclusion and identify strategies for building a more inclusive culture:
 1. People - Individuals of various identities backgrounds and experiences
 2. Practices - Behaviors and habits adopted by people
 3. Policies - Rules, policies and procedures set forth by leadership
 4. Programs - Activities that foster growth in people
 5. Promotion - Internal and external communication
- Lesli Rice shared that we should start thinking about as we move forward, what's going to be our culture inside the group/your organization; the Work Group will be an accountability partner as the strategic plan is being developed.
- How do we create a DEI strategic plan to get us where we want to be:
 - Vision and Purpose
 - Mission (We will not create a new Mission for the DEI Plan; we will ensure that it ties into the mission of the organization.)
 - Values
 - 3 Pillars (focus areas)
 - 3 Objectives
 - 4 Actions under each objective
 - Operating Structure and Sustainability
- Rice shared that she sees the Work Group most involved in the Operating Structure and Sustainability part. This a core part of implementing the plan.
- REDCon is not creating stand-alone documents. They are looking at the DEI plan as an overlay of the ADAMHS Board Strategic Plan.
- Rice shared the Discussion Framework:
 - Objective questions: What's happening? What do we know about this?
 - Reflective questions: What is the impact if we do nothing? Will this significantly further the mission and vision of the organization?
 - Interpretive questions: What does it currently mean for stakeholders?
 - Decisional questions: What are we going to do?
- Rice discussed the "Miracle Question." She asked the group to imagine that while you are sleeping, a miracle occurs. When you wake up, what is something you would like to see that would make life better for those you serve? Think about this as a large overarching goal and share what miracle has happened.
- Audience input:
 - Money wasn't an issue to keep individuals from seeking the help they needed.
 - Black and Brown and marginalized people are seen and judged by the content of their character and not the color of their skin.
 - Glass ceilings are shattered.
 - Staff and management reflect the makeup of the community they are in.
 - Health disparities between those we serve, including individuals/families living in poverty, primarily persons of color, have disappeared.
 - Accessibility of services is improved; everyone who wants help can easily access support.
 - We can all meet without COVID restrictions.
 - We have enough staff to meet client needs for three shifts.
 - Maybe four shifts to balance out the stress; consider the mental health of the people providing services.
 - Structural barriers to accessing affordable housing have disappeared.
 - Open and unbiased communication.
 - More staff to serve those that need it and that they understand that all people no matter their situation, economic status or color can be served.
 - We have each assumed personal responsibility for doing our own work to acknowledge how we might contribute to the challenges that those we serve are confronted with.

- People can talk and listen with empathy and that leads to open and honest conversations.
- High quality, easily accessible health care, physical and mental health.
- Our goals achieved.
- People weren't ashamed/afraid to seek help.
- More intakes.
- Open conversations about mental illness and substance use disorders.
- More people connected to treatment with fewer barriers.
- Fewer people with mental and substance use disorders would be in jail.
- Rice shared that the Miracle Question helps us identify the environment we desire to have. That helps define our vision, from there we create an action plan with measurable goals.
- Rice mentioned that the input is reflecting system miracles and personal miracles (interpersonal connections). It starts with the individual; our individual experiences impact how we interact with others and then how we interact with others becomes the system and institutions.
- Rice showed a key visual that included the information below and asked what thoughts come to mind and where do you see the provider network, DEI Work Group, the ADAMHS Board?
 - Inequality - Unequal access to opportunities.
 - Equity - Custom tools that identify and address inequality.
 - Equality - Evenly distribute tools and assistance.
 - Justice - Fixing the system to offer equal access to both tools and opportunities.
- Audience input:
 - We have made movement toward equality but not enough.
 - Equity is a good next step
 - Justice is complicated yet offers the best long-term more sustainable solution.
 - Equity and equality aren't enough.
 - This message should be instilled in people at a young age, that everyone should be entitled to equity and justice.
- Rice asked if participants have seen organizations go from inequality to equality and from equity to justice.
- Rice asked, from a DEI perspective:
 - What do you want that you don't have? **Achieve:**
 - Representation of those we serve at the provider board level/leadership.
 - Feedback through phone, surveys, in-person, etc.
 - What do you want that you already have? **Preserve:**
 - Forum for people to have difficult conversations.
 - Keep the clients engaged in this process so they can have their voices heard.
 - Keep voices at the table; continue a high level of observation and participation.
 - Extending partnerships.
 - What don't you have that you don't want? **Avoid:**
 - Separatism within the organization; want unification.
 - Commitment to continue to honor and create or modify services and programs based on the voices of those served.
 - Guilt.
 - Doing things the way they've always been done just because that's how they've always been done.
 - Just words and no action.
- Rice shared that we would get a clearer, evolved charge for this group as we move forward. The next couple of months the group we will be leveraging it to make sure the group is set up properly for sustainability and continuity.
- Rico Rice asked the group's comfort level with education, advocacy, policy work, or programmatic support.

- Clare Rosser noted that we would like to keep the working committees going but need direction. Five areas of focus: Workforce; Health Equity; Policy and Advocacy; Data and Research; and Community Collaboration/Education and Stigma.
- It was noted that group participants want to take action with the information while not reinventing the wheel. If recommendations are created, where will they go?
- Rico Rice questioned why stigma is listed in our five focus areas. Beth Zietlow-DeJesus noted that it addresses not just mental health/substance use stigma but also culture stigmas, like “keep in the home” or “pray it away,” that act a barrier for people reaching out.
- The next meeting will focus heavily on where we are going with the DEI Strategic Plan and refining the charge of the subcommittees.
- Rice will address questions shared in the group with Board Staff.
- Rice mentioned that the name of this work group will be discussed and decided on at the next meeting.
- Bill Hebble shared that there is a March 24 client meeting that will address the DEI survey, and asked that anyone interested reach out the Clients Rights staff.
- The meeting ended with the Just One Word activity:
 - Willing, Process, Progress, Hopeful

Next meeting April 4, 2022, 1 pm to 2:30 pm