

Racial Equity and Disparities Workgroup
Technical Assistance Tools and Resources Subcommittee
April 13, 2021

Meeting Summary and Action Items

Attendees:

1. Iruma Bello, OnTrackNY
2. Melanie Bennett, Connection LHS
3. Marielle Demarais, EPI-MINN
4. Jill Marsteller, Connection LHS
5. Tiana Sepahpour, Connection LHS
6. Lisa Dixon, OnTrackNY
7. Vanessa Klodnick, EPINET-TX
8. Stephen Smith, OnTrackNY
9. Michelle Friedman-Yakoobian, OnTrackNY
10. Tamara Daley, ENDCC
11. Donna Atkinson, ENDCC
12. Bennie Osafo-Darko, ENDCC
13. Chackupurackal Mathai, OnTrackNY
14. Hong Ngo, OnTrackNY
15. Kowsar Ahmed, EPI-MINN

OPENING

The meeting began with an icebreaker focused the origin and meaning of group members' names.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

New committee members

- Three new committee members (Chacku Mathai, Michelle Friedman-Yakoobian & Kowsar Ahmed) attended the meeting. Chacku is the Director for the SAMHSA Healthy Transitions grant at OnTrackNY. Michelle is also from OnTrackNY (OTN) and works on a SAMHSA-funded, mental health technology transfer center program. Kowsar is clinical research coordinator and psychometrist at the University of Minnesota/first episode psychosis clinic
- Anyone who has recommendations for potential new members should send their names and contact information to Bennie.

Resources and Tool Development

- Stephen presented on the work that the OTN Equity and Inclusion Workgroup is doing to address racial equity issues and antiracism practices. The workgroup is an internal advisory group made up of multidisciplinary staff with the goal of transforming the knowledge and practice at OTN. The workgroup was established to develop an antiracism plan, facilitate racial

equity meetings and to develop a racial equity curriculum that would engage all OTN staff. Their goal is to develop a plan and curriculum that would engage staff intellectually, emotionally and relationally.

- The antiracism plan is based on shifting from a model that uses a cultural competency lens to a model that reflects racial equity and structural humility principles, while developing technical assistance focused on racial and structural competence.
- The antiracism plan focused on three areas: foundation-building, consciousness-raising and changing practice
 - Foundation-building – focuses on understanding the history of racial and structural inequities with curriculum materials for exploring evolution of race/racism/slavery in America and current day impacts.
 - They did something called a 20x20 challenge with Dr. Ruth Shinn at UC Davis during which staff were exposed to different resources every day for 20 days. OTN used some of these resources to inform their own curriculum.
 - They also have a journal club with discussion topics focused on race and racism in psychiatry, facilitated by Hong.
 - They also have 30-minute bi-monthly racial equity check-ins during which staff can present on something they have learned that may not be specifically psychiatry related. This is an additional mechanism to keep the racial equity conversation ongoing.
 - Consciousness-raising focuses on exploring key concepts centered on raising one's sense of racial consciousness with curriculum materials for exploring concepts such as white privilege, intersectionality, positionality, racial identity development, etc.
 - Changing practice focuses on understanding how issues of racial equity can inform practice, policy and advocacy, with curriculum materials for exploring the impact of racism in psychiatry, proving TA to staff and exploring changes needed in the content of materials
 - They worked with Dr. Ruth Shinn to develop a 4-part anti-racism webinar series for their staff.
 - They did a 2-day retreat on structural racism with Dr. Ruth Shinn that focused on shifting from a cultural competency model to a cultural-humility, racial and structural racism model. They discussed how this shows up in practice by looking at the content of their materials and discussed how to develop services that are structurally appropriate.
 - Their Data and Race Workgroup looked at existing research projects and how data is being analyzed and interpreted; how race is included and left out of race data.
- The curriculum includes resources that are digestible, relatable and somewhat vetted. They include a series of podcasts, YouTube videos, articles and exercises, which are all no more than 30 minutes long. They also have a library of resources with more extensive materials for staff who may be interested in learning more about the topics.
 - About a week before their monthly racial equity meetings, staff are assigned to one of the topics, which are discussed during the meetings. The meetings usually begin with a presentation on the topic, followed by smaller group discussions via breakout rooms.

- OTN Lessons Learned
 - There is always a sense of urgency that the work needs to be done right way and there is a constant pull between how much time to devote to the work and to meeting outcomes
 - Traditionally, people focus more on outcomes than on the process
 - It is important to make a distinction between anti-racism and not being racist. It is also important to meet and acknowledge where people are.

Next Steps for the TA Tools & Resources Workgroup

- The team had follow-up discussions about how to share lessons learned and guidance across the hubs.
- The team will develop a survey that will be sent to the hubs to collect information about:
 - What they have in terms of resources
 - Curriculums
 - Processes being used
 - Lessons learned
 - Self-assessment questions – where do people think they are in terms of racial equity?
- Donna will begin drafting domains for the survey and share with the group
- Tamara will share the draft PL-CAB that ENDCC with the group. The CAB/Research group is also reviewing the items related to race and ethnicity.

ACTION ITEMS

- Donna will draft potential survey questions that the team will use to survey the hubs about resources, lessons learned, processes being used etc.
- The group will continue with the meanings of names exercise at the next meeting.
- Members should send names and contact information for potential new members to Bennie.
- Jill will share the most recent version of the curriculum with the team.
- Team members with ideas or materials for activities that explain the concepts in CoMMIT curriculum should share them with the team.
- Team members should upload any resources they have on the [Google Drive](#) for the team to review.
- Jill will upload some slide decks with curriculum content for team members to review.
- The team will work on the survey during the next meeting.