



# **BHPOC Work Group on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Behavioral Health**

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[www.cga.ct.gov/ph/BHPOC](http://www.cga.ct.gov/ph/BHPOC)

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Co-Chairs: Alice Forrester and Selma  
Ward

## **Meeting Minutes**

**November 2, 2021 11:00 AM via ZOOM\***

*Attendees present: Selma Ward (Co-Chair), Dr. Alice Forrester (Co-Chair)  
Brenetta Henry, Yvonne Jones, Dr. Robert Plant, Roderick Winstead, Colleen Harrington,  
Mark Vanacore, Heather Gates, Donyale Pina, Dr. Stephney Springer, Dr. Noel Casiano, Kelly  
Phenix, Janine Willey- Sullivan, Marissa Bayerl, Lois Berkowitz*

*The BHPOC is committed to creating to an environment that provides equal access to  
behavioral healthcare in a culturally competent capacity, with particular attention to social  
and racial justice.*

\*Join Zoom Meeting  
*Robert Plant is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.*

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### **I. Racial Justice and Towards Creating an Anti-racism Organization-**

Monica Rams (Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs/Office of Diversity  
and Equity)-DCF

- a. Presentation has been postponed and will occur at December, 2021 DEI meeting

### **II. Discussion on presentation to CFAC and the request from the community participants on what they would like to see and/or share their needs for DEI BH Services in CT.**

- a. DE&I Chairs provided an overview of the DEI Committee at the October 14<sup>th</sup> Consumer and Family Advisory Council (CFAC) monthly meeting.
- b. The presentation included the functioning and goals of the committee as well as what the committee is looking to achieve as a community driven committee.
- c. CFAC was limited in response to the DEI presentation due to managing multiple recent projects and initiatives. This topic will be discussed at the November CFAC monthly meeting with the larger group to extend an opportunity for them to join the committee.
- d. CFAC was one of the primary contributors to identifying the four strategies,
- e. DEI is open to the public as are all BHPOC committees but public participation is limited
- f. Clarification about the different stipend payments for consumers for their attendance at both CFAC and BHPOC and its subcommittees was discussed

### **III. ECC Update:**

- a. DSS reported a fiscal analysis was done and the DSS Commissioner agreed to move forward allowing existing ECC's to expand ECC billing to all of their locations, thereby improving access to underserved areas.
  - i. Providers received a letter last week asking for them to complete an attachment fee (an attestation) listing all their sites to include as legitimate ECC sites. Providers have until November 30 2021 to get the information back.
- b. Discussion points included:
  - i. A future where services could be provided in unconventional environments and setting to allow people to get services where they live and work,
  - ii. Consideration of adding to the existing pool of ECC providers as to not overburden the existing ones.
  - iii. Data about race and ethnicity is difficult to collect from Medicaid data due to incomplete data collection but may be better accessed at a provider level
  - iv. New ECC data collection requirements hopes this investment will help determine if more people of color actually receiving adequate care
  - v. The ECC rates and the business aspect may be better discussed at Operations and not deter from this Committee's focus on DEI

### **IV. Retention, Recruitment, Retaining – the 3 R's of Cultural Competency**

- i. At the last BHPOC DEI meeting, this group discussed how it may go about making recommendations to the larger partnership to help facilitate getting strong DEI programs to providers, which will help identify steps needed to build an effective DEI workforce.
- ii. Must include the consumer voice and eliminate barriers in getting the consumer and family voice included in DEI discussions
- iii. Workforce is an issue and especially now during the pandemic with the huge new demand for services.
- iv. Suggestion to bring in Michael Hoge from Yale and the Annapolis Coalition, a national technical assistance center that did some work on workforce and behavioral health. Annapolis' intention was to expand the concept of the workforce and to not just think of Masters level professionally trained individuals: peer recovery support specialists, and community residents
  - Senator Murphy is drafting a new mental health bill, so there may be an opportunity for potential funding.
- v. There is need to continue these longer term conversations, and build on what

DE&I have accomplished to date

- vi. Reimbursement, parity and incentives to create a welcoming work environment for culturally competent team members.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, December 7, 2021 at 11:00 AM via ZOOM**