

Meeting Summary for Committee on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Behavioral Health Zoom Meeting

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Quick recap

The team discussed their personal health issues before delving into the ongoing work at Clifford Beers, which includes trauma-informed antiracism and restorative justice practices. They also explored the effectiveness of focus groups in gathering information and the challenges of data collection, particularly for individuals of Latin American descent and non-English speaking families. The team agreed to continue these discussions with a more specific data set and potential recommendations in their next meeting.

Next steps

Amy Soto will share her data and findings from the focus group with the team. Carlos will explore the idea of using technology for simple, quick surveys to gather data from families and providers.

Summary

Clifford Beers Team Meeting with Amy Soto and Shayna Singh

The team at Clifford Beers, led by Alice, began their meeting with a trauma-informed anti-racism exercise. Amy, representing the Department of Social Services, introduced herself to the team. Shayna, from the Department of Social Services, was also present to represent Fatmata Williams. The team was also joined by several others, including Brenetta Henry, who was being set up with technology for future meetings, and Carlos Blanco, who was there to present on one of his programs. The team's ongoing work at Clifford Beers includes trauma-informed antiracism and restorative justice practices.

Weather Personality Icebreaker

Alice led a fun icebreaker where each participant shared what kind of weather they would be if they were a weather condition. The responses ranged from sunny and hot to stormy and cold with a surprise element. Participants also had to select someone else to describe. The group included members from various locations, adding to the discussion with their unique perspectives on weather.

Family Focus Groups for Equity and Inclusion

Alice, Brenetta, and Amy discussed the importance of data collected from family focus groups for fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion. Amy, representing the Connecticut Department of Public Health, shared how her team regularly conducts focus groups with families, offering stipends for their participation, and using the gathered data to inform program development and funding. The conversation also touched on the rebranding of the Connecticut Department of Public Health to Connecticut Public Health, and the significant data collection efforts of the Family First initiative. The team agreed on the need to share this data more broadly and maintain a library for program designers to learn from.

Focus Groups, Feedback, and Transparency

The group discussed the effectiveness of focus groups in gathering information and the lack of feedback on how that information is being used. Brenetta and Alice questioned the value of

focus groups without a clear feedback loop, emphasizing the need for transparency in how the information is used and the importance of service providers being asked for their feedback. Tanja highlighted the importance of collecting client feedback for their agency's service and implementation. The group also discussed the potential impact of factors like compensation and the wording of questions on the outcomes of focus groups, with Carlos suggesting the use of technology, such as tablets, to gather feedback in a less intrusive manner.

Addressing Self-Identification and Healthcare Challenges

Carlos raised concerns about the challenges faced by individuals of Latin American descent in self-identification and suggested simplifying the options to improve the process. Alice proposed the development of a standardized questionnaire to assess quality of care and barriers to care across different agencies, emphasizing the need for culturally appropriate questions. The team also discussed the challenges of data collection and utilization, particularly the Patient Information Exchange (PIE) system, and the potential for clients to withhold honest feedback due to fear of repercussions. Lastly, they reviewed Amy's data from a focus group, which showed that 67% of respondents sought appointments through their own providers in 2022, a trend projected to continue in 2023.

Non-English Speaking Families' Healthcare Challenges and Telehealth Solutions

Alice and Carlos discussed the challenges faced by non-English speaking families in accessing healthcare services, with a particular focus on the dynamics within these families and the reliance on children to act as interpreters. They also touched on the potential of telehealth to overcome some of these barriers. The team agreed to continue the conversation in the next meeting, with a more specific data set and potential recommendations. A date for the next iCAN Conference was set for September 26, 2024- in person!