



Office of
Mental Health



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**Broome County Mental Health
Central Regional Multicultural Advisory
(CRMAC) Committee
Annual Report**

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Summary

This report details the activities of the Central Region Multicultural Advisory Committee (CRMAC) during 2014. CRMAC is made up of 35 colleagues from local non-profit agencies, hospitals, colleges, government offices and consumers in the Southern Tier. The committee meets 3 to 4 times annually to focus on creating and supporting a diverse mental health system by promoting cultural and linguistic competency among mental health professionals, program staff, consumers and the community.

Introduction

In the Fall of 2011, the NYS Bureau of Cultural Competence held a Central Region Town Hall meeting to discuss the creation of a regional multicultural advisory committee to give consumers, family members, providers and stakeholders a voice in shaping the future of mental health services within New York State.

Doris Cheung, Cultural Diversity Director of the Mental Health Association and Lynne Esquivel, Performance Manager of the Broome County Mental Health Department stepped forward to create what is now the Central Regional Multicultural Advisory Committee. Doris and Lynne chair the meetings and are involved members of the Statewide Multicultural Advisory Committee as well.

Meetings and Activities

In 2014, CRMAC met in January and September. A May meeting was scheduled but subsequently cancelled due to the building elevator breaking down.

On May 2, 2013, CRMAC invited Frances Priester, OMH Bureau of Cultural Competency, to a Town Hall meeting for the Central Region to share what other Multicultural Advisory Committees are doing around the area. The attendees decided to identify "hot topics" to be addressed at future meetings. In 2014, CRMAC invited agency experts to give presentations on Housing in the January meeting and on Peer Support/Groups in September's meeting.

On September 24, 2014, Doris Cheung and Lynne Esquivel met with Linda Nelson, OMH Director at the Central Field Office in Syracuse, to discuss CRMAC's potential collaborative efforts to educate behavioral health providers and other community members about bringing culturally and linguistic competency care to all.

In addition, the Broome County Dual Recovery Coordinator offered several free trainings throughout the year that CRMAC Chairs circulated to committee members. In September, Anonymous People, a documentary featuring prominent people who are living publicly in long term recovery, was shown twice for the community free of charge. Many CRMAC members attended.

In the Winter/Spring of 2013/2014, CRMAC Chairs conducted a series of assessments to gauge the cultural diversity of all county-funded and community-based behavioral health care agencies. The Cultural Competency Assessment scale, developed by the Nathan Kline Institute for

Psychiatric Research, Center of Excellence in Culturally Competent Mental Health, Orangeburg, NY, June 2012, Version 2.1 was used. A total of 13 agencies took part in the assessment. Strengths, weaknesses and differences between all agencies across all dimensions of cultural competency were identified and an overall commitment to cultural competency was demonstrated. A report on this assessment will be issued and distributed to all CRMAC members in 2015.

Conclusions

CRMAC will continue to coordinate with NYS OMH Bureau of Cultural Competency and NYS Multicultural Advisory Committee in order to help providers and community members learn/implement cultural competency best practices.

Meetings for 2015 are as follows: January 15 at 2 p.m.; April 16 at 10 a.m.; September 17 at 10 a.m. and December 3 at 10 a.m. All meetings are held at Broome County Mental Health Department, 229-231 State Street, Binghamton, NY 13901.