

# Summary

## Merced County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Cultural Humility, Health Equity & Social Justice Committee

September 17, 2020  
10:05 am – 11:00 am  
Behavioral Health & Recovery Services  
via Teleconference

### Present:

Alyssa Castro, Christina Celis, Vong Chang, Jose Chavez-Diaz, Fernando Granados, Caitlin Haygood, Heydi Herrera, Sharon Jones, Alejandro Jurado, Cindy Mattox, Marilyn Mochel, Ismael Muñoz, Maria Orozco, Nancy Reding, Cara Rupp, Sandra Sandoval, Anna Santos, Ker Thao, Belle Vallador, Linda Xiong, Janet Zamudio

### Presentation and Discussion:

*All Members*

#### I. Check-in/Conocimiento

Sharon asked that those in attendance email Maria Orozco to confirm their attendance.

#### II. Approval of Minutes

The approval of minutes for August 27, 2020, was motioned/seconded (Nancy Reding/Christina Celis) and carried.

#### III. Committee Name Change

The committee's name change will be reflected on next month's meeting minutes and agenda.

#### IV. Discussion on the Difference between Cultural Competence and Cultural Humility

It was suggested by the committee that there is a need to move on to the actions of how cultural humility can be implemented. Sharon Jones shared that upcoming actions include virtual cultural humility forums, a survey, virtual conversations, trainings, and how it will play out within the service delivery system. Cultural humility is an ongoing process of self-exploration where you are open to learning from others, she shared that it is a philosophy and process that can be implemented by mitigating power imbalances that exist in society.

#### V. Discussion on Equity

No discussion took place regarding this agenda item.

#### VI. BHRS Integration of Cultural Humility

No discussion took place regarding this agenda item.

#### VII. Social Determinants of Health

Sharon Jones asked the committee what some of the social determinants of health that they encounter in their work. Sharon shared the example of poverty. Examples of social determinants of health in Merced County that were noted by the committee included: Discrimination based on all the "-ism's" - racism, heterosexism, genderism, etc.; living in a food desert where there is little to no access to grocery stores and fresh fruits and vegetables; lack of housing, employment, social support, language and literacy barriers, crime and violence, health insurance, food insecurity, access to health care, geographic location, lack of sidewalks and transportation; limited investments in educational resources for children age 0-3; stigma regarding all of the previously mentioned social determinants of health. Marilyn Mochel shared there is a need to have BHRS representatives present at policy meetings to engage policy makers in discussion surrounding the impacts of their decisions on the health of the community. When the city council makes a decision on housing, often nobody is there to remind them that their policy decisions impact the physical and behavioral health of individuals. Unless

the policy makers start talking about social determinants of health and considering them during policymaking decisions, we will not see them improve. There is a need to move away from the silo where elected officials think decisions are only based on economics and not based on health and behavioral health. Alejandro Jurado from YLI agreed that this is a clear path to address these systemic issues. Having committed actions during these meetings would help create trust and cohesion with those that are on this call. Sharon Jones said we can add “action items” to the agenda and solidify goals for this meeting.

#### **VIII. Discussion on the Impact of Poverty**

Sharon Jones stated that it is important to understand the sensitivity and humility around poverty. When individuals are living in poverty do not have the opportunities that others have and often experience feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness, and social insecurity. These factors can impact a person’s wellness and emotions. Sharon asked the committee for their thoughts on this issue. A committee member noted how poverty can impact a child’s ability to access extracurricular activities, such as local youth sports leagues, which has a direct impact on their health and wellbeing. Another committee member shared that a lack of access to transportation due to poverty has an impact on individuals health. He noted how some Golden Valley Health Center patients were missing appointments because they did not have access to transportation. Golden Valley contracted with Uber and Lyft to provide transportation for those without access. Another attendee noted the importance of how providers represent themselves when working with others and the importance of humility and learning from the people you are trying to serve. Approaching individuals as a learner and a teacher, and allowing others to be learners and teachers is important. Another attendee said a training on how to making those crucial connections with others and how to focus on the needs of the individual and approach others in a humble way. Sharon Jones suggested as an action item for the committee that it would be powerful for the committee to collaborate and create a training on this topic. A committee member from Health House spoke on the topic of providing services to individuals who are homeless. She suggested that we need to practice self-reflection and the ability to connect with others at the point of interaction.

#### **IX. Discussion on the Community Engagement and Collaboration with Culture at the Center**

Sharon Jones asked what true engagement look like to the committee members. Linda Xiong from HLUB Hmong Center said that understanding the strengths of the people you are working with is very important. Even if the person you are working with is at the lowest moment of their life, they have assets that can be used to their advantage. This type of approach creates the kind of engagement where people feel respected and like an asset as opposed to someone who just needs help. She elaborated that the typical idea of poverty is often defined by the amount of money a person has, but does not take into consideration the riches they may have in life, love, and children.

#### **X. Upcoming Cultural Forums via Blue Jeans**

Sharon Jones suggested developing a training on the culture of humble beginnings. Action items needed include an introduction to the committee and what we will be accomplishing over the next year. Sharon would like to jump-start these actions with forums to engage in conversations surrounding culture in the workplace and culture in the service delivery system. Marilyn Mochel shared that NAMI will be offering cultural humility trainings. She will keep the committee informed about these trainings.

#### **XI. Cultural Humility Plan Update**

No discussion took place regarding this agenda item.

#### **XII. What are the Cultural Characteristics of Populations in Merced County?**

Sharon Jones asked the committee to share some of the characteristics of the population of Merced County. Characteristics noted include resilience, especially in individuals who have survived the experiences of immigration or being a refugee, and have had to navigate through system barriers to find resources. Another characteristic of the current populations in Merced County is the frequency of generational households in which individuals from multiple generations live in the same house. It was noted that generation households speak to resiliency as well because families are doing whatever it takes to meet their needs.

**XIII. Program Reports and Updates**

There were no program reports or updates.

**XIV. Possibilities and Success Stories**

Marilyn Mochel shared that she could provide the committee with a presentation on the social determinants of health from a behavioral health context.

Linda Xiong from HLUB Hmong Center said it is critical to ensure that the people we are serving are part of the decision making process. She suggested reaching out to individuals who receive services so they can engage in this committee. She said HLUB Hmong Center would also like to provide a presentation about the work they are doing, at the core of their work is asking what is the Hmong way and does the Hmong way lead us to better outcomes? She would be open to providing this presentation to BHRS as well.

**XV. Next Steps**

Sharon Jones would like to see a resources forum so people can learn about the services that are offered in the community. She asked the committee to email Maria Orozco with how they would like to contribute in terms of moving cultural humility forward.

**XVI. Adjourned**

Meeting adjourned at 10:52 a.m.