



CLAS Courier

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(Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services)

OFFICE OF CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE

FEBRUARY IS AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

Did you know that in September 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., took the podium at APA's Annual Convention in Washington, D.C.? Were you aware that a Black husband and wife psychologist team provided key research, which was cited by the U.S. Supreme Court in its historic 1954 ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*, which declared segregation in public schools unconstitutional? (APA, 2015). This month, we honor the African American pioneers in behavioral health and developmental disabilities. Read more about African American contributions to the field and health issues, related to the community, on our webpage [here](#).

"While mental disorders may touch all Americans, either directly or indirectly, all do not have equal access to treatment and services. The revolution in science that has led to effective treatments for mental illnesses needs to benefit every American of every race, ethnicity and culture."

~ Dr. David Satcher

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH EQUITY INNOVATION - GOT A NOMINATION?

Nominate an Organization, Teams, or Program for the Behavioral Health Equity Innovative Achievement Award

DBHDS is accepting nominations for the Behavioral Health Equity Innovative Achievement Award. We are recognizing organizations, teams, and program who are implementing promising methods that advance the cultural and linguistic competence of healthcare throughout Virginia. Programs selected will be focused on promoting the reduction of racial or ethnic health disparities and the increase of access to services in underserved communities. Awards recognize organizations or programs that demonstrate an exceptional impact on the community through innovative ways of incorporating cultural and/or linguistic relevant practices. To nominate an organization, team, or program, or learn more, click [here](#).

TOOLS YOU CAN USE

[Using cultural and linguistic competence to reduce health disparities](#)

DBHDS utilizes cultural and linguistic competence as the primary strategy to address behavioral health inequities in Virginia. This is a recognized best practice across the nation for the elimination of disparities in health and healthcare (e.g., Betancourt, 2004; 2006; Brach & Fraser, 2000; HRET, 2011). By looking at the three major levels of healthcare where sociocultural barriers occur and contribute to racial/ethnic disparities, anyone can organize interventions to address disparities up and down their service structure.

[Creating a Health Equity Team](#)

Every organization has a "culture" of policies, procedures, programs, and processes, and incorporates certain values, beliefs, assumptions, and customs into those activities. Organizational cultures largely echo mainstream culture in its sense of time orientation, perception, and use of time. An organizational culture may not always lend itself to cultural competence, so skill building is needed to infuse these elements. A culturally competent organization brings together knowledge about different groups of people -- and transforms it into standards, policies, and practices that make everything work.

[You can improve the equity in all your policies](#)

Organizations can use the Race Equity Tool when creating and/or revising agency policies. The tool includes six best practices, which guide the user through a process of collaborating with communities of color to ensure all agency policies are in alignment with agency goals.

ARTICLES OF INTEREST

[States Discover Need for Bilingual Mental Health Services](#)

The U.S. is grappling with a severe shortage of mental health professionals. But the situation is particularly dire for some minority communities, where barriers of language and culture can make it hard to seek and get help. Most good mental health care requires subtle, intimate conversation with patients. But too often, mental health experts say, professionals lack the language skills needed to serve those who struggle with English.

[With mental health treatment, one size does not fit all](#)

A one-size-fits-all approach to mental health treatment might not be the answer for ethnic minorities and one researcher is looking to bring cultural competency into the field of psychology.

[Cultural Variations in Healing: Mental Health Outreach](#)

Mental health impacts all people. This includes more temporary conditions and more lasting conditions. The prevalence of diagnosable mental health conditions places emphasis on common conditions such as depression and anxiety.

[State Health Gaps - What's driving health differences across your state and how can those health gaps be closed?](#)

Why is there such a difference in the health of residents in one county compared to other counties in the same state? In these reports, the County Health Rankings & Roadmaps program explores how wide gaps are throughout each state and what is driving those differences.

[Many Black Students Don't Seek Help for Mental-Health Concerns, Survey Finds](#)

African-American students feel less emotionally prepared for college than white students do, and they're also more likely to keep their worries to themselves, according to the results of a national poll released on January 13, 2016.

[Lost in Translation: Why Hospitals need professional interpreters](#)

A 2012 study in the Annals of Emergency Medicine analyzing audio recordings found thousands of interpretation mistakes, even when the hospitals used professional interpreters. Such mistakes include adding, omitting, or substituting words, using words that did not exist in the original language, and adding their own perspectives. Of these mistakes, 18% had potentially harmful consequences.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE OCLC?

We are constantly updating the OCLC webpage. If you are looking for cultural frameworks, value systems, and community characteristics to give you a basic cultural orientation from which to begin your work with a particular individual, be sure to see if we have any useful material [here](#).

VIRGINIA REFUGEE WELLNESS PARTNERSHIP

The partnership is offering many programs for refugee integration and acculturation support. Below are just a few which can be brought to your community.

- Mental Health ESL Word Chart - This 1-hour session presents 12 English words that identify different emotions, common health and mental health words that they can use to communicate with providers, and present parameters for situations/emotions that are generally considered “normal” or “not normal” during the resettlement process.
- Mental Health and Wellness - This is a 2-4 hour session using the DBHDS CoMHAS Module. The participants will be encouraged to share their view of and practices about mental health from their home country, sharing information how American’s view mental health, and provide resources like the Roanoke Refugee Mental Health Referral System. Other in-depth mental health training can be arranged for interested groups.
- Cultural Navigators Qualification Program – This is a series of DBHDS trainings that individuals with previous health and mental health background can take and obtain competence to enhance their competitiveness for entry level jobs in health or mental health setting.

For more information, email Eva Stitt, PhD., Refugee Mental Health Analyst at eva.stitt@dbhds.virginia.gov. Don’t forget to review the [website](#)!

JOIN US TODAY!

Join the OCLC Google Group - Do you want to keep up with the latest research, articles, events, and information related to cultural competence, language access, and health equity in the state and the nation?

We have other Learning Communities too!

- [RVA Latino Mental Health Community](#)
- [Virginia Refugee Wellness Partnership](#)
- [Qualified Bilingual Staff Continuing Education Community](#)

Upcoming Training and Conferences

QUALIFIED BILINGUAL STAFF TRAINING

- Qualified Bilingual Staff Training - Hampton Newport News Community Services Board - April 19- April 21 2016 [Application here](#)
- Qualified Bilingual Staff Training - Roanoke - June 28 - June 30 2016 [Application Here](#)

SAVE THE DATES!

- Northern Virginia Language Access Leadership Conference April 26, 2016
- Refugee Case Manager Conference – May 17, 2016
- Statewide Refugee Wellness Partnership Conference – July 7, 2016
- [Roanoke Mental Health Council hosts Language Access Conference - 2016](#)

Got Questions? Email at oclc@dbhds.virginia.gov