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Advisors

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Quality Innovation Network -
Quality Improvement Organizations
CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES
EQUALITY IMPROVEMENT & INNOVATION GROUP



HEALTH EQUITY UPDATES

July 2023

NATIONAL MINORITY MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH



CMS' Inaugural Health Equity Conference - RECAP

CMS held its first health equity conference at Howard University in Washington, D.C. on June 7th and 8th. Several hundred people attended in person and about 3000 attended virtually, marking a successful two day event. The plenary sessions featured speakers from several HHS agencies highlighting their commitment and successes in promoting health equity. Breakout sessions focused on innovative initiatives and best practices to address health disparities from health care organizations, community-based organizations, associations, and policymakers. The sessions aligned with the five priority areas of the [CMS Health Equity Framework](#).

- Download [presentation slides](#) from the Agenda webpage.
- View the conference video [HERE](#).
- View the poster presentations [HERE](#).

Best of CLAS

A tip for implementing culturally and linguistically appropriate services

HHS National CLAS Standards – [Standard 3](#)

Recruit, promote, and support a culturally and linguistically diverse governance, leadership, and workforce that are responsive to the populations in the service area.

- Target recruitment efforts to the populations being served to increase the recruitment of culturally and linguistically diverse individuals. Racial and ethnic parity between clinicians and staff, and their patients improves communications, builds trust, reduces adverse events, and results in better health outcomes.

This Month

[National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month](#)

National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month is observed in July to raise awareness of the challenges that Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) face regarding mental illness. The COVID-19 pandemic has made it more difficult for these individuals to access mental health care, including substance use treatment services.

Visit the HHS Office of Minority Health [2023 Reading List](#) for ways to help end the stigma associated with mental illness.

[Disability Pride Month](#)



The [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) was passed July 26, 1990. To honor this landmark legislation, Disability Pride Month is celebrated each July to acknowledge the experiences, achievements, and challenges of people with disabilities.

The CMS Office of Minority Health has a [variety of resources](#) to help those providing care to individuals with disabilities ensure they offer equal access and high-quality care.

In the News

[Possibility Shop Assists Rural Maryland Residents](#)

The Possibility Shop in Maryland’s rural Allegany County connects vulnerable populations to health and human services and resources such as hygiene products, food, clothing, housing, and care management services. The program, which is staffed by community health workers and peer recovery specialists, has 13 partners including insurance navigators, health organizations, food banks, and other agencies. The results of the program are impressive: from January through May 2023, 2,983 service encounters occurred and 253 intakes to services were performed.

[Rural Outreach Center in Rural Western New York](#)

The Rural Outreach Center (ROC) offers care coordination, therapy, budgeting assistance, and a variety of other services to individuals and families living in poverty in rural Western New York. The program serves approximately 250 adults and children each year through counseling, care coordination, and empowerment opportunities to help individuals break free of generational poverty. To address transportation barriers, which can limit access to services for rural residents, the ROC partners with the Volunteer Transportation Center and offers gas cards based on individual needs.

[Advancing Equity for AA & NH/PI Communities](#)

The HHS Office of Minority Health has released a series of resources that offer best practices to advance cultural competency, language access, and affirming care for Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AA and NH/PI) communities in COVID-19 response efforts. The guides were developed based on a Request for Information, literature searches, and listening sessions with leaders from the AA and NH/PI communities. The series includes introductory, language access, community engagement and data disaggregation resource guides.

[Joint Commission Health Care Equity Certification](#)

The Joint Commission released an on-demand webinar that provides an in-depth review of the new health care equity certification standards and elements of performance, examples of how they can be applied, and available resources. This voluntary certification program, effective July 1, 2023, will be available to hospitals and critical access hospitals “already on their journey to health care equity and would like to formalize structures, processes, and goals for identifying and addressing health disparities.” The webinar is approved for 1 Continuing Education Credit through July 24th.



Visit the IPRO Resource Library: <https://qi-library.ipro.org>

Upcoming Events

[Private Practice Simple Solutions: Social Determinants of Health](#)

American Medical Association
July 25
11:15 AM – 12:15 PM ET

[Community-Based and Equitable Transportation Response in Disaster](#)

National Academy of Medicine
July 19
12:00 – 1:30 PM ET

[Community Care Coordination: How to effectively identify, engage, and sustain community partners](#)

National Rural Health Resource Center
July 19
2:00 PM ET