



# REMHDCO

Racial and Ethnic Mental Health Disparities Coalition

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## MEMO

To: Commissioners Gladys Mitchell – Chair of the CLCC  
Commissioner Keyondria Bunch - Vice Chair of the CLCC  
All Members of the MHSOAC CLCC

cc: Commissioner Lynne Ashbeck, Chair of the MHSOAC  
Toby Ewing, Executive Director of the MHSOAC

From: The Board of Directors and Members of REMHDCO

Date: July 2, 2020

Re: Restarting and Reforming the Cultural and Linguistic Competence Committee (CLCC)

The recent and historically significant national events that have disproportionately affected communities of color, spotlight the urgency for the MHSOAC to both restart and reform its Cultural and Linguistic Competence Committee (CLCC). The CLCC should assist the Commission in meaningfully addressing the COVID-19, as well as the police brutality and Black Lives Matter situations have impacted communities of color, particularly the African American community.

Over the years, the inattention, inadequate staffing, and oppression experienced by the CLCC is irrefutable. In an effort to support the CLCC moving forward, we have attached a number of recommendations that we would like the CLCC to discuss and consider at the upcoming meeting that we understand has been set for July 15, 2020.

These recommendations were reviewed by not only the members of REMHDCO's Board of Directors, but also by organizations that serve multicultural communities around the state such as the California Pan Ethnic Health Network (CPEHN), and others. We believe that in order to serve the Commission in a consequential way that also benefits communities of color, the members of the CLCC must be supported, respected, and consulted before embarking on committee activities. In addition, members of the public should be allowed ample time to weigh in with their suggestions and concerns on all matters undertaken by the CLCC and the entire Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission.

As the millions of protesters around the county express their frustration with how things were done in the past and for institutions to change, we join with them in the struggle to have our voices heard and for "business to be done differently". We hope you take this opportunity to make a fresh start and accept our offer to work as partners with you in order to improve not only the CLCC but all the operations of Commission.

# **Recommendations for Restart and Reform of the MHSOAC Cultural and Linguistic Competence Committee**

## **Administrative and Structural Concerns**

- The administrative support to this committee should be comparable to other committees in regards to number of staff, funds for travel, funds for projects, and funds for experts or consultants.
- The membership of the committee should be posted on the MHSOAC website.
- Minutes of each committee and subcommittee meeting should be completed in a timely manner and posted on the website. The agenda for each meeting should be posted on line at least 10 days in advance.
- It is expected that the committee meet on average at least 4 times a year. The formation of subcommittees is encouraged to work on specific projects or tasks.
- If there is a period longer than three months between CLCC meetings, members of the committee should be given the respect and courtesy of receiving notice of the reason for the delay and the approximate time when the next meeting will be expected to take place.
- If it is not advisable or possible to meet in person, meetings should take place on line through applications such as Zoom so that people may be visible. Whatever applications are utilized, the “chat” features should be turned on to maximize communication during the meeting.
- Public comment should be allowed and encouraged *during and after* the Committee takes up agenda items, whether or not a formal vote is associated with a particular item.

## **Duties and Responsibilities of the CLCC**

- The duties and responsibilities of the CLCC should be developed by the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee, the members of the CLCC, with ample and open collaboration with community stakeholders.
- Duties should focus on policy and program issues, especially at the state level.

- Duties should include focus and review of all projects and operations of the MHSOAC itself.

## Membership

Appointing knowledgeable and experienced members of the Cultural and Linguistic Competence Committee (CLCC) is as important as developing the responsibilities and activities of the CLCC. Membership should not merely be “diverse” – members should possess experience and knowledge in the areas of reducing mental health disparities, working towards equity, or providing culturally competent services to racial and communities.

- Membership should include people with knowledge and experience in policy and programs with respect to **reducing mental health disparities at the state level** as well as the local level, and/or providing appropriate and effective outreach and services to a particular unserved/underserved/inappropriately served community.
- Membership should include *at a minimum*, representatives from *each* of the following communities: the African American/Black, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Latinx, and Native American.
  - We strongly support more than one from each of these communities as there is considerable diversity within all of them.
  - These representatives should be people who are not only **from** those communities, but people who have knowledge and experience in *providing mental health services* to these respective communities. *Diversity does not equal cultural competence.*
- There should be at least one representative of the participants of the California Reducing Disparities Project (CRDP).
- There should be at least one representative of the staff of the Office of Health Equity (under the California Department of Public Health).
- There should be at least one representative who is a county Ethnic Services Manager.
- We strongly support representation of the LGBTQI community, the older adult community, TAY, and other underserved communities on this committee.
- As written in the MHSOAC’s Rules of Procedure, we support consumer and family member representation on every committee, including the CLCC. We

strongly suggest that they are also members of underserved communities and *have experience in reducing mental health disparities for racial, ethnic, and cultural communities.*

- Members should include urban and rural areas of the state.