



Department of
Mental Health



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Advisory council established to set Ohio's cultural competence research agenda

The Multiethnic Advocates for Cultural Competence, Inc. (MACC) and the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) today announced the selection of a statewide Research Advisory Committee (RAC) that will lead the state's efforts to set a cultural competence research agenda. The RAC members are: Surendra Adhikari, Ph.D; Dr. Timothy Barreiro, DO, FCCP, FACO; Tamara Davis, Ph.D; Sharon Denham, DSN, RN; Barbara Fowler, Ph.D, APRN, BC; James L. Moore, III Ph.D.; Cora Munoz, Ph.D, RN; Manoj Sharma, MBBS, CHES, Ph.D; Robertta Thoryk, NCSP, Ph.D; and Barbara J. Warren, Ph.D, PMHCNS- BC. The RAC will create a research agenda which may include promising practices, curricula development, assessment tools, training standards, trainer certification, and licensure standards in the area of culture, diversity and language competency.

"We screened an impressive pool of applicants and identified 10 researchers from various racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, disciplines, institutions as well as geographic locations around the state to plan and execute a cultural competence research agenda," said Charleta Tavares, MACC executive director.

"The work of the RAC will be instrumental in developing strategies to assist the Ohio Department of Mental Health in eliminating racial and ethnic disparities in behavioral health," said ODMH Director Sandra Stephenson.

MACC and ODMH have worked collaboratively to address disparities in mental health over the last decade. Most recently, they partnered to conduct the first ever "Learning Your Needs" Statewide Cultural Competence Needs Assessment (2006; 2008). The assessments provided valuable information on how to serve and address the needs of 11 specific racial, ethnic and cultural groups. The RAC will supplement the learning and develop specific tools that may eliminate disparities in mental health for these racial and ethnic communities. The RAC will meet in September to set its work, resource and staff plans.

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