



Supporting equitable and quality mental health care in Jackson County.

Racial Equity Statement

Introduced by Jacquelyn C. Moore and Gary A. Thompson, MD.

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The Community Mental Health Fund acknowledges our privilege and responsibility in managing tax dollars collected from Jackson County citizens. We commit to learning about our own privilege and bias, supporting each other's learning, and recognizing this as an ongoing process. We acknowledge that white supremacy culture (1) exists and laid the foundation of systemic racism. We know that systemic racism negatively impacts mental health. We understand that all lives cannot matter until White America recognizes that all lives have not mattered equitably throughout America's history and the cost has been at the expense of Black lives and other people of color.

As an organization whose purpose is to fund mental health services in Jackson County, we choose to focus our efforts on building an equitable (2) and quality service delivery system that promotes inclusivity, stands against racism, brutality, violence, marginalization, hate speech, bullying and the oppression of people of color.

- Equity – participants have access, encounter respectful interactions, and receive services that are fair and impartial and are in line with their needs
- Quality – services that meet the highest standards of care no matter the persons race, sex, age, gender, sexual orientation, or ability to pay

To date, in support of this stance, we have:

- established a Cultural Competency Advisory Council (CCAC) to operationalize and receive feedback about our practices from the community and providers
- made financial and staff investments in race-equity work through the Cultural Competency Collective
- required cultural competency and language access plans be a part of the contracting process
- supported organizations through the pandemic by reimbursing for care provided through tele-services
- engaged in tax incentive policy and reform initiatives

As we move forward, we will continue to use our influence against systemic racism (3), oppression, and discrimination within the mental health systems of care and build broad based partnerships with individuals and organizations that support equity for persons of color.

Moving forward, we commit to:

- Identify how our policies, procedures and practices support white supremacy culture and utilize our CCAC to recommend changes in policy/practice
- Consistently analyze data from organizations related to leadership and employment diversity and inclusion at all levels of the organization
- Identify how our role in the community can best work toward supporting an anti-racist culture related to mental health
- Target resources to support:
 - grassroots organizations and organizations led by persons of color
 - organizations in identifying and treating race-based trauma
 - organizations to develop administrative capacity to focus on equity policies and procedure

This is not just for the Black Lives lost, it is for all persons of color and LGBTQ+ lives affected every day by the systematic racism that permeates multiple systems: judicial, educational, housing, physical and mental health care, employment, etc.

We look forward to keeping the community apprised of our ongoing work and progress on new commitments.

Notes

(1) White supremacy culture: The idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions. It is reproduced by all the institutions of our society. In particular the media, the education system, western science (which played a major role in reinforcing the idea of race as a biological truth with the white race as the "ideal" top of the hierarchy), and the Christian church have played central roles in reproducing the idea of white supremacy (i.e. that white is "normal," "better," "smarter," "holy." *Source: Showing Up for Racial Justice Network (<https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/white-supremacy-culture.html>)*

(2) Racial Equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them. *Source: Center for Assessment and Policy Development (the D.C. Policy Center - <https://www.dcpolicycenter.org/racialequity/>)*

(3) Systemic racism is a form of racism that is embedded as normal practice within society or an organization. It can lead to such issues as discrimination in criminal justice, employment, housing, health care, political power and education, among other issues.^[1] The term "institutional racism" was first coined in 1967 by Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton in Black Power: The Politics of Liberation.^[2] Carmichael and Hamilton wrote that while individual racism is often identifiable because of its overt nature, institutional racism is less perceptible because of its "less overt, far more subtle" nature. Institutional racism "originates in the operation of established and respected forces in the society, and thus receives far less public condemnation than [individual racism]".^[3] *Sources: The New York Times*

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/13/us/george-floyd-racism-america.html>), *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Black Power: Politics of Liberation*

(https://archive.org/details/blackpowerpoliti00carm_0/page/4/mode/2up)