

**Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program**

**Developing Culturally Competent Systems of Care**

*March 3, 2009*

**Carolyn Lichtenstein, PhD & Stephen Forssell, PhD**  
Walter R. McDonald & Associates, Inc.


**Freda Brashears, MSW & Phyllis Gyamfi, PhD**  
Macro International Inc.

**Sylvia Fisher, PhD**  
Child, Adolescent and Family Branch  
Center for Mental Health Services  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration




**Purpose of Analysis**

- ▶ To explore the implementation of cultural and linguistic competence (CLC) within those systems of care that are in their early stage of development




**Research Questions**

- ▶ What strategies are used by system of care communities that have better early implementation of CLC?
- ▶ What community characteristics appear to be associated with the implementation of these strategies?




**Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program**

- ▶ Referred to as the Children's Mental Health Initiative (CMHI)
- ▶ Funded by the Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- ▶ 144 grants and cooperative agreements funded to date (since 1992)
- ▶ Each system of care community funded for 6 years
- ▶ 30 communities funded in FY 2005 and FY 2006 (Phase V)
- ▶ National evaluation involving all 30 communities, and including Descriptive and longitudinal study of children and families served  
System-level study: System of Care Assessment  
CLC Study




**System of Care Assessment**

- ▶ **Goals**
  - Document how communities operationalize system of care principles
  - Track system development over time
  - Compare systems on the extent to which they embody system of care principles
- ▶ **Framework**
  - Domains
    - ♦ Infrastructure
      - Governance
      - Management and operations
      - Service Array
      - Evaluation and quality monitoring
    - ♦ Service delivery
      - Entry into services
      - Service planning
      - Service provision
      - Case review




**Cultural and Linguistic Competence Implementation Substudy (CLCIS)**

- ▶ **First of three substudies of the CLC Study**
- ▶ **Explores the cultural and linguistic contexts of 4 communities funded in FY 2005 and how those contexts inform the implementation of their systems of care**
- ▶ **Qualitative study that addresses these questions:**
  - What are each community's efforts to develop culturally and linguistically appropriate systems of care at the infrastructure and service delivery levels?
  - What are the facilitators and barriers to implementing culturally and linguistically competent practices? What efforts at resolving these barriers have been implemented?
  - What are consumers' and other respondents' perceptions of how these efforts meet the diverse cultural and linguistic needs of children and families?




### Analytic Methods

- ▶ **Case study of 4 communities included in CLCIS**  
Identified strategies illustrating 7 System of Care Assessment elements  
Combined information from System of Care Assessment reports and CLCIS reports
- ▶ **Examined community characteristics possibly related to degree of CLC implementation**




### Governing Body Membership Strategies

- ▶ *2-tiered governance structure* (1 for the entire system of care and 1 for each local service area that represents the cultural and ethnic mix of the area)
- ▶ Governing body membership that *proportionally represents* the cultural / ethnic groups in the system of care




### Management and Operations Training Strategies

- ▶ CLC training for *all new governing board members and agency staff*
- ▶ CLC training for *staff from other child-serving agencies, other community-based organizations, and private providers*
- ▶ CLC included *in every system of care training event*



### Management and Operations Staff Recruitment Strategies

- ▶ Culturally competent and diverse staff who have received *sufficient training and mentoring*
- ▶ Staff who reflect the diversity of the service population




### Management and Operations Linguistic Competence Strategies

- ▶ *Readily available professional interpretation services*
- ▶ *Bilingual care staff* who reflect the diversity of the service population
- ▶ *Culturally focused wraparound teams*



### Service Array Strategies

- ▶ Cultural practices such as *“alternative holistic practices”* and *“spiritual consultation,”* as well as services offered through faith-based organizations
- ▶ *Culturally appropriate wraparound* in which teams provide culturally relevant care coordination, therapy, and counseling
- ▶ Services provided by *culturally and linguistically diverse parents/paraprofessionals* whose children have had contact with the local care system



### Quality Monitoring Strategies

- ▶ Evaluation advisory subcommittee that provides significant input into creating a *culturally sensitive evaluation process*, including translation of data collection interviews
- ▶ Evaluation team includes *culturally and linguistically diverse staff*
- ▶ Evaluation's efforts includes *needs analysis of cultural competence* in all areas served by the grant program



### Entry into Service System Strategies

- ▶ *Diverse staff* assists with outreach efforts
- ▶ *Bilingual intake staff* who represent the most common languages spoken by families being served
- ▶ Town hall meeting attendance to *identify and connect with gatekeepers* of diverse communities



### Service Planning Strategies

- ▶ Staff (or interpreters) who *speak a common language* with the service population
- ▶ Cultural assessments using the *Life Domain Assessment* tool to *probe about religion and traditions* through strengths and discovery process and working with families to *identify natural supports*



### Service Provision Strategies

- ▶ *Mental health* discussed in a manner that is *sensitive* to a family's religious / spiritual beliefs
- ▶ *Families paired with care team providers* with a similar cultural and ethnic background
- ▶ Culturally diverse interventions that *engage children, youth, and families*

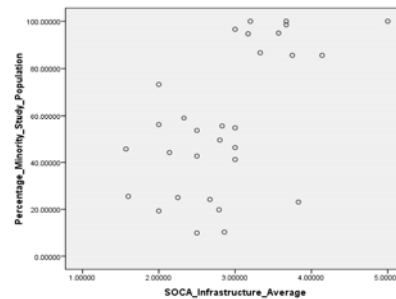


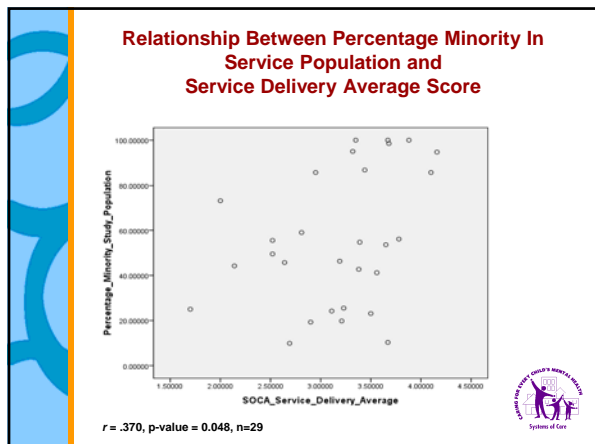
### Community Characteristics Related to Degree of CLC Implementation

- ▶ **Some characteristics of communities and systems of care:**
  - Diversity of cultures and languages
  - State context
  - Leadership commitment to CLC
  - Previous CLC and system of care efforts in community
  - Economic environment
  - Geographic size and configuration
  - Type of involvement of cultural organizations in system of care



### Relationship Between Percentage Minority In Service Population and Infrastructure Average Score





- ### Implications for Future Research
- ▶ Interaction between strategies and community characteristics
    - Not all strategies work equally well in all communities
    - Communities must select strategies within the context of their characteristics
  - ▶ Wide variety of characteristics and CLC strategies used among system of care communities allows further investigation of the interrelationships

### For More Information, Contact:

Carolyn Lichtenstein  
Phone: 301.881.2590  
[clichtenstein@wrma.com](mailto:clichtenstein@wrma.com)