Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program

Developing Culturally Competent Systems of Care

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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

Relationship Between Percentage Minority In Service Population and Infrastructure Average Score

- 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

Community Characteristics Related to Degree of CLC Implementation

- Relationship Between Percentage Minority In Service Population and Infrastructure Average Score
  \[ r = 0.574, \text{p-value} = 0.001, n = 30 \]
Relationship Between Percentage Minority In Service Population and Service Delivery Average Score

\[ r = 0.370, \text{ p-value } = 0.048, n=29 \]

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

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