



# Center for Family & Maternal Wellness

## CULTURAL COMPETENCY PLAN

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Our Vision

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## **CFMW Cultural Competency Plan**

### **PURPOSE**

Center for Family and Maternal Wellness recognizes and values the richness of diversity among its population served and understanding, appreciating, and respecting differences and similarities in beliefs, values, and practices within and between cultures of each patient, each patient's family and significant others, as well as their communities. The services Center for Family and Maternal Wellness provides can be important to enhance the quality of life for those we serve.

The Center for Family and Maternal Wellness provides mental health services without discriminating against persons because of, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, genetic information, religion or infectious disease status.

In addition, the Center for Family and Maternal Wellness recognizes differences in backgrounds and beliefs that may influence the way groups of clients in therapy and individuals within these groups view the world and their place in it, their mental health, substance use and treatment. The Center for Family and Maternal Wellness is and continues to be committed to providing culturally competent and affirming services in ways that are accessible services to all individuals in need. In keeping with our non-discrimination clause, all staff members must develop, adhere to and demonstrate a philosophy and commitment to cultural sensitivity, competence and proficiency.

Cultural affirmation and competence is characterized by acceptance of and respect for difference, continued self-assessment regarding culture, careful attention to the dynamics of difference, continuous expansion of cultural knowledge and resources and adaptations of treatment models in order to meet the needs of our diverse patient population. Cultural affirmation and competence is further defined as the capacity to understand and value the similarities and differences among cultures including ethnic/racial/religious/social group or sexual orientation. The Center for Family and Maternal Wellness staff members should understand the interplay between theory and practice and be committed to guiding principles that enhance services to diverse populations. This understanding should be reflected in the attitudes, beliefs and practices of our personnel as, "the holding of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that allow the treatment provider and program to understand the full context of a patient's current and past socio environmental situation."

To this end, the Center for Family and Maternal Wellness provides training support for staff members to develop and in-depth understanding of cultural differences and become

sensitive and competent working in different socio environmental cross-cultural situations. All appropriate staff members and student interns are required to participate in trainings in cultural competency, diversity, sensitivity, affirmation, and multi-cultural awareness as part of their onboarding and orientation to the agency.

The purpose of this plan is to guide how the Center for Family and Maternal Wellness responds to the diversity of all stakeholders, and how knowledge, skills, and behaviors will enable personnel to work effectively in cross-cultural and diverse situations. Center for Family and Maternal Wellness strives to provide effective delivery of clinical services that recognize these various aspects and any identified special characteristics of the persons served, personnel and other stakeholders in settings that promote safety, comfort, trust, and familiarity. Aspects of cultural competency may include: race, ethnicity, and national origin; sexual orientation or gender preference/expression; age; mental and physical abilities; disabilities of the population served; language (the ability to communicate in a manner understandable to the client); dress; traditions; notions of modesty; eye contact; health values; help-seeking behaviors; work ethics; spiritual beliefs, values and practices; holidays; dietary regulations/preferences; attitudes regarding mental health treatment; culturally-specific treatments prescribed by traditional healers, concepts of status (such as HIV or socio-economic); issues of privacy and personal boundaries; and any identified special characteristics of the persons served.

Thus, the Center for Family and Maternal Wellness' Cultural Competency Plan aims to be flexible, dynamic, and person-focused. The Center for Family and Maternal Wellness is committed to being culturally competent and affirming through demonstrating awareness, respect, sensitivity, and attention to diversity of all persons served, families/caregivers, personnel, and other stakeholders. Our commitment is reflected in the Mission, Vision, Goals, and Values of our organization:

## **Our Values**

### **We value the individual**

At CFMW, the dignity and rights of each individual is respected. We believe that all people have the right to the best behavioral health services available, regardless of their circumstances. We believe that all people have the right to enjoy full and productive lives. We believe in empowering individuals to reach their full potential.

### **We value our staff and volunteers**

We commit to excellence and diversity among our staff and volunteers. We build on our strengths and encourage teamwork, flexibility, innovation and professional growth. We conduct our services and activities in accordance with the highest ethical and professional standards.

### **We value community and family:**

We strive to continually improve our services, always maintaining our sense of accountability and responsibility to the communities we serve. We develop relationships and build trust within to help us respond to the changing needs of our community. We support family members in developing meaningful roles in the care of their loved ones. We collaborate and partner with other agencies, service providers and social justice organizations to realize our shared vision for a healthy community.

### **We value human rights, equality, equity, and social justice**

We work with purpose and intention to address the healthcare needs of the most marginalized in our communities. We investigate and work to dismantle structural barriers and oppressive forces that prevent the mental health accessibility and the freedom of choice. As experts at the intersection of social work and social justice work we adhere to our ethical call to achieving justice for all.

Center for Family and Maternal Wellness recognizes that strengths, customs, unique differences, needs, thoughts, communications, beliefs, actions, preferences, worth, and values reflect an individual's cognitive or physical ability, racial, ethnic, religious, economic status, gender, age, language, social groups or sexual orientation. Our responsibility to cultural competency is anchored to our core values, services, strategic action plan, policies, attitudes, and organizational structure.

The Center for Family and Maternal Wellness understands that culture influences people's needs, perceptions, and reactions to life events. Perceptual variations create distinct differences in realities and relate directly to the life context of staff members in interaction with the life context of persons served, therefore impacting the effectiveness of service delivery.

Culture is defined as the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes the thoughts, communication, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of a racial, ethnic, religious,

social, or other group and aids in a person's development of a world view and their sense of self. Diversity is defined as differences due to cognitive or physical ability, culture, ethnicity, religion, spiritual beliefs, economic status, gender, age, language, gender preference/expression, or sexual orientation.

## CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND DIVERSITY PLAN POLICY

It is the practice of the Center for Family and Maternal Wellness to provide nondiscriminatory, ethnically and culturally sensitive and competent treatment services and programming to our diverse current and potential patient population. All clients of the agency's programs and services will be treated with respect for their dignity and their human rights without regard to their sex, race, age, religious beliefs, ancestry, physical, emotional, or psychiatric capacity, gender identity or expression, marital status, civil union status or sexual orientation. All personnel are expected to be familiar with this policy and its intent in order that they do not violate the human rights of consumers, and so they can protect and preserve the dignity and personal safety of persons served. The Center for Family and Maternal Wellness' commitment to cultural competency and diversity is anchored to and reflected in the following policies and procedures: **Administrative Guidelines: Nondiscrimination & Equal Employment Opportunity; Preemployment Interview Questions; Anti-harassment; Employee Request for Accommodations.**

## GOAL

The goal of the Center for Family and Maternal Wellness Cultural Competency Plan and its implementation is to ensure that everything we do as an organization is infused with awareness, respect and attention to diversity of all stakeholders, and to promote the willingness and ability of all staff members to value the importance and influence of cultural influence and diversity in organizational practices. The process of the Center for Family and Maternal Wellness Cultural Competency Plan focuses on the delivery of services and management of human resources that:

- Includes all segments of the population of persons served: individual, family, school, and community;
- Includes personnel, student interns and other stakeholders;
- Considers but is not limited to culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status, and language.
- Are available, accessible, affordable, acceptable, and appropriate.

## OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

Center for Family and Maternal Wellness embraces cultural competency and diversity in each organizational process, such as service delivery (e.g., consultation, advocacy, treatment planning, diagnostic assessment, transition planning), quality assurance/performance improvement, supervision, risk management, employee recruitment/retention, and leadership activities. The objective of promoting competency and valuing cultural differences includes ongoing education, awareness, and practice. Mental Health leadership, with support of the Center for Family and Maternal Wellness Administrative Team, shall be responsible for integration of activities that promote cultural competence within the agency.

The Center for Family and Maternal Wellness will endeavor to:

- Identify and create mental health treatment accessibility to diverse, marginalized and underserved populations
- Educate staff members on cultural competence and diversity with regard to serving diverse, marginalized and underserved populations; and
- Seek feedback from persons served regarding their perceptions of the degree of respect and understanding demonstrated for their cultural differences, needs, and preferences.

## CLINICAL ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION:

It is the policy of the Center of Family and Maternal Wellness that cultural factors be routinely assessed and evaluated during initial screenings, assessments, as additional patient history is obtained, and as treatment proceeds. Culture will affect treatment directly and needs to be considered in developing, updating and revising patient's individual treatment plans. Included in staff member cultural competency and diversity trainings are strategies and guidelines for respectfully inquiring about and obtaining cultural factors from an individual. The goal is to identify and strengthen cultural resiliency, sensitivity, competency and protective factors.

The Diagnostic Assessment tool is design to obtain culturally specific information such as Religion/Spirituality, Cultural/Ethnic preferences, Information/Concerns, and Gender **Preference**, Gender Expression, Gender Identity, and Sexual Orientation. Ensuring that our assessment procedures are thorough and person-centered, all clinical staff are trained to use the DSM-5 **Cultural Formulation Interview** as a guide to accurate and appropriate diagnosis and treatment planning.

## SERVICE DELIVERY AND PLANNING:

Once individual concerns and problem areas are identified, the resulting service plan, co-created by the therapist and client reflects how such needs will be addressed. Service plans are person-centered and based upon the strengths, needs, abilities and preferences of each patient. Service plans will be reviewed to ensure that they provide for the unique needs of each individual served and this review may take place at several levels: during review by the treatment team, during chart audits, during clinical review as well as during Quality Health Information record reviews. In addition, during Treatment Team meetings issues concerning pertinent cultural and ethnic considerations of the patient are addressed. Culturally specific mutual help groups should be identified and recommended as part of the service and continuing care plans for patients, if indicated. Family interactions will be modified when relevant to address family issues in a cultural context.

## REFERRALS TO OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS

If a patient is assessed to need supplemental services that are currently not available at Center for Maternal Wellness, a referral to another provider or service will be arranged and documented by the primary clinician.

## IMPLEMENTATION

1. Center for Family and Maternal Wellness will annually assess the client population compared to available statistics of the county to determine the extent to which minority populations are served by the agency. This assessment will include at least a comparative report regarding race, gender, socio-economic status and any other available information. The report will be submitted to the Quality Assurance/Performance Improvement Committee and shared with Center for Family and Maternal Wellness Administration.
2. Center for Family and Maternal Wellness will actively recruit minority ethnic and cultural representatives as staff members, interns, and volunteers. Mental Health leadership will annually assess the effectiveness of those recruitment efforts, to determine the extent to which minority populations are represented by the leadership and clinical staff members. Mental Health leadership will annually assess the effectiveness of the staff recruitment efforts, to determine the extent to which minority populations are represented by the organizational workforce.
3. Center for Family and Maternal Wellness will identify and actively participate in community forums, planning activities, and service collaborations designed to meet the needs of underserved residents of the

greater Mecklenburg County service area. The purpose of these interactions will be to identify the needs expressed by representatives of organizations who serve culturally diverse populations.

4. Center for Family and Maternal Wellness will promote cultural competency and diversity awareness by providing a medium for information dissemination of available specialized trainings and seminars for all staff members. This may be through supervision, Internet offerings, email, bulletin boards, or mailings.
5. Center for Family and Maternal Wellness will provide workshop, seminar, and education professional development that may be used by employees for advanced cultural competency and diversity trainings. In addition to an extensive onboarding process, Center for Family and Maternal Wellness provides RELIAS, a comprehensive online training system which includes sections on cultural competency, disabilities, discrimination and a myriad of mental health topics including ethics.
6. Supervisors will be responsible for promoting and approving individual access to educational opportunities that focus on clinical competence within the realm of cultural competency and diversity.
7. Center for Family and Maternal Wellness will provide focused presentations and staff meetings at least annually that educate workforce members on specific aspects of cultural awareness, clinical and social implications of cultural diversity, any identified special characteristics of the clients served, and application of awareness concepts in all organizational processes.
8. Center for Family and Maternal Wellness maintains documentation of attendance at cultural sensitivity, competency and diversity outside trainings, as well as a log and attendance sheets of internal in-service training events. Cultural diversity awareness training is conducted upon hire and annually for all staff members at all levels of the organization.

## RECRUITMENT

Center for Family and Maternal Wellness is committed to obtaining and retaining the most qualified professionals for all positions throughout all departments and programs. Among the issues to consider when hiring or contracting a new staff member including counselors in training (students) is finding, for all levels of positions, persons who represent the various cultures Center for Family and Maternal Wellness serves.



## STAFFING

Center for Family and Maternal Wellness is committed to equal opportunity employment and diversity while adhering to established policies regarding recruitment. Employment interviews endeavor to attract employees who are sensitive Cultural Competency Plan.

## EVALUATION

The effectiveness of the Cultural Competency and Diversity Plan is the responsibility of The Senior Administrative Staff, annually, for review and revision, as appropriate. A designated Diversity Officer will provide guidance to leadership and staff to develop and evaluate plans for cultural competency in the agency. The Diversity Officer will stay current with policy and procedural changes and ensure that the agency is adhering to the identified changes. Any issues of insensitivity can be brought to the Diversity Officer under confidence. The Diversity Officer will take necessary steps to investigate the issue and decide what steps, with or without committee intervention, should be taken to resolve the issue.

## SERVICE OR LOCATION GAPS

Center for Maternal and Family Wellness is conveniently located in the city of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. We offer extended and weekend hours to support individuals working nontraditional business hours or with childcare barriers and are convenient to public transportation. Additionally, we provide emergency after hours support including weekends and holidays for established clients. Programming and services are reflective of patient, community and referral source needs. Center for Family and Maternal Wellness remains responsive to requests, needs, and suggestions from stakeholder feedback and community input.

## MONITORING COMPLIANCE

The CEO provides oversight and monitoring of compliance through the Complaint and Grievance process as well as the Quality Assurance Program or other ways the CEO becomes aware of compliance issue.

The Center for Family and Maternal Wellness Diversity Officer

**Reia Chapman, MSW, LCSW, LISW, Executive Director**

**Center for Family and Maternal Wellness**

\*Review Date July 2019