


Psychologists of Color and Allies SIG
Monthly Call
1-10-19
37 Participants

Agenda:

- ✓ Opening remarks and general announcements (Christopher Watson)
 - All are welcome! Please share any and all comments!

 - ✓ VACO update (Claire Collie)
 - MH services for Other Than Honorable Veterans—10N Memo distributed to Networks in November. Now extends eligibility for MH tx to former Service Members who received dc that is not Honorable (but not due to dishonorable or court martial), served 100 days and served in combat theatre, or MST
- 
- Other Than Honorable Access Cal
 - New legislation requires VHA to provide initial assessment and treatment w/no time limits on care
 - No longer required to have SC
 - 500k+ letters mailed out to potential Veterans
 - VHA always has Humanitarian Care—previous OTH authority allowed for follow up care was up to 90 days to allow for determination of services eligibility.
 - Improving Capacity and Efficiency Initiative forthcoming from OVAC
 - Phase 1 will ask facilities to validate labor mapping and bookable hours for clinicians.
 - Nothing NEW (yay! 😊)
 - Education calls will be scheduled
 - OMHSP Technical Assistance Specialists are happy to answer any questions about these issues
 - Later phases will focus on expanding clinic capacity—more to come!
 - Chris gave excellent suggestions for how to integrate issues related to diversity


stepping down as co-Chair, Mary Beth Shea will be new co-chair. Bylaws say Co-chairs should rotate every 3 years—overlap between incoming and outgoing co-chairs.

- PoC SIG is a year and half in—Gayle and Marcos will be talking w/you all about the PoC SIG succession plan (☺)
 - AVAPL Membership requirements
 - Leadership roles/activities in SIG should be members
 - Folks on Listservs do NOT have to be AVAPL members but it is encouraged
 - EC wants to be more connected to SIGs
 - SIGs will start reporting on activities to EC
 - EC Reps will attend calls—get feedback
 - EC will be having their Mid-Winter meeting
 - Have plans to meet with VA’s Chief Diversity Officer
 - Suggested content:
 - How will VHA address issues that have increased during the current divisive climate? VHA providers experience microaggressions from patients and coworkers.
 - Examples: “I want my provider to be American.”
 - What about cultural competence training for MH providers? It is not required, yet existing data demonstrate disparities in MH services for ethnic minority Veterans
 - Suggestion about including leadership development training @ VAPL conference
 - Talk w/Mike Martin about potential inclusion for 2020 VAPL conference
 - APA Div 18 developing a mid-career
 - Former webpage for Veterans of Color w/PTSD. Had some data, no longer there.
 - GYI will attempt to get info
 - Tracey invites feedback/input—there is a button on the [AVAPL Website](#)
 - How do we provide feedback given concerns about psychological safety?
 - Website “button” does not go through VA but rather is AVAPL dedicated emails and website
- ✓ Allyship (Erin Watson--@ SFVA, ECP ally, GYI’s mentee/Kelly Koo @ N. CA VA since 3 weeks, formerly of SFVA!)
- Invited to share activities on today’s call given discussions. This is a very cursory initial discussion.
 - Who is an ally? An ally is a member of an advantaged (unearned and earned privilege), acknowledges that privilege advantages that person. Allyship is a VERB-you have to do the work, take a stand against oppression. Racial privilege


is a common focus, but there are many opportunities for all of us to be allies to each other. Conversations can be uncomfortable, but are so important.

- Observations of allyship (or lack thereof). Example of 2018 APA conference, SF VAMC context. SF VAMC has very robust Diversity Committee (Chair Will Hua) and programming. Yet even with that, try to explicitly emphasize allyship.
- Book Club: Anti-racist white Allyship Group. Specific to MH staff. 6 Month-long read book: "What it means to be White." Discussion of material including application of content discussed. Debrief of leaders (Erin + Dawn Lawhon) and consultant (Kelly).
- Collaboration w/UCSF—SF VAMC has strong affiliation. "Differences Matter" initiative in UCSF School of Medicine, dedicated funds for diversity, equity and inclusion champion trainings. Offered to anyone who interacts w/UCSF learners (SF VAMC staff, students and interns). Community Ambassador (Will Hua), provision of consultation/discussion following 1-day training. Also allows for collaboration and communication w/non-MH colleagues.
- Sexual harassment trainings facilitated by Diversity Committee members. Focus not just on victims, but how to train bystanders with the focus of emphasizing allyship.
- So many things going on behind the scenes to address improved environments
 - Shared agreements during events
 - How to respond to microaggressions as perpetrator and bystander
- Requires leadership support to have these difficult conversations, to have these events. So far to go, but sharing with this group.
- Reactions from the chat—awesome, applause, please share materials. Allyship takes bravery, not be defensive, want to grow. Appreciate your bravery, honesty and willingness to share. "Emotional labor" is a good term, also time required.
 - Not much materials re: book club.
 - Kelly negotiated 25% of her time @ SF VAMC to do diversity-focused work. So much diversity work is on top of everything else we do so it can lead to burnout.
 - Transparency is important—Idea for book club came from psychologists of color for a long time, but took White allies to take the initiative to make it happen. A lot of fear but need to DO the work and not wait for someone else. What role did microaggressions play in the lack of establishing the book club. Erin and Dawn stepping up was a demonstration of allyship @ the facility.

- Marcos suggests also potential movement from *allyship* to *accomplice*. Based on decolonizing the mind concept.
 - Plenary panel on allyship at AVAPL Conference
- A few resources from Drs. Watson and Koo:



Anti-Racist White
Allyship Group.pdf



Group
Agreements_FINAL.doc
- ✓ SIG mentoring activities—(Josephine Ridley--SIG Mentoring Coordinator). Ran out of time in meeting, but included here for folks 😊
 - I participated in the conference call/Mentoring Networks Meeting held in the fall for AVAPL to update the Mentoring Survey (Mentoring Match Tool)
 - It was agreed to use this single match tool across SIGs
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AVAPLECP?sm=8kK14MTxyl1ZLTHdTh0KL9u%2f3jcDSy8LJ3ukzLrDzFs%3d>
 - I am planning a conference call for the last week of January – will be sending out emails
 - I have asked a colleague who is African-American woman ECP at our VA to co-chair our subcommittee. Kia-Rai Prewitt, Ph.D.
- ✓ Any additional feedback about the use of the listserv (Gayle Iwamasa/Marcos Lopez)—Ran out of time on call. Deferred
- ✓ Next call is 2-14-19 ♥