

## CHA Department of Psychiatry - Multicultural Diversity Training

---

In keeping with the mission of the Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) to “improve the health of its communities”, the **CHA Department of Psychiatry Diversity Council** cultivates a professional and training environment that *values diversity* and fosters *culturally sensitive and inclusive mental health care* for patients from a variety of backgrounds (i.e. gender, race, ethnicity, class, religion, sexual orientation and other social identifications). Faculty and trainees are encouraged to examine their worldviews, values and biases as well as the ways in which their personal cultural framework impacts clinical practice. They are also encouraged to learn about the values, life experience and concerns of many different cultural communities. The Diversity Council supports the multidisciplinary training directors in developing curricula that attends to bio-psycho-socio-*cultural* case formulation, explanations of illness, acculturation, clinical issues in multilingual interpreting, privilege, etc. Moreover, trainees are given many opportunities apply clinical skills that enhance their work with people from all walks of life.

The Department of Psychiatry has historically hosted **Multicultural Training Days** on topics such as: psychoanalytic psychotherapy in a sociopolitical climate (Usha Tummala-Narra), immigration (Salman Akhtar, M.D.), racial identity development (Janet Helms, Ph.D.), multicultural supervision & training (Luiz Vasquez, Ph.D.), using cultural formulations (Russell Lim, M.D.), multicultural mental health research (Margarita Alegría, Ph.D.), the psychodynamics of racism (Price Cobbs, M.D.), and mindful exploration of diversity issues (Lee Mun Wah). In addition, our **Grand Rounds** series offers scientific discussion of cultural issues. Examples of past Grand Rounds include “*Children in Context: Using Cultural Formulations in Child Psychiatry*”, “*Addressing Barriers to Muslim Patient-Care*”, “*LGBTQ Survivors of Identity Abuse*”, “*Recognizing & Addressing Racial Trauma in Health Care*” and “*Diversity, Disability & Resilience*”. For the 2018-19 training year the diversity curriculum will include various seminars that explore cultural, diversity and social justice factors relevant to the expression and treatment of mental illness: a) the summer **Multicultural/Diversity Core Seminar**, b) the Adult OPD **Cultural Psychiatry Seminar**, c) the **Global Health & Human Rights Seminar** offered in partnership with the Department of Medicine and the new **LGBTQ Consultation Service**.

The **Diversity Council** is charged with creating programming that maximizes the academic, clinical and professional development of trainees that identify with a minority group(s). Such programming has included the **Minority Trainee Mentoring Alliance (MTMA)**, **Pathways Brown Bag Lunch and Panel Sessions** and supporting the **Diversity Trainee Working Group** in planning the **Annual Minority Trainee Retreat**. The Diversity Trainee Working Group is comprised of interdisciplinary trainees within the Department of Psychiatry (Psychiatry, Psychology, Social Work and Nursing) who are committed to addressing issues of diversity, inclusion, and social justice in the curriculum and broader CHA community. The Diversity Council also partners with the CHA **Social Justice Coalition (SJC)** to promote equity across all domains and improve the social, cultural, economic, environmental and political health of the communities we serve.

The structure and environment of CHA’s Department of Psychiatry serves as a model of culturally-sensitive mental health care. Our outpatient service is staffed by multicultural clinicians that have ongoing training in diversity issues. The outpatient service also has **cultural linguistic teams** aimed at serving the need of individuals of various ethnic backgrounds. Trainees on either of these outpatient teams will have the opportunity to be supervised by and consult with faculty whose expertise spans many areas relevant to cultural diversity. In the inpatient service trainees will learn diagnostic assessment skills relevant to people of various backgrounds as well as culturally-sensitive ways to work with communities and families that support the rehabilitation of their mentally-ill family member(s). CHA also provides an **interpreter service** to maximize the clinician’s ability to effectively communicate with its multi-linguistic patient population. Trainees are encouraged to use the service when needed and to consult with their supervisors on clinically effective use of interpreters in mental health care.

For more information about multicultural diversity training at CHA or about the Diversity Council contact **Dr. Treniece Lewis Harris at (617) 665-2414 or [tharris@challiance.org](mailto:tharris@challiance.org)**.