



A Cultural Competency Toolkit: Ten Grant Sites Share Lessons Learned

National Consumer Supporter Technical Assistance Center
National Mental Health Association



The National Consumer Supporter Technical Assistance Center (NCSTAC) is funded by the Center for Mental Health Services and run by the National Mental Health Association.

NCSTAC provides assistance to mental health consumer supporter organizations across the country in the forms of educational manuals and fact sheets, trainings, and ad hoc technical assistance.

National Consumer Supporter Technical Assistance Center

National Mental Health Association

1021 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-2971

Tel. (800) 969-NMHA

Fax. (703) 684-5968

E-mail: ConsumerTA@NMHA.org

Website: www.ncstac.org

Acknowledgements

The National Consumer Supporter Technical Assistance Center would like to thank the following contributors, without whose help this manual would not have been possible:

Ellen Alderton (Editor)

National Consumer Supporter Technical Assistance Center

Mack Gift (Chapter 9)

The Mental Health Association in Utah

Paula Heim (Chapter 4)

The Mental Health Association in Hawai'i

Kaanoi Kaapana (Chapter 4)

The Mental Health Association in Hawai'i

Cassandra Landry (Chapter 3)

National Mental Health Association of Georgia

Tom Lane (Chapter 5)

NAMI New Mexico

Brenda Lee (Chapter 2)

The Mental Health Association of Allegheny County

Jan McGillivary (Chapter 1)

The Mental Health Association in Alaska

Kristine Medea (Chapter 3)

National Mental Health Association of Georgia

Donna Roberts (Chapter 10)

Consumer Voices are Born

Constance Shepard (Chapter 7)

The Mental Health Association in Aiken County

Deborah Sorensen (Chapter 8)

Asian American Family Counseling Center

Kim Szeto (Chapter 8)

Asian American Family Counseling Center

Tom Volkert (Chapter 6)

The Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania

Contents

Introduction	v
Index.....	viii
Chapter 1: Alaska	1.1
Key concepts: advocacy, consumer involvement, leadership/advocacy training, Native Alaskans, rural communities	
Chapter 2: Allegheny County, Pennsylvania	2.1
Key concepts: African Americans, community assessment, the elderly, Hispanic/Latino Americans, manual writing	
Chapter 3: Georgia	3.1
Key concepts: African Americans, depression, education of professionals, public education, rural communities	
Chapter 4: Hawaii	4.1
Key concepts: advocacy, Asian Americans, consumer involvement, leadership/advocacy training, Native Hawaiians, public education, speakers' bureau	
Chapter 5: New Mexico	5.1
Key concepts: consumer involvement, Hispanic/Latino Americans, leadership/advocacy training, Native Americans, rural communities	
Chapter 6: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	6.1
Key concepts: advocacy, consumer involvement, the elderly, leadership/advocacy training, public education	
Chapter 7: South Carolina.....	7.1
Key concepts: African Americans, community assessment, the elderly, event planning, public education, rural communities	
Chapter 8: Texas	8.1
Key concepts: Asian Americans, assessment of professionals' cultural competency, education of professionals	
Chapter 9: Utah.....	9.1
Key concepts: African Americans, Asian Americans, Deaf culture, education of professionals, Hispanic/Latino Americans, interpreters, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders	
Chapter 10: Washington.....	10.1
Key concepts: Asian Americans, consumer involvement, Hispanic/Latino Americans, Russian Americans, translation, warm-line implementation	

Introduction: The Cultural Competency Initiative

For organizations providing support to mental health consumers, “cultural competency”—the ability to reach out effectively and appropriately to individuals of different cultural backgrounds—is central to meeting the needs of a diverse community. Recent U.S. census data indicate that nearly 70 million Americans are people of color and that this number is growing. This shift in the U.S. population has a significant impact on the mental health services system. According to the U.S. Surgeon General, language differences, cultural barriers and stigma prevent people of color from receiving necessary or adequate services.

The National Consumer Supporter Technical Assistance Center (NCSTAC) is in a unique position to play a pivotal role in this area. NCSTAC, through its Cultural Competency Initiative, has attempted to increase understanding of ethnic and racial disparities in mental health treatment and to support efforts that address the related barriers to adequate treatment.

The Cultural Competency Initiative, which was launched in 2000, assisted consumer supporter organizations by providing funding and technical assistance as well as by disseminating information about innovative minority outreach programs.

The Cultural Competency Initiative provided funding and disseminated information about innovative programs of minority outreach.

Through a competitive selection process, ten sites across the country were each awarded \$5,000 to launch new initiatives or to build upon existing programs over a one-year period. Sites chosen already had proven track records in reaching out to special populations.

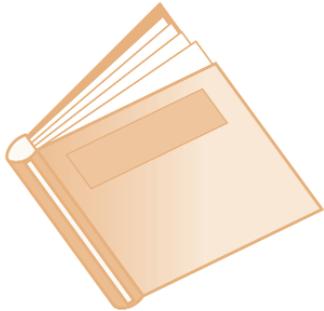
The sites that were selected began to address the issues of cultural competency in their communities and to document the lessons learned in carrying out these efforts. With data from these ten organizations, NCSTAC is now able to offer this Cultural Competency Toolkit. Each chapter provides an overview of one of the ten model programs. Project goals and implementation plans are shared, project leaders share their expertise, and program materials are included in each chapter's appendices. NCSTAC hopes that this information will assist other consumer supporter organizations in their efforts to launch similar outreach programs.

NCSTAC's vision is of a just, humane and healthy society in which all people are accorded respect, dignity and the opportunity to achieve their full potential free from stigma and prejudice. It is our hope that organizations providing support to mental health consumers can help to make this vision a reality one project at a time.

Language differences, cultural barriers and stigma continue to prevent many individuals from receiving necessary or adequate services.

Overview of chapters

Chapter one discusses the Mental Health Association in Alaska's (MHAA's) Mentor Project. With NCSTAC funding, MHAA flew five Native Alaskans from the state's most remote regions to Juneau to attend a three-day leadership training to develop advocacy skills.



Prior to this grant proposal, the Mental Health Association of Allegheny County (MHAAC) participated as a founding member in a local Multicultural Outreach and Education Task Force. MHAAC believed that this massive outreach effort was highly replicable, and **chapter two** discusses how this organization used NCSTAC funding to prepare and disseminate a how-to manual for replicating their project.

Chapter three provides an overview of the National Mental Health Association of Georgia's Project HOPE, (Healing, Opportunity, Prevention and Education). Project HOPE aimed to increase awareness in Georgia's African American community of the symptoms of and treatments for depression.



Chapter four describes how the Mental Health Association in Hawaii (MHAH) used its NCSTAC funding to strengthen its existing speakers bureau by recruiting and training mental health consumers of different cultural backgrounds. Over the course of this project, MHAH enlisted eight Native Hawaiians and Asian Americans as consumer advocates.

Chapter five discusses NAMI-New Mexico's (NAMI-NM's) Consumer Involvement Project. NAMI-NM offered a series of workshops at seven different locations across the state to help consumers to launch their own self-help and advocacy programs.

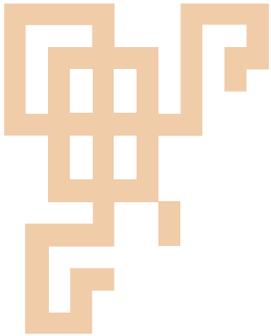




Chapter six explains how the Mental Health Association of South Eastern Pennsylvania (MHASP) built upon its existing Mental Health/Aging Advocacy Project. MHASP trained elderly consumers and their caregivers to advocate for the mental health needs of older Americans in the Philadelphia area.

Aiken County, South Carolina is rated as one of the top 100 places to retire in the United States and accordingly has a large population of older Americans.

Chapter seven provides an overview of the Mental Health Association in Aiken County's efforts to found an Elder's Task Force to help serve this population's needs.



Despite stereotypes to the contrary, mental illnesses among Asian Americans are actually common. **Chapter eight** describes how Houston's Asian American Family Counseling Center designed and offered a series of brown bag lunches where local mental health professionals could learn more about working with the area's Asian American communities.

Chapter nine explains how the Mental Health Association in Utah organized a two-day conference where 200 mental health professionals could learn about cultural competency. Conference workshops explored working with Utah's various minority populations: Native Americans, Latinos, African Americans, Pacific Islanders and Asian Americans. Additionally, one workshop focused on Deaf culture.



Consumer Voices Are Born (CVAB), a consumer-run drop-in center, established a warm-line where individuals in the Clark County, Washington area facing mental health challenges could call in and discuss their problems with a peer. **Chapter ten** focuses on CVAB's efforts to extend warm-line services to the county's various ethnic communities.

Index

Chapters

advocacy	1, 4, 6
African Americans	2, 3, 7, 9
Asian Americans	4, 8, 9, 10
community assessment	2, 7
consumer involvement	1, 4, 5, 6, 10
Deaf culture	9
depression	3
the elderly	2, 6, 7
event planning	7
Hispanic/Latino Americans	2, 5, 9, 10
interpreters	9
leadership/advocacy training	1, 4, 5, 6
manual writing	2
Native Alaskans	1
Native Americans	5, 9
Native Hawaiians	4
Pacific Islanders	9
professionals, assessment of cultural competency	8
professionals, education of	3, 8, 9
public education	3, 4, 6, 7
rural communities	1, 3, 5, 7, 9
Russian Americans	10
speakers' bureau	4
translation	10
warm-line implementation	10