NC Balance of State CoC

Racial Equity Subcommittee

Monthly meeting. 3/20/24

Attendees: Tradell Adkins, Dr Deniece Cole, Quiotti Ratliff, Lori Watts, Kisha Darden, Mary Erwin, Laurel Benfield (staff), Andrea Carey (staff).

Celebrations: Dr. Cole shared that she is moving into her home after 9 years! Tradell shard that he has finished his tortoise and turtle habitat for his pets/lawn crew!

Laurel presented a summary of the priority that the subcommittee identified for 2024 last meeting and some prompting questions to support future planning.

Priority: External Funders

* In response to the needs of the Balance of State CoC’s survey on racial equity, the RE Subcommittee identified the goal of “Homeless service funders and partners to hold providers accountable and incentivize them to implement racially equitable practices”
  + Goal confirmed by members
* How to move forward?
  + Currently, we (BoS as a CoC and our Subcommittee) don’t have formal relationships with funders. We’ll need to lead a get-to-know you campaign to understand how we can support our goal even as we acknowledge their own goals.
  + Who are these funders outside of the CoC system? What do they ask for of our homeless service providers? What are their application materials? Do they highlight or support racial equity explicitly already?
* Tradell – are the funders aware of the impact of funding organizations that have historically participated in inequitable practices? Do they understand the implications of being associated with them?
* Dr Cole – how do we approach funders politely with achievable partnership?
* Tradell – how do we engage clients of the programs to identify problematic program practices? And then potentially share those with the funders?
* Kisha – Let’s invite funders to the table and generate buy-in, and be direct. We might not be able to partner with all the funders/programs.
  + Dr Cole – so we can be prepared to walk away
  + Laurel – we can be in conversation with funders to assess whether they are open to partnership, or not. We are not applying to their funding. We are going to hold our power and tone.
  + Group highlighted potential tension around engaging funders specifically and explicitly around racial equity.
* Taking Action
  + Message to local funders will be more effective from the subcommittee members (and not staff based in the Triangle)
    - Dr Cole is all in!
    - Kisha – Yes! If not us, who?
    - Tradell also in!
  + Mapping the funders
    - United Way of Lee and Harnett County (Tradell sees Kendra Martin at case conferencing and thinks she’d be engaged)
    - Duplin County Health Department (Dr Cole knows they have Duke Endowment for equitable healthcare)
    - Duplin Vita or Vaya (Dr Cole)
    - Laurel asks folks to send contact info to her so we can identify some early targets

Priority: Education

* In response to the needs of the Balance of State CoC’s survey on racial equity, the RE Subcommittee also identified the goal of increasing the knowledge base of equity across the NC BoS CoC.
  + Goal proposed by staff: 2 or 3 regionally specific Racial Equity 101 trainings targeted
  + Dr Cole and Tradell are skeptical that trainings will be effective
  + Kisha – there could be an advantage to training with the assumption that folks don’t know. Maybe there’s a way to ask agencies if they have trainings right now and to ask to review the content?
  + Laurel provided context: the BoS has never offered training widely, recently we have given points for scorecards that reward trainings.
  + Dr Cole – could training on equity be incorporated into HART training?
  + Tradell – having a standard training could be beneficial
  + Dr Cole – Supports a virtual training
  + Tradell – agrees that a virtual option would be necessary
  + Kisha – I’d suggest that live in-person and recording could be made available… virtual live options undermine the in-person
* Discussion to be continued

Next Meeting April 17th!