

The Haitian Mental Health (HMH) Network

Brief Overview of the HMH Network

The Haitian Mental Health (HMH) Network is a group of Haitian providers (e.g., social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists) established in the aftermath of the January 12th earthquake to coordinate mental health services and respond to the psychosocial needs of the Haitian community. As part of this initiative, the HMH Network will work collaboratively with local health centers and community-based organizations serving the Haitian community to ensure that mental health interventions are comprehensive, integrated, culturally sensitive, and developmentally appropriate.

Scope of Services

Under this agreement, members of the HMH Network agree to provide the following services to the Haitian Multi-Service Center (HMSC):

1. Convene a cadre of linguistically- and culturally-competent mental health clinicians, religious leaders and pastoral counselors, and other related professionals to coordinate mental health services and address the trauma recovery needs of the local Haitian-American community
2. Provide training, clinical consultation and support to mental health and related professionals as they work to address post-disaster counseling and education to members of their local Haitian-American communities.

Specifically, the HMH Network will provide:

Training

- Conduct two culturally-oriented, trauma-informed group sessions for providers at HMSC.
- Assist providers in developing appropriate skills to (1) recognize signs of mental illness among Haitian children, adolescents and adults; (2) assess those at-risk for emotional difficulties; and (3) refer consumers for follow-up mental health care.

Consultation

- Offer on-going clinical consultation and support to HMHC providers, including those directly or indirectly affected by the earthquake.
- Work jointly with providers to conduct a needs assessment of the impact of the earthquake on consumers.

Support:

- Provide a directory of licensed mental health providers with experience and expertise in delivering culturally-oriented counseling services to the Haitian community in Massachusetts where consumers can be referred for short- and long-term counseling support.
- Assist providers in identifying appropriate social support services and linking customers to other available resources (e.g., housing, food and nutrition, legal services, etc.) in their respective communities.

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T – Training

- Conduct training for providers (e.g., mental health, medical, schools, spiritual leader, etc.) on Psychological First Aid.
- Provide intensive training to Haitian mental health providers on trauma-informed mental health interventions.
- Train providers on (1) recognizing signs of mental illness among Haitian children, adolescents and adults; (2) assessing those at-risk for emotional difficulties; and (3) referring consumers for appropriate care.

A – Assessment

- Conduct community-wide assessments to measure the impact of the earthquake on the mental health and psychosocial well-being of Haitian individuals both locally and in Haiti
- Assess existing gaps in mental health services in the Haitian community.
- Develop evidence-based practices and clinical interventions that are culturally tailored to address the complex emotional, psychological, cultural, and spiritual needs of the Haitian community.

S – Services

- Offer culturally-oriented clinical consultation and support to providers serving the Haitian community, including those directly or indirectly affected by the earthquake.
- Coordinate direct care services that are culturally-sensitive, linguistically-sound and developmentally-appropriate to respond to the mental health needs of Haitian children, adolescents and adults.
- Facilitate consumers’ access to mental health services that are “free of charge” and readily available within their communities.

K – Knowledge Exchange

- Serve as a “hub” for coordinated mental health services targeting the Massachusetts Haitian community.
- Create a directory of Haitian mental health providers in Massachusetts where patients can be referred for short- and long-term counseling support.
- Work in partnership with local, national and international organizations to exchange information and knowledge about best clinical practices, and share resources.

S – Support and Outreach

- Identify and secure funding to sustain the Network’s mental health initiatives.
- Build workforce capacity and strengthen existing resources within the community.
- Link consumers and providers to social support services and other available resources (e.g., housing, food and nutrition, legal services, etc.) in their respective communities.

The Haitian Mental Health Network
Directory of Mental Health Providers

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