



NEWS

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Montgomery County Chosen for Cultural and Linguistic Competency Pilot Project

Norristown, PA (October 29, 2014) – Montgomery County is one of only a handful of counties in the Commonwealth chosen to participate in the *Cultural and Linguistic Competency Pilot Project* through the Pennsylvania System of Care Partnership (PA SOC). The goal of the project is to incorporate and improve cultural and linguistic competency at the county level of care in Pennsylvania. This will require a joint effort between county leadership, PA SOC, and community partners to develop programs that address the cultural and language needs of the youth and families served.

The Montgomery County Commissioners have identified cultural competency as a priority in their administration. This pilot project will enable the County to work with a PA SOC Cultural and Linguistic Competency (CLC) Coordinator over the course of five months, beginning in November 2014. The initial CLC assessment will look at county demographics and the diversity of youth and families served to identify gaps and determine priorities. A County CLC advisory committee will then be formed to develop an action plan for addressing those priorities. By the end of the project, the County will have started to implement the action plan.

The pilot project will run from November 1, 2014 through March 1, 2015 with bimonthly meetings with the PA SOC CLC Coordinator and staff. At the end of the program, County staff will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to incorporate cultural and linguistic competency into its system of care, allowing for the delivery of services in a more efficient and effective manner for the populations served. “Cultural competence enables systems, agencies, and communities to better understand the needs of those accessing healthcare. It is critical to improving access to high-quality healthcare services and supports that are responsive and respectful of the diverse needs of families,” said Alyssa Snyder, Director of Children’s Behavioral Health in the Montgomery County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Department. The CLC Coordinator will draft a final report based on the

findings of the pilot project including lessons learned, best practices, and recommendations for future CLC implementation initiatives in the County and the Commonwealth.