

Incorporating a trauma-informed approach in Washington

Background

In 2016, Governor Jay Inslee issued an executive order to establish the Washington State Blue Ribbon Commission on Delivery of Services to Children and Families. The commission's final report included several recommendations, including incorporating trauma-informed approaches and care throughout the system.

The Washington State Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) convened a multi-stakeholder cross agency learning collaborative called Multi System Trauma Informed Care (MSTIC), with technical assistance from Chapin Hall. The group developed strategies for a state agency implementation plan. The other state agencies engaged in this work include Health Care Authority (HCA), the Department of Health (DOH), the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

The implementation plan for state agencies included two aims for using trauma-informed approaches to improving services:

Workforce and organizational development

How do we support our workforce to develop expertise in being trauma-informed and how does that inform the organizations policies and programs?

Programs and policies

How do we increase community engagement to influence agency policies and procedures to deliver a better client experience?

HCA's work

HCA invested federal mental health and substance use block grant dollars to plan and implement trauma-informed training and policy work for behavioral health providers.

Key development partners included:

- Community organizations through a survey
- MSTIC

- DOH
- Trauma Informed Oregon
- Federal partners and national experts

The initiative consisted of several components detailed below

Community grants

In 2019, HCA awarded \$1.46 million in grants to 31 communities. The intention of the grants was to fuel work already happening at the grassroots level around the state.

[Sites were invited to share lessons learned](#) in their implementation and partnership with a non-behavioral health referral source. There is a [resource list of implementation tools](#) to get you started if you are considering expanding your trauma-informed footprint.

Training

HCA offered in person trainings focused on demonstrating the "how to" of implementation from different layers of an agency:

- Direct client care
- Supervision of direct care teams
- Administration
- Executive leadership
- Ancillary services/community partners

While the in-person trainings are not currently active, we do have the [trainings in English and Spanish available online](#)

The trainings were created through contracts and partnership with founders of Trauma Informed Oregon and rooted in [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's core trauma informed principles](#).

Outreach

HCA partnered with Dr. Isaiah Pickens to lead forums focused on trauma informed care across partners



serving youth and families, including impacts of historical, generational, and racial trauma. Participants included the local behavior health, community outreach groups, and juvenile justice partners with the goal of bringing community together to better understand how they as communities becoming trauma informed across all partners connecting with families can support young people and their families in healing. Forums were held in Yakima, Pierce, King, and the Tri-cities. A forum was also held in Green Hill supporting young people in their efforts to develop a trauma informed training to offer to Juvenile Rehabilitation staff.

HCA, in partnership with Dr. Isaiah Pickens also hosted forums across state government partners to have the same conversation about the importance and impact of truly trauma informed systems. Trainings included staff from many facets of government services and branches.

For more information

TIA inbox

Online

<https://www.hca.wa.gov/tia>

[DBHR] [State Agency Partnerships] – [Trauma Informed Approach]
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