WEBINAR

Embedding Equity in 988 Crisis Systems Through Community Engagement
May 9, 2024
The views expressed in written conference materials or publications and by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsements by the U.S. government.
1. Welcome
2. Messages from SAMHSA & Speaker Intros
3. Speaker Presentations
4. Speaker Q&A
5. Wrap-Up
6. Office Hours
The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has selected Altarum to provide training and technical assistance support to states, territories, tribal organizations, and community partners across the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and crisis continuum of care. Along with our partners, W2 Consulting Corporation and Change Matrix, LLC, who have extensive experience with crisis services, technical assistance, and health equity, the Crisis Systems Response Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC) was formed to support the continued growth of 988 Lifeline and build a more robust crisis care system.
Learning Objectives

• Understand how to effectively engage the community in Crisis Response Systems.
• Identify ways to build upon successful community engagement strategies.
• Learn ways to define community through an equity lens.
• Develop strategies for involving the appropriate partners.
• Explore how to build authentic relationships in your community.
Guest Presenters

Rachele Espiritu
Founding Partner, Change Matrix

Josh DeBartolo
Senior Manager of Community Integration, Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

Don Ramos
Program Development Director for the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes and Project Director of the Tribes’ 988 Tribal Response Grant

Charles Rice
Community Engagement Specialist, NY Office of Mental Health and Co-chair for NYS 988 Community Education and Awareness
Embedding Equity in Crisis Response Systems Through Community Engagement

Rachele Espiritu
Rachelle Espiritu’s Agenda

• Understanding of Equity in Crisis Response: Key Concepts
• Defining Community Through an Equity Lens
• Core Principles of Community Engagement
• Equity Practices in Engagement
Community engagement is the cornerstone of an equitable crisis response system. By actively involving all community segments, particularly the most vulnerable, we ensure that our strategies and solutions are not only effective but also fair and inclusive. This approach transforms crisis systems from merely reactive to profoundly resilient, making sure that no one is left behind in their most critical moments.
Understanding Equity in Crisis Systems

**Equity**

**Community**

**Engagement**
Defining Community Through an Equity Lens

• **Community as Non-Monolithic:** Recognize that communities are made up of diverse groups with varying needs, backgrounds, and perspectives.

• **Intersectionality:** Consider factors like race, socioeconomic status, age, disability, gender, and more, which intersect to form unique identities and experiences within a community.
Who is helped?
Who is harmed?
Who is missing?
Benefits of an Equitable Definition of Community

• **Targeted and Effective Responses:** By understanding the full scope of who makes up a community, crisis response can be more accurately tailored to meet diverse needs.

• **Increased Trust and Cooperation:** When community members see their identities and needs reflected in crisis planning and response, they are more likely to trust and cooperate with those efforts.

• **Sustainable and Resilient Communities:** Inclusive engagement helps build stronger, more resilient communities that are better equipped to handle future crises.
A Dynamic Relationship: Achieving Health Equity and Systems Transformation through Meaningful Community Engagement

Source: Assessing Meaningful Community Engagement: A Conceptual Model to Advance Health Equity through Transformed Systems for Health
Equity Practices in Community Engagement

- Identifying and Addressing Power Imbalances
- Ensuring Inclusivity Through Communication
- Sustained Engagement and Trust Building
- Equitable Resource Allocation
Recognizing and addressing power imbalances is not just about fairness; it's about effectiveness. When we engage communities by leveling the playing field, we enable the most impactful solutions to emerge from those who understand the challenges firsthand.

• Understanding Power Imbalances
  o When does this occur?
Identifying and Addressing Power Imbalances 2/2

- Strategies to Address Power Imbalances
- Tools to Balance Power
Insuring Inclusivity Through Communication

- Language Accessibility
- Cultural Responsiveness
- Accessibility for People with Disabilities
- Use of Technology
- Community Networks and Collaboration
- Regular Training and Awareness
Cultivating Long-term Engagement and Trust in Communities

- Consistency in actions and follow-through on commitments
- Transparency about the limitations and capabilities of the crisis response system
- Regular updates about progress and changes in the crisis response strategy
- Education and empowerment
A CONTINUUM OF ENGAGEMENT POSSIBILITIES

INFORM
Provide balanced, objective info that the public should know and act on.

CONSULT
Obtain and consider feedback or input on issues, ideas, and decisions.

INVOLVE
Work with the public to understand issues and problems and include them in identifying options for moving forward.

COLLABORATE
Partner with the public, seeking advice and innovations that become embedded as much as possible in decisions.

EMPOWER
Final decisions are made by the public, who are one of the players implementing those decisions.

Adapted from International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation
Equitable Resource Allocation in Crisis Response

• **Assessment of Needs**: Techniques for assessing the varying needs of different community groups.

• **Fair Distribution**: Methods to ensure resources are distributed based on need and not just on availability or visibility.

• **Monitoring and Evaluation**: Setting up systems to monitor the equity of resource distribution and make adjustments as needed.
Community Engagement

Community engagement can bridge the divide between systems and the communities they serve, change how the 988 systems operate, and equip systems to advance equity.
Together, we can build a foundation of trust and equity in our crisis response systems. By embedding community engagement at the heart of our efforts, we ensure that every voice is not only heard but also empowered. Let us continue to forge paths of resilience through inclusivity and collaboration.
Illustrations of the Three Sisters

Maize

Bean

Squash
Three Sisters

• Beans Fertilize Corn & Squash
• Corn Stalk Supports Beans
• Squash Provides Ground Cover Between Corn & Beans
• Thrive Together Better Than When Planted Alone

The Three Sisters of Indigenous American Agriculture | National Agricultural Library (usda.gov)
Three Sisters Illustration

- Three Separate Plants
- Planted Together in Small Mound
- Nurturing Each Other Like Family When Planted Together
- Stronger Together
Oklahoma 988

Oklahoma 988 Launch July 2022
• Tribal Nations Awarded SAMHSA Tribal 988 Grants
• Oklahoma Crisis Continuum Expanded
  o Centralized Call Center (24/7)
  o Mobile Crisis Teams (24/7)
  o Urgent Recovery Centers (24/7)
Oklahoma 988 Brought Systems Together 1/2

• Federal Funder — SAMHSA
• State — ODMHSAS
• Tribal Nations
• Monthly Check-In Meeting
• Call Center, ODMHSAS, Tribal 988 Initiatives
• Goal: Working on Referral Plans for Tribal Citizens
• Tribes Formed Work Group
Partners Started Noticing Oklahoma

- Tribes Working Together in a Cohort Model
- State, Call Center, and Tribal Nations Collaborating
Oklahoma 988 Rooted Together
Thank You! Ura!

Josh DeBartolo  
Senior Program Manager of Community Integration  
Joshua.DeBartolo@odmhsas.org  
linkedin.com/in/joshdebartolo

Don Ramos  
Program Development Director  
Raising Interest in Suicide Education (RISE)  
Donald.ramos@wichitatrib.com  
linkedin.com/in/donald-ramos-96a466253

OKLAHOMA Mental Health & Substance Abuse

CRISIS SYSTEMS RESPONSE  
TRAINING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER  
988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE  
Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Embedding Equity Through Community Engagement: New York State

Charles Anthony Rice
OMH is committed to developing a statewide crisis system of expanded, enhanced, and connected services composed of:

- Telephonic triage through the implementation of 988
- Mobile Crisis teams
- Crisis Residential programs
- Crisis Stabilization Centers
- Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Programs (CPEPs)
- Other community services and supports
NYS Landscape

US Census Bureau, 2022 American Community Survey, 1-Year Estimates, New York State Quick Facts
Educational Materials

OMH currently offers most 988 educational materials in New York’s top 9 languages

- English, Spanish, Traditional Chinese, Simplified Chinese, Bengali, Haitian Creole, Korean, Arabic, and Russian
- Request materials in additional languages using the Translation Request Form on the NY 988 web page
- 100+ requests for materials in 28 different languages
Engaging the Community to Develop Crisis Systems

**Coming in H.O.T.**  
Honesty, Openness, Transparency

**Make our presence known**  
Meet people where they live, learn, work, and play

**Voice of the people**  
Make it actionable
Created via Chapter 57 of the laws of 2023, the Daniel’s Law Task Force was established in order to:

- Identify potential operational and financial needs to support trauma-informed, community and public health-based crisis response and diversion for anyone in the state experiencing a mental health, alcohol use, or substance use crisis.

- Review and recommend programs and systems operating within the state or nationally that could be deployed as a model crisis and emergency services system.

- Identify potential funding sources for expanding mental health, alcohol use and substance use crisis response and diversion services.

[omh.ny.gov/omhweb/daniels-law-task-force](omh.ny.gov/omhweb/daniels-law-task-force)
Helpful Resources

- New York 988 Webpage
- New York 988 Listserv (email)
- SAMHSA 988 Partner Toolkit
- 988 Lifeline
- 988 Community Education and Awareness Toolkit (PDF)
Formative Research Webinar

“988 Formative Research: Messaging and Communications about 988 to Trusted Messengers of People Disproportionately Impacted by Suicide”
May 20, 2024
2:00–3:00pm EST

Webinar Series:

June 13, 2024
1:00–3:00pm EST
Questions?

Rachele Espiritu  
Founding Partner,  
Change Matrix

Josh DeBartolo  
Senior Manager of  
Community Integration,  
Oklahoma Department of  
Mental Health and  
Substance Abuse Services

Don Ramos  
Program Development  
Director for the Wichita and  
Affiliated Tribes and the  
Project Director of the Tribes’  
988 Tribal Response Grant

Charles Rice  
Community Engagement  
Specialist,  
NY Office of Mental Health and  
Co-chair for NYS 988  
Community Education and  
Awareness
Information Exchange

Laura House, Ph.D., LCSW-C
Engagement and Equity Officer
SAMHSA’s 988 Behavioral Health Coordinating Office
Laura.House@samhsa.hhs.gov

SAMHSA's 988 Crisis Systems Response, TTAC
- support@988crisis TTAC.org
- 844-464-8338 (toll free)

Crisis Systems Response Training and Technical Assistance | SAMHSA

This project is supported by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), the agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. The Crisis Systems Response Training & Technical Assistance Center works in conjunction with the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. In 2020, Congress designated the new 988 dialing code to be operated through the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. SAMHSA sees 988 as a first step towards a transformed crisis care system in America. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of SAMHSA or the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.