



June 5, 2020

To our community:

Community Mental Health Authority of Clinton, Eaton, and Ingham Counties abhors the violence and systemic racism that plagues our communities. We stand in solidarity with all families, friends, and community members who are outraged by the senseless killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and the violence against many other Black people whose lives were taken before them. As a behavioral health authority, it is our duty to take a clear stand against the violence and systemic racism affecting communities such as police brutality, poverty, unemployment, poor education, inadequate housing that reflects the historic foundation of white privilege and racism upon which this country was built.

This historic and ongoing interplay of racist structures, policies, and norms shape lives and disproportionately and often strategically undermine the health and well-being of communities of color. We know that inequities in health care, including behavioral health care, are both commonplace and deeply harmful. We also know that the experiences of racism, including the fear of being harmed or killed, is an ongoing traumatic experience that can create a mental health burden in those who are forced to endure it. Many individuals who are experiencing the impacts of racism, discrimination, trauma, and stigma not only rely upon their communities and families, but also upon us as a behavioral health care provider for hope and healing.

With all of this in mind, and in support of our Black employees, consumers and community members, we commit to doing our part to take accountability, recognize, address, and eradicate racial injustice, discrimination, and oppression within our own organization, the behavioral health system, and the broader community. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Supporting and prioritizing the efforts of our Diversity Advisory Council in providing our staff of 1,200 employees ongoing opportunities to learn and engage in conversations about race, privilege, and bias.
- Examination of our policies, programs, services, and practices as we continue to learn about systemic racism, implicit bias, and oppression.
- Amplifying the voices of those that we serve through increased opportunities for open conversation, and self-advocacy within the behavioral health system through the leadership of those represented on our Consumer Advisory



Community

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Together we can.

- Continuing to engage with local law enforcement agencies in de-escalation skill building opportunities through intensive Crisis Intervention Team training offerings that improve police interactions with community members that have a behavioral health related condition or crisis.

We also call upon you in this moment, despite the frustration, anger, and fear, to not lose hope. As the public behavioral health provider, we honor all Black lives, recognize the negative impacts of racism, oppression, discrimination, trauma and stigma people of color have endured, and remain inspired by their spirit and resiliency. We stand with you. Together We Can.

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Chief Executive Officer
Community Mental Health Authority of
Clinton, Eaton, Ingham Counties

Paul Palmer
Chairperson, Board of Directors
Community Mental Health Authority of
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