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Department of Public Health

CHIP Title: Racial Equity in the Workplace

Project Description:

I was working on a A3 to address racial equity in the workplace. Through the A3 process it was ascertained that 35% of staff did not feel comfortable discussing race and racism in the workplace, resulting in an organizational culture and environment unable to advance racial equity. The goal of the project was to continue the A3 process to advance racial equity by increasing staff awareness and comfortability (staff feeling safe) in discussing and addressing racism in the workplace. The target was 100% of staff would have comfort discussing racism in the workplace by December 2021.

Key Findings and Lessons Learned:

- Started by completing an analysis (why does the problem exist, in terms of causes, constraints, barriers); developed possible countermeasures; and made a plan (PDSAs) to implement the countermeasures.
- Able to implement identified countermeasures but shortly after implementation A3 work was put on hold due to COVID.
- Deployment COVID activated the majority of 2020 and the other lead person helping me with the A-3 project left the organization.
- Late 2020 started the project again but only a small portion of my time could be dedicated to the work due to being short-staffed, COVID activities, and personal leave.
- Able to put more focus on one of the countermeasures and incorporated SMARTIE (Strategic, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable) Goals in the annual Performance Plan & Appraisal Report (PPAR), as a small pilot for selected managers & supervisors (12 staff).
- Pilot was a success and 100% of the staff who participated reported they felt more comfortable with discussing and addressing racism in the workplace.
- Due to the success of the pilot, SMARTIE Goals was adopted and will be written policy for the entire Maternal, Child, & Adolescent (MCAH) section of DPH (200+ staff).
- Developed a SMARTIE Goals training and was able to train MCAH staff and Human Resources Department who incorporated parts of the training into their existing PPAR training for all DPH staff (8,000+ staff).
- The SMARTIE Goals training and implementation in the PPARs caused staff to have important racial equity and disparities discussions, which led to applying a racial equity lens and change to the culture and environment to advance racial equity in their programs.
- Couldn't compare percentages because the equity survey was put on hold.

Next Steps:

- Commit to advancing racial equity by completing the full A3 process, that successful countermeasures are reflected throughout policies and practices and reinforced at all levels of the organization.
- Work with DPH to ensure the annual equity survey for staff is reinstated to compare percentages, stratified by race and position.
- Address structural racism by collaborating and sharing best practices with other agencies and developing and implementing a City-wide collective impact racial equity agenda.

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