

TIP SHEET: TALKING TO YOUR PROVIDER ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

FOR INDIVIDUALS

DOS:

- Advocate for yourself. Share your needs and desires with your providers.
- Ask for providers who are culturally responsive and have experience working with individuals of similar identities to you.
- Ask your provider to document everything that is discussed, including any denials of treatments that you want.
- Seek combinations of mental health care that is right for your unique needs.

DON'TS:

- Avoid mental health care due to shame.
- Feel obligated to choose a Western model of mental health care.
- Exclusively use one type of mental health care without exploring all options that feel right to you.

FOR PROVIDERS

DOS:

- Use shared decision making. Learn about the individual's experiences and cultural perspectives. Understand that they are the experts of their own life and listen to their needs and desires.
- Seek out opportunities to train you and your staff on cultural responsiveness. Be accountable in ensuring that those trainings are followed by policies and procedures that can put that knowledge into action.
- Translate material into languages that your clients can understand, including simplifying high-level medical language.
- Provide sliding scale and payment plan options for clients who may be affected by financial concerns.
- Use mental health screenings that are culturally relevant and equitable to each client's experiences.

DON'TS:

- Make generalizations or assumptions about the individual's health, wellness, or experiences.
- Make decisions on the individual's health or well-being without discussing it in full with them first.
- Maintain an approach that is rigid in its adherence to the Western medical model.