CONNECTION LEARNING HEALTH SYSTEM
HUB-WIDE DATA SNAPSHOT

WHAT SUPPORTS TREATMENT ENGAGEMENT FOR BLACK CSC CLIENTS?

Black participants are more likely to leave CSC before 2 years than participants of other racial identities. We interviewed 18 Black participants from CSC programs in CLHS to better understand their perspectives about things that facilitate or impede engagement. Interviewees described ENGAGEMENT as the degree to which they are candid, disclosing, genuine, and invested when interacting with CSC staff, in contrast to guarded, distant, or emotionally absent.

THEME 1: RELATIONSHIP WITH STAFF IS CENTRAL TO ENGAGEMENT

SUPPORTIVE STAFF–CLIENT INTERACTIONS ARE FOUNDATIONAL TO POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

Client Engagement was strengthened when staff ...

- Show genuine respect by **actively listening** to what the client says and what they mean.
- Help clients **feel welcome** through warmth, openness, and steady kindness.
- **Communicate openly** about all aspects of treatment, including medication, so clients feel informed and involved.
- Handle **serious conversations with calmness, compassion,** and without dismissiveness.
- Treat clients as a **whole worthwhile person**, focusing on their interests and goals, rather than only diagnoses or past incidents.

"Everyone was really warm and welcoming. .... They explained everything, like what was going to happen, all about the program, what things are going to look like, before I even got there. So I wasn't really anxious at all."

“Communication [is most important]. Everyone from the receptionist, the therapist, psychiatrist, the nurse who measures my medication, they're always checking in on me. They just seem like they want to be there to help”.

“They actually listen to what I have to say. We have conversations, too, where sometimes we would talk about sports or...about what's going on with my day-to-day life. So, it's more than just talking about my mental health is why I appreciate it.”

“I would just go back to how accessible everyone is and how willing they are to reach out.”

TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN CLIENTS' RELATIONSHIP WITH PROVIDERS TAKES TIME.

- Clients often **entered the program feeling wary**, given the unfamiliar environment and uncertainty about what to expect.
- **Consistent, positive interactions with staff built familiarity** and trust over time.
- **Clear, open communication** during the initial entry period helped people feel safer and more willing to engage.



“When I first got there, I was a little uncomfortable. I didn't know what to expect...[what helped me get more comfortable was] me realizing what's going on, me realizing that they just here to help me”

“It took some time... Just talking to [provider] about myself and her listening [helped build trust]”