



ALCOHOL, DRUG & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
DON KINGDON, PhD, INTERIM DIRECTOR

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August 16, 2017

Dear BHCS Staff and Other Stakeholders,

We wanted to take this time to acknowledge the rioting that occurred on Saturday, August 11 in Charlottesville, Virginia, and the resulting equivocating language from our President regarding hate groups. We know many of you are feeling scared or in disbelief to hear some of the recent comments from President Trump, and wonder, as we do, what does this mean and why are groups espousing hatred being legitimized by our President? Though we cannot speak for the discourse at the national level, we do want to assure everyone that our Department's commitment to diversity and inclusion has not changed, and that our value of social inclusion remains the same. Our department will not tolerate the harassment or intimidation of any underrepresented group that is either employed by BHCS or receives services from our department. Our department's social inclusion statement sums it up:

We value advocacy and education to eliminate stigma, discrimination, isolation and misunderstanding of persons experiencing mental illness and substance use disorders. We support social inclusion and the full participation of consumers and family members to achieve full lives in communities of their choices, where they can live, learn, love, work, play and pray in safety and acceptance.

"No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite." - Nelson Mandela

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Wagner", written over a horizontal line.

James Wagner, LMFT/LPCC, BHCS Deputy Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Don Kingdon", written over a horizontal line.

Don Kingdon, Ph.D., BHCS Interim Director

