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Dr. Lewis-Fernández’s research focuses on developing clinical interventions and novel service-delivery approaches to help overcome disparities in the care of underserved US cultural groups. His work centers on improving treatment engagement and retention in mental health and physical health care by persons with anxiety, depression, and other serious mental illnesses. He also studies the way culture affects individuals’ experience of mental disorder and their help-seeking expectations, including how to explore this cultural variation during the psychiatric evaluation. His work has been funded by the National Institutes of Mental Health, the American Red Cross, and private foundations like the National Alliance for Research on Schizophrenia and Depression.

He is a member of the National Advisory Mental Health Council of the National Institute of Mental Health, the chair of the Cultural Psychiatry Committee of the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry, a member of the Anxiety Disorders Work Group and the Culture and Gender Study Group of the DSM-5, and a member of the Community Services Board of the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.