

**MHSA WET Financial Incentive Program  
Mid-Year Adjustment to MHSA 3 Year Program and Expenditure Plan  
Fiscal Years 2017-18 through 2019-20  
(Revised 11/01/2017)**

## **Background**

The MHSA Workforce Education and Training (MHSA WET) Plan is tasked with efforts to address retention, recruitment, and education and training needs of the existing and future workforce of the Los Angeles County public mental health system. Objectives of the Plan include: 1) support initiatives expanding workforce service delivery capacity of MHSA plans, such as Community Support and Services (CSS) and Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) Plans; and 2) increase workforce multi-lingual and multi-cultural capacity reflective of consumer/family populations served. Financial Incentive is one of five funding categories identified in the MHSA WET Plan and approved by mental health stakeholders, Mental Health Commission and State DMH during FY 2008-2009. DMH is proposing to implement the following three components of the Financial Incentive Program: Loan Repayment Support Program, Tuition Reimbursement, and Underserved Cultural Communities (UsCC) Graduate Recruitment Program. Approximately \$20 million is projected for disbursement.

This plan has been reviewed and supported by MHSA WET Advisory Committee on: February 20, 2009; March 20, 2009; July 8, 2009; September 30, 2009; October 26, 2009; December 9, 2009; March 8, 2010; September 1, 2010; January 20, 2011; May 10, 2012; May 2, 2013; October 28, 2013; October 29, 2014; October 22, 2015; and October 11, 2016. Details for this program were presented to the Stakeholder Leadership Team (SLT) on October 18, 2017.

## **Proposed Program Description**

DMH requests feedback on its plan to implement the following three components of the MHSA WET funded Financial Incentive Program.

### **1. Loan Repayment Support Program**

The program provides educational loan payment assistance for staff employed in the public mental health system of LA County in exchange for continuous employment in a hard-to-fill/retain mental health program. Direct service providers or supervisors of direct service providers are eligible to apply. Two distinct repayment programs are available: clinical/direct service (non-MD) staff and Mental Health Psychiatrists.

#### **A. Certificate, Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate**

Awardees will receive up to \$20,000\* in exchange for a two year work commitment to remain in the public mental health system. Direct service providers are eligible to apply. Estimated disbursement is \$10,000,000 with approximately 500 awards to be distributed.

## **B. Mental Health Psychiatrists**

The program offers loan repayment awards to mental health psychiatrists committed to remaining in the public mental health workforce for up to 5 years. Awards range from up to \$300,000 and the number of awardees is contingent on the amount of the outstanding loan to be paid. Disbursements are estimated at \$8,000,000.

## **2. Tuition Reimbursement**

Tuition reimbursement is available for staff pursuing coursework leading to career advancement opportunities in the LA County public mental health system. Tuition will be reimbursed to staff enrolled in a Certificate, Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctorate program(s). Reimbursable courses must fulfill requirements defined in the Los Angeles County Human Resources Management System Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines Manual under Section 123, for "Accredited College Education."

Awardees will receive up to \$15,000 in exchange for a one year commitment to work in the public mental health system. An estimated 150 individuals will be awarded, with an estimated disbursement of \$2,250,000. Only certificates/degrees applicable to current and/or projected mental health service delivery needs will be considered. The number of awardees depends on the amount of the tuition to be reimbursed.

## **3. Underserved Cultural Communities (UsCC) Graduate Recruitment**

Individuals from underserved communities both culturally and/or linguistically competent to service their respective communities are eligible to apply. Two program options are available:

**Option 1** is a three year program which consists of a one year paid internship providing direct services to unserved/underserved communities at a DMH directly operated program or DMH contract agency and two years of funding for a graduate program in social work with a clinical concentration, marriage and family therapy, or licensed professional clinical counseling. This option is for those individuals with limited knowledge or experience in social service but have a strong interest and commitment to working in the mental health field.

**Option 2** is a two year program which provides funding for individuals pursuing a graduate degree in social work with clinical concentration, marriage and family therapy, or licensed professional clinical counseling. This option is intended for those individuals with experience working in a community based services organization.

Payback service commitments are required for both options and to be completed in an outpatient mental health program providing full time direct clinical services to unserved/underserved communities: Option 1 = 3 years and Option 2 = 2 years. Approximately 28 individuals will be identified and awarded. Total disbursement for this program is estimated at \$838,000.

**Target Population**

These system-wide retention and recruitment efforts will increase workforce capacity to service all age-groups, ethnic and mono-lingual underserved/unserved communities. These opportunities are intended to attract much needed mental health medication management personnel as well as support career pathway advancement in the public mental health system.

**MHSA Component**

Workforce Education and Training Division, Financial Incentives

**Intended Program Outcomes**

- Address shortage in medication management providers
- Address linguistic/cultural disparities in underserved communities
- Increase the continuity of care as staff remains with hard-to-fill/retain programs
- Support career advancement opportunities for non MD personnel, including administrative staff

**Proposed Outcome Tool**

- Ongoing tracking and evaluation surveys

**Budget (MHSA)**

Total expenditures for the Financial Incentive Program are estimated at \$20 million. These proposed programs utilize MHSA allocations identified in the County's MHSA WET Plan. To address the changing needs of the public mental health system, funds may be redirected among the various Financial Incentive Program components. No additional funds are requested at this time, but if needed, Community Services and Supports (CSS) funding may be accessed.

\*DMH may exceed this amount for DMH medication management providers, which may include Psychiatric Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants and Pharmacists. DMH is requesting additional medication management provider positions based on a workforce assessment. A Board Letter is pending to secure these positions for DMH directly operated programs.