

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
Office of the Deputy Director of Strategic Communications**

LGBTQI2-S Conference Planning Meeting / UsCC SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

March, 7, 2019
1:00PM – 4:00PM
Strength United

Present: Danielle Samuel, Andres Magana, Rebecca Russell, Terri Jay, Josue Vega, Jessica Orellana, Desiree DeShay, riKu Matsuda, Kat Aguenza, Victor Guerra-Cardoza, Joey Martinez, Eddie Martinez, Marcos Zamora-Sanchez, Renato Lira, Gustavo Velez, Blair Ralston

Phone: Jeffery King, Sermed Alkass, Pam Inaba, Bill Sive

RAND: Mathew Mizel, Sanika Bharil

DMH: Mirtala Parada Ward, Kelly Wilkerson, Connie Acosta Castaneda

Admin:

Agenda Items	Comments/Discussion/Recommendations/Conclusions
Welcome/ Introductions	Attendee introductions
Review of minutes	March 7, 2019 meeting minutes approved
RAND	<p>Matthew Mizel from RAND Corporation shared with the members that RAND is a Non-Profit Independent Research Organization. RAND is working with the Service Area Advisory Councils (SAACs) and the Underserved Cultural Communities (UsCCs) to engage them in focus group discussions and gather information about their needs</p> <p>RAND Corporation is assisting LACDMH who is undergoing a strategic planning process that will transform their system of care, along with feedback from various stakeholders. RAND Representative had a 90-minute focus group open discussion with the AAA subcommittee members. RAND Corporation facilitated the meeting while Nicole Eberhart took notes that will be shared with the members once RAND has completed their final report.</p>
UsCC Business	<p>A. Community Co-Chair – Nominations:</p> <p>Please email Kelly Wilkerson directly within the next week if you are interested in being a co-chair alongside Terri Jay. They would have to be community members, not DMH employees. If you are working for a contracted agency of DMH you have to be line staff, you can't be an administrator or manager. Renato Lira has expressed interest and so has Greg Wilson. Requirements for co-chairs are to attend LGBTQI2-S monthly meetings and monthly UsCC Leadership meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If you'd like to nominate someone they would have to attend meetings on a regular basis ○ You can nominate yourself or someone else ○ To have voting privileges you would have to attend in person or by phone 50% of the meetings

over the last 12 months to be able to vote

Conference Business

A. Emcee Discussion: Terri Jay suggested Valerie Spencer, she is very visible and is an advocate and working directly with the LGBTQI2-S community, she identifies as a trans woman and is a licensed professional. She's also a community visibility individual who can really take charge and take control, bring highlight and bring positive energy to being an emcee. Terri also recommended John Sheehe. Renato suggested Jazzmyn Crayton.

Workshop Topics Recommended from Last Conference:

LGBTQI2-S TAY/Youth

Danielle Samuel proposal: I'm trying to address a gap in what I have noticed is the black LGB community. I think a lot of times when workshops are being done it's about the whole community but sometimes we also need to specifically address certain communities within the larger LGBTQIA2-S community. This workshop would be talking about black identity development for youth, specifically something I want more clinicians to know about is post traumatic slave syndrome. I'm also open to a co-presenter to cover the other elements that are out of my scope of practice.

Isaias Guzman and Renato Lira proposal: The workshop that we are interested in providing is focusing on the LGBTQ Youth in school. There is the highest percent of bullying and harassment and also their coping mechanisms and the mental health disparities including depression and suicide rates. And the utilization of tobacco and substance abuse and discussing how we can address those issues.

Gustavo Velez and Kathryn Aguenza: We developed a 6-hour long training for providers to be more inclusive and build a safe place for LGBTQI2-S individuals. And to support mental health providers and community health organizations in developing the capacity to increase access for and effectively serve LGBTQI2-S TAY. We focused it more for the TAY population. We started off with terminology and language. We want to make sure our audience knows the correct terminology.

- Special Populations/Youth Topics
- Terminology and Language
- Trans Youth
 - Describe the distinct needs of the Trans community
- Homeless Youth
 - Describe risk factors and prevalence rates of LGBTQI2-S youth living on the streets. Including information on effects of homelessness and service gaps.
- Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Youth
 - Explain the prevalence rates and risk factors for LGBTQI2-S youth.
- Bullying
 - The effects of bullying behavior on LGBTQI2-S youth.
 - Provide information on best practices for prevention of bullying in schools and the workplace

- The coming out process
- We would like to train DMH staff and community of being more competent and being more inclusive
- We focused on reclaiming our stories and sharing our coming out stories. We would like to call it “Coming out Star”

Kelly Wilkerson shared proposal of those not present:

Proposed by Mimi Hoang – “Counseling Bisexual, Pansexual, and Non-Monosexual Youth” (possible CEU’s) Studies show that more people in the younger generation are identifying as bisexual, pansexual, queer, fluid, and other non-monosexual (AKA “by+”) and that bi+ youth outnumber gay and lesbian youth, yet face higher rates of bullying, harassment, intimate partner violence, and suicidality than even gay/lesbian and heterosexual youth. This creates a call to action for therapists and counselors working with young people to educate themselves on this growing yet vulnerable population and learn how to support and advocate on their behalf. This workshop utilizes a feminist, multicultural, and ecological framework to discuss identity development, biphobia and bi erasure, and health disparities, and will provide concrete tools and resources to help clinicians become more affirming of bi+ clients and students.

Faith & Spirituality

Richard Zaldivar: We want to use this space to have a conversation based around Faith, Spirituality. We know that everybody has had some kind of experience with both whether that was negative or positive. We want to create some sort of healing process through conversation by bringing in people from the faith community that work with LGBTQI2-S individuals and also use testimonies to spark conversations around that. We’re going to be using people from our Faith Programming. And engage with the participants. Panel discussion with different ethnic cultural communities. They would be LGBTQI2-S, they will also talk about how spirituality is important and how it intersects with mental health. And also how we define spirituality in one’s life and how do we deal with the challenges and barriers that we all find ourselves victims of in a church or religion, but its more based on faith and spirituality.

Two-Spirit

Joey Martinez: This presentation will take us on a journey of 2-3 Native people from various tribes/clans. Invitation in reclaiming sacred titles, acknowledging conflicts between native and non-native folks, identifying roles and responsibilities of two-spirited individuals, and discussing solutions for the mental health of Two-Spirited folks will be made.

- It was suggested that to be sensitive on language they should use Nation instead of Tribes/Clanship
- Feedback from Terri Jay: As far as decolonizing mental illness, we come from a healing back round so this is about being sensitive to it being non-native world when it comes to mental health. There is going to be a strong barrier to invite a non-native professional to guide them through their healing practices within their nation or community.

Kelly Wilkerson shared proposal of those not present:

Proposed by Yue Begay. The goal of the workshop is to expand knowledge of Two Spirit and Native LGBTQPAI identities through introducing the concept and history of Two Spirit, exploring the history of American Indian and Alaska Natives as it relates to Two Spirit and Native LGBTQPAI communities, and expanding current understandings of contemporary Two Spirit and LGBTQPAI identities. Participants will learn various terminologies, history of American Indians and Alaska Natives, and discuss various issues facing Two Spirit and Native LGBTQPAI communities today. At the workshop's conclusion, participants should be able to:

- Describe the differences between American Indian and Alaska Native, Native American, and indigenous.
- Identify the various historical challenges American Indian and Alaska Native communities faced.
- Recognize how Native LGBTQPAI communities differ from non-Native LGBTQPAI communities.

Older Adults

Kelly Wilkerson shared proposals of those not present:

“LGBTQ+ Older Adults – Self-Isolation, Social Discrimination, Cultural Humility.” Proposed by Bill Sive from the Gay Elder Circle. Attendees will be provided real life examples of challenges LGBTQ+ Older Adults experience self-induced and/or socially induced. Examples of solutions based on cultural humility will be provided.

Attendees will learn how to communicate with age appropriate language, identify preferred family, and provide cultural solutions through active listening. Attendees will be asked to engage in intergenerational dialogue, identify advocates, and contribute towards next steps.

- Overview of current state of LGBTQ+ Older Adults
- Overview of LGBTQ+ Older Adults and self-isolation.
- Overview of LGBTQ+ Older Adults and social discrimination.
- Cultural Humility based solutions.

Thomas Green from APAIT is interested in presenting on: Self-isolation due to small support group, feeling not attractive, feelings of denial and concealment of self, ageism, suicide, sexuality, self-image and coping strategies and LGBTQ+ Older Adults staying connected. We all need to be connected somehow to our self and to our community in order to thrive. I have traveled extensively during my life (internationally) and therefore find myself having left many friends behind, or lost forever to HIV or other ends. I worked as a dancer for 20 years living the gypsy life going from contract to contract, sometimes placing roots, only to uproot everything and move on. I have also faced some pretty stiff obstacles along the way. However, my artistic endeavors have uplifted me along the way. In my current incarnation, I am bringing my artistic leanings to the support of Older Adults in the HIV+ community, and the LGBTQ community. I worked in resort hotels for many years, and I was part of a team of "animators" who got people involved in recreational activities. Everything from playing games, pool exercises, learning the local language, and getting up in front of an audience to do comedy skits. These activities help people to come together and enjoy free time with strangers, getting to know each other and often build lasting friendships, plus understand a sense of where they are and who they are. As a gay man coming from nearly a lifetime abroad, I was already getting older, and losing my attractiveness, and just being invisible to younger gay men was upsetting. Not to mention other physical limitations coming on with age. Luckily

substance misuse was never an issue for me, but I have certainly observed it and dealt with others and their abuse. I've been through a major heart operation, as well as numerous kidney operations, so I have experienced some major health scares, yet manage to move on and recreate myself to this point where I want to help others to cope with their lives and situations through the use of Storytelling, Art, Recreation, and movement. I feel this rounded approach with diversity built in is a good way for create community and inner harmony.

Jennifer Alquijay (presented at last year's conference) is also interested in presenting on this topic. (possible CEUs) Topic choices - narrowed down: 1. First generation of Transgender seniors, 20+ years of hormone therapy (only if I can find an interested Trans person who is willing to present along with me - would prefer to present all the workshops in collaboration with someone - I'm willing to do the work, but don't want to be "cis-splaining anything."). I'm open to feedback and input from your committee around that if people have ideas, questions or concerns. 2. Going back into closet due to non-affirming staff at care facilities, and bullying in nursing homes. 3. Self-isolation due to small support group, feeling not attractive, feelings of denial and concealment of self, alcoholism, ageism, suicide, sexuality, self-image and coping strategies. 4. Social discrimination, and cultural issues in care facilities.

Additional workshop Proposals:

Joey Martinez shared regarding Mapping Queer Health: Challenges of HIV/AIDS +, Chemical Dependency, and Mental Health –This presentation will map the challenges of living with HIV/AIDS, chemical dependence, and mental illness in LA county. Three queer Latinos will pinpoint their mental, emotional, and physical trauma and healing as their queer bodies have navigated the San Fernando Valley, Antelope Valley, and greater Los Angeles. As an interactive and visual representation of these individuals' every day and every night living, a map of Los Angeles County will be available for presenters to mark memories of thoughts, emotions, and actions that they've expressed and encountered within this urban landscape. The mapping may show the complex and common structures—the personal, familial, communal, and institutional—that queer persons of color thrive in. Thus, Brandon will share his struggles with chemical dependence and his sobriety of almost 2 years, surviving AIDS, Hemophagocytic Lympho Histiocytosis (HLH), homelessness, a coma, and his two-time experience with resuscitation from death. Oscar will draw out tales of a partner's deception as the reason for becoming HIV +, his use of cocaine, isolation, and now 2 years of sobriety. Joey will map a tale of queer magic and recovery, as well as his personal and social failures battling depression, anxiety, and crystal meth use as a HIV + person during his time as a graduate student.

Kelly Wilkerson Shared Additional Workshop Proposals for those not present:

LGBTQI2-S / Non-Binary 101 – Ethan Alexander Patron is interested in presenting on this topic. This workshop delves into the basics of the LGBTQ+ community by breaking down the four spectrums of sex, gender, expression, and attraction. Over the course of the workshop, participants will gain an elementary understanding of identities and issues related to this community. Ethan will also include information regarding the non-binary community (i.e. non-binary 101). This workshop has been presented at numerous organizations and conferences, including Strength United, Children's Institute Inc, and last year's LGBTQI2S Mental Health

Conference.

Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) for Trans Clients – Addison Rose Vincent is interested in presenting on this topic. This presentation breaks down forms of trauma and traumatic experiences related to the transgender community, and why and how service providers must implement a TIC approach. Over the course of this presentation, participants will gain a better understanding of types of trauma, current and historical issues facing the community (including sexual and domestic violence), the 6 principles of TIC, and steps to take to adopt a TIC approach, moving from “What’s wrong with you?” to “What happened to you?” This presentation has been performed at multiple agencies, including St. John’s Well Child & Family Center’s Transgender Health Program.

Couples Therapy with Gay Men – Yamonte Cooper is interested in presenting on this topic. Traditionally, couple therapy models have been heteronormative and pathologizing of nontraditional relationship structures. There is a lack of research on evidence-based effective couple therapy with gay men. This workshop will analyze the history of relationships between men. Multicultural issues will be addressed in the context of couple therapy and the LGBTQ community including respectability politics and assimilation. Concepts such as LGBTQ affirmative therapy and homonormativity will be described. In addition, the history and tenets of queer theory will be evaluated along with the medicalization of sexual practices. Further, identities such as queer, Same-Gender-Loving (SGL), and Two-Spirit will be defined. Minority stress and resilience will be examined and described. In addition, the role and impact of shame in the lives of gay men will be assessed. Further, the Stonewall riots and the direct connection to the gay liberation movement will be reviewed. The history of polyamory and nonmonogamy in gay male relationships will be evaluated. Moreover, stages of gay relationship development will be reviewed. In addition, the role of resilience and anti-resilience in behaviors in the romantic lives of Black SGL men will be examined. Further, the role of attachment and gay men will be described. Research on couple therapy will be analyzed and couple therapy models will be identified along with the barriers to couple therapy. The identified couple therapy models that will be analyzed are Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT), Gottman Method Couple Therapy (GMCT), and Collaborative Couple Therapy (CCT). Specific therapeutic interventions that can be effective with gay couples will also be assessed.

Storytelling for Empowerment – Ana Bernal from the Q Youth Foundation is interested in presenting on this topic. The idea for the workshop would be Using Ethical Storytelling Techniques and Story Circles to Understand LGBTQIA+ Communities. The discussion would be about how LGBTQIA+ identified storytellers and writers of color uniquely transform modes of storytelling, moving from spotlighting not queer people but rather queer lives—“a process of living queerly” through experiences of racism, ableism, and gender oppression. And I would incorporate examples of story circles and storytelling through grassroots community actions through first person witnessing and testimonial account through writing. I can organize a presentation of several plays that discuss, Youth and Identities: Transphobia, Mental Health: a 1st hand account of LGBTQIA+ person living with Bipolar Disorder but written without the tropes of stigma; HIV Awareness are some examples of works that have been produced. I can offer actors to come in to role play, give participants some guides and resources to take back to their organizations and how to apply storytelling circles within their groups. Depending on the size of the group for the workshop - I can have them do some group work and a mini-breakout session so they can stay engaged or I can just give PowerPoint presentation with actors for role

playing and guides.

Body Love for Imperfect Bodies – Proposed by Spoonie Collective. CrimethInc’s Nigel Davis wrote that “beauty must be defined as what we are, or else the concept itself is our enemy.” Who gets to embody beauty, desire, power, and strength? How do we navigate the world with bodies which are not given inherent value and worth as marginalized people? How do we heal and reconcile with our bodies and minds on our own terms? Join us for a workshop and community discussion on body love that explores how ability, gender identity, and sexual orientation intersect, are influenced by oppression, and how we can use them with an intersectional feminist framework to develop resistance and resilience within ourselves and our communities that will protect and honor our bodies and our self-worth. This event will be a dialogue centered around the intersections of disability, chronic illness and neurodiversity within transgender, queer, and intersex communities with a particular focus upon body issues like desirability politics, ableism, fat acceptance, and body love. We hope to facilitate a nuanced discussion on the politics of gender and the body using an intersectional feminist and disability justice framework, facilitate a community deconstruction of societal standards imposed upon bodies and genders, and encourage a reevaluation of our worth and our bodies as marginalized individuals. The event will close with a reflection and reconciliatory creative writing exercise that participants can take home. The event will create a space for disabled, chronically ill, and neurodivergent people to express and share their personal experiences, stories and truths. The participatory structure of the conversation is vital for breaking down the hierarchies that often exist within the presenter-listener dynamic. Rather than a traditional workshop or panel where the audience’s primary role is that of the listener, we plan on presenting an event where a variety of stories, experiences, compensations, truths, identities, challenges and successes (to name just a few aspects) from both the audience and the panelists are represented, shared, heard, supported, and affirmed.

Putting the “I” Back in Our Team: Intersex Solidarity – Ducky Jones and Lilac Maldonado from the Spoonie Collective. Intersex people, or individuals born with any of several variations in sex characteristics (chromosomes, gonads, sex hormones, or genitals) that do not fit the typical definitions for male or female bodies, comprise of 4% of the total human population. Strangely, the same proportion of the population as lefties and redheads, yet neither of those groups face the same stigma or state-sanctioned violence that the intersex community does. Join us for a deep discussion on the intersex identity and experience, including a brief medical and historical overview, and discussion of current community issues of visibility and erasure within and outside of the LGBTQIA+ Community. LA Spoonie Collective co-founder, Ducky Jones will share their personal story from their life as an intersex individual who has survived coercive medical trauma, and how this feature of their identity interacts with other avenues of marginality in their life as a Black Latin low income nonbinary transgender femme former foster and homeless youth. Facilitators will lead a group discussion amongst all in attendance fostering a non-hierarchical horizontal power structure where everyone’s voice is valued. This will allow attendees the opportunity to ask respectful questions of the facilitators and allow the facilitators to pose questions to the attendees and guide the conversation to build better intercommunity cohesion among all those who identify within the LGBTQIA+ spectrum and our allies.

A Queer Peer Perspective: Providing Culturally Responsive Mental Health Services – Proposed by Robyn Gantsweg and Barbara Acosta from Disability Rights. This workshop examines ways mental health providers can create safe spaces and accessible services for LGBTQ+ clients. For the queer community, finding support

	<p>for mental health issues presents unique challenges often preventing help-seeking and treatment effectiveness. Being queer doubles the stigma already experienced by people who access mental health services. Many feel unwelcome and misunderstood when assumptions about gender expression, misuse of language and pronouns and dead naming disregard and disrespect their sense of self. Their resulting reluctance to self-disclose interferes with open and honest communication crucial to effective treatment. Some may lack self-confidence and self-advocacy skills to convey and ask for what they need. Both facilitators are from the LGBTQ+ and mental health communities and understand the barriers queer peers face. Providing strategies for providers to eliminate these obstacles will invite queer clients to seek help, overcome societal and self-stigma, advocate for their needs and improve treatment effectiveness.</p>
Next Meeting	4/4/19, 2:00pm-4:00pm, In The Meantime