

Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
Strategic Communications Division
Black & African Heritage UsCC Subcommittee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday July 22, 2021 2:00pm

Welcome & Introductions

Participants: Desiree Deshay, Wendy Cabil, Nakeya Fields, Cleo Ray, Senait Admassu, Carlene Davis, Keacha Stewart, Joyce Sales, Marilyn Huff, Erica Melbourne, Romalis Taylor, Jamila Clark, MC Harris, Pharoah Mitchell, Catherine Clay, Sunnie Whipple, Bernice Mascher, Blake Johnson, Gaby Hinojosa, Frederick Mc Neal, Rosario Ribliza, Belanie Brown, Rayshell Chambers, Kumar Menon, Nina Womack, Imani Lewis, Pinki Mehta,

Minutes Approved for June 2021

Black Mental Health Taskforce Update: Marilyn Huff

- Over 200 participants participated as well as Dr. Sherin
- There were several stations with face painting, massage, drumming circles, and performances.
- Free food was provided with giveaways.
- We have the Elder Project and are in the proposal process with Senior Citizen Centers. |
- Our goal is to create healing circles that address the eight dimensions of wellness.
- It was reported that seniors is struggling with social isolation, this project will offer technology components for seniors to learn and connect with others using technology.
- The Social Justice Leadership Institute was presented the idea of pairing teens to elders for intergenerational connection.
- The Elders Project originated from the Black and African Heritage committee, and it was awarded to Nakeya to the Therapeutic Play Foundation.
- Nakeya will provide us with updates on the two particular projects that were awarded to the Therapeutic Play Foundation.
- August 21st Empowering Black Families will have a sound bath healing at one of the parks in San Gabriel Valley.

African Coalition Update: Senait Adamassu & Romalis Taylor

- They are providing services during the pandemic.
- They are addressing the underserved communities and unmet needs during the pandemic and to improve the current treatment model.
- Senait shared it is great to be part of this amazing group since its birth and also part of the Black Task Force.
- Senait encouraged everybody to bring newcomers and new members and new groups to add to the Black Task Force.

- The African Coalition is willing to work with everybody as part of this group.
- Senait shared consumers are in crisis, families are unhoused, living in shelters.
- If anyone is interested, please contact Senait or Desi, who is representing Service Area 6.
- They are working closely with the Department of Mental Health to expand services.

Medical Peer Support Specialist Certification Program

- Catherine shared that she and Kumar were appointed by Dr. Sherin to represent L.A. County's voice through California Behavioral Director's Association.
- Catherine is responsible for bringing the lived-experience voice to the table.
- Catherine started as a community worker for Professional Care work group, which consists of 16 community health workers
- The Community health workers give input and help make recommendations for how the Department can implement the peer certification into the county.
- Kumar shared detailed information about the Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist Certification Program
- L.A. County is going to opt in because they are one of the major movers behind getting this signed by Governor Newsom last year as SB803.
- The initial certification has a set of standards that must be met to be certified as a Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist.
- The State requires peers to complete 80 hours of training to qualify to take an exam.
- The Code of Ethics, has 17 competencies that the 80 hours of training have to cover.
- The training covers preparation for employment opportunities such as study, test taking skills, application and resume preparation, interviewing.
- The program must provide reasonable accommodations to candidates taking the examination as needed, including verbal testing and testing in prevalent languages.
- All certifications must be renewed every two years, and a signed form adhering to the Code of Ethics, in addition completing 20 hours of continuing education over two years.
- The lapsed renewal process, gives peers additional years to complete 40 hours of refresher training and allow them to retake and pass the exam and affirm in writing about the Code of Ethics.
- If you have a status as a paid or unpaid employee providing peer support services as of January 1, 2022, you can get Grand-parented in as a Medi-Cal Peer Support Specialist. You have one year to do it, until December 31st along with meeting some criteria's
- If you are certified in L.A. County, your certification is valid in all of the counties in California

DMH Updates: Pinki Mehta

Hollywood 2.0

- MHSA OAC approved a new project called Hollywood 2.0.
- Hollywood 2.0 is a model built in Trieste, Italy with a pilot program that was being proposed in the Hollywood area, which is why its called Hollywood 2.0
- Pinki shared information about what the pilot program is and how the program has changed, and why it's being piloted in Hollywood
- Members were encouraged to provide feedback or suggestions.
- DMH is engaging with an organization called Hollywood 4WRD, which brings together elected officials in the Hollywood area, advocacy groups, CBOs.

- LGBTQIA2-S subcommittee provided great feedback because they have a large presence in the Hollywood area, as well as SALT 4
- Pinki shared the FAQ questions and that everyone needs to be informed that will be affected by the pilot.

I Prevail

- IPrevail is a new program that the Department is offering county wide similar to the headspace app.
- IPrevail can be found on the DMH website
- The application has different features to meet different needs across the county
- Pinki encouraged everyone to navigate the system and learn how to engage in different coaching sessions or be a part of support groups.
- Pinki will look into some of the details on how Iprevail works behind the scenes and follow up with the group.

Wendy Cabil – Bebe Moore Campbell

- **Toolkit Overview- by Wendy Cabil**
- Bebe Moore Campbell National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month was created to bring awareness to the unique struggles that underrepresented groups face with regard to mental illness in the US.
- Bebe Moore Campbell was an American author, journalist, teacher, and mental health advocate who worked tirelessly to shed light on the mental health needs of the Black community and other underrepresented communities.
- To continue the visionary work of Bebe Moore Campbell, each year Mental Health America develops a public education campaign dedicated to addressing the mental health needs of Black, Indigenous, and people of color, BIPOC.
- Thanks are going to the pharmaceutical companies, Johnson & Johnson, Otsuka America Pharmaceutical, Alkermes, and the NFL foundation for making this campaign possible.
- This year's theme is about strength in communities, where the focus is on alternative mental health supports created by BIPOC and queer and trans.
- Wendy stated it's time to educate the board to see where they stand on supporting us with the MHSA.

Public Comments:

Co-Chair Support

Black & African Heritage is in search of Co-Chair considerations to support Wendy.

MC Harris is interested in supporting Wendy by sitting in as a Co-Chair for one of the meetings to give it a try.

March of Dimes

- Wendy shared the March of Dimes Advocacy training will be on July 23,2021, the link was shared to register. They are focusing on Black Maternal Health, called the Momnibus.

Measure J: Alternatives to Incarceration

- Wendy shared July 28th is the last opportunity to weigh in on a focus group with Access California about Measure J and Alternatives to Incarceration.

Nakeya Fields:Black Mental Health Task Force Meetings:

Black Mental Health Task Force meetings, is held on the first Monday of every month at 9:30, the general meeting

Marilynn runs the outreach meetings on Thursdays at 10:30

Rayshelle runs the policy work group every other Wednesday @ 2 p.m.

Imani Lewis shared there is an ISN program funded through the Department of Mental Health, that provides mental health services. The current providers are all African-American, Black, or African in descent. In addition to providing mental health services, they provide case management and holistic treatment free of charge. Imani shared the link in the chat box.

Gaby Hinojosa

- Gaby Hinojosa shared she will be a PhD student starting in the fall at UC Santa Barbara. She is going to get her PhD in school psychology.
- Gaby shared that she is going to be fully funded, and she wants to put it towards Black Mental Health research.
- Gaby is looking at what needs improvement, implementing some participatory action research and trying to hear what the community wants and needs as support.
- Gabby offered help, and support with research.

Future Mtgs: Time & Date: 9/16/2021; 2pm-4pm