

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

Access for All UsCC Minutes

June 14, 2023

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Stakeholders: Wendy Blanco, Joseph Bucton, Chloe Casey, Carol Chung, Sandra Clayton, Raquel Decipeda, Erik Escareno, Cody Hanable, Melissa Hernandez, Adjoa Jones, Amy Kay, Carol Kou, Laura Kerr, Natalia Magana, Mastaneh Moghadam, Junko Nakamatsu, Steven Park, Agion Quinney, Hector Ramirez, Blanca Watson, and Ann-Marie Yamada

DMH Staff: Daniel Estrada, Carey Grier, Laura Kerr, Jenny Nguyen, Martha Ortiz, Mirtala Parada-Ward, Suyapa Umanzor, and Elaine Waldman

ASL Interpreter: Judith Aboufares and Kaitlyn Broad

Captioner: Joann Jaimes

Agenda Items	Comments/Discussion/Recommendations/Conclusions
DMH Management Update	Mirtala Parada-Ward reintroduced herself to the group. As the DMH Program Manager III in the Prevention Division, who worked to establish the UsCCs, she is pleased to see the increase in community stakeholder participation over the years. Passionate about elevating the voice of community members

	<p>to improve DMH service delivery, policies, and programs, she wears two hats, one as a manager in the bureaucracy, and one as an advocate. She is looking forward to reconnecting with the UsCC Co-Chairs and staff liaisons, to see what support is needed as we move forward together in a transparent, kind, and respectful manner. She will be hiring and training a supervising psychologist to manage the UsCCs and will attend upcoming stakeholder meetings.</p> <p>Hector Ramirez shared that the Access for All stakeholder group is most active in local and statewide efforts to push for accessibility.</p>
Approval of Minutes	<p>Hector Ramirez moved to approve the June meeting minutes; Joseph Bucton seconded the motion.</p>
Community Accessibility Resource	<p>Due to limited time, we were unable to hear Alex Elliott’s monthly update. Please refer to the website for his curated resources: https://dmh.lacounty.gov/about/mhsa/uscc/access-for-all-uscc/</p>
Capacity-Building Project Contractor Presentations	<p>Peace Over Violence:</p> <p>Wendy Blanco and her team created “Accessibility Over Violence,” a 6-8 hour training on domestic violence 101 for people with disabilities. The program addresses coping skills, crisis intervention techniques, trauma, vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, self-regulation, and widening our resiliency zone. The objective was to reach 70 individuals, yet the program trained over 100. Staff made connections with GLAD, Braille Institute, CSUN, and other key organizations, to facilitate recruitment. Participant feedback was positive, and both participants and staff learned from the experience. One challenge was that several participants politely declined the offer of the incentive (gift card), and Peace Over Violence staff were unable to allow the gift cards to be distributed to clients or anyone other than program participants. Therefore, staff engaged additional participants in order to be able to fully distribute these incentives.</p> <p>Hector Ramirez affirmed the importance of interpersonal violence prevention and intervention, especially during the pandemic. Adjoa Jones raised the</p>

critical issue of missing and murdered Black women. Wendy Blanco shared that Peace Over Violence acknowledges the intersectional identities of program participants, and that emergency services and policy advocacy (including legal, mental health, housing, and healthcare) efforts are provided in a supportive way to assist people who are in unhealthy relationships and lack accessible resources. Junko Nakamatsu shared that the role play activities were helpful in practicing how to react in difficult and risky situations. Joseph Bucton shared that he appreciates how Peggy Reyna from Peace Over Violence goes to people where they are, creating access to these vital sessions. They pair self-defense workshop instructors with Braille Institute participants to help with physical techniques and awareness.

Painted Brain:

Melissa Hernandez of Painted Brain presented on the workshops provided to participants who are deaf/hard-of-hearing, blind/visually impaired, and people with physical disabilities (105 were recruited and 47 completed the program). Painted Brain, a peer-run organization, hired co-facilitators with lived experience, used social media, and developed referral protocols with numerous agencies. They developed working relationships with Marlton School, a k-12 LAUSD school, to engage caregivers and parents of deaf students in on-site sessions, in Spanish and English. The program yielded positive responses from participants, new partnerships, and lessons learned. One lesson learned is that separating group participants by disability is problematic, especially when people can have multiple disabilities. A recommendation for future capacity-building projects is to hold sessions for people of diverse and intersectional identities. One unanticipated challenge was that people living outside of Los Angeles County registered and tried to attend the virtual sessions, since Painted Brain's social media presence has a wide reach; thus, staff developed additional screening protocols to target only Los Angeles County residents.

Cross-Cultural Expressions:

Mastaneh Moghadam shared an update of the media project, in which 6 podcasts and 6 YouTube videos were produced to highlight the stories,

	challenges, and experiences of people living with various disabilities (deaf/hard-of-hearing, physical disabilities, and blind/visually impaired). The sessions focused on stigma, family and community support, self-compassion, advocacy, loneliness, isolation, anxiety, and depression. Finding panelists was challenging, and there were some unavoidable delays. In the upcoming Access for All meeting, Mastaneh will share samples of the podcasts that will be disseminated to Spotify, I Heart Radio, and Apple; and YouTube videos that will be posted.
Next Meeting	The next meeting will be held on July 12, 2023 – 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM