



STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE
MEETING OF THE
THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY
PREVENTION AND PROMOTION SYSTEMS
GOVERNING COMMITTEE

500 WEST TEMPLE STREET
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

Wednesday, November 8, 2023

8:00 AM

AUDIO LINK FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING. (23-4201)

Attachments: [AUDIO LINK](#)

Present: Chair Jackie Contreras, Ph.D., Member Fesia Davenport, Member Barbara Ferrer, Ph.D., Member Peter Loo, Member Brandon Nichols, Member Karla Pleitéz Howell, Member D'Artagnan Scorza, Ph.D., Member Cheri Todoroff, and Member Lisa Wong, PSY.D

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Call to Order, and Los Angeles County Land Acknowledgment. (23-4061)

Chair Dr. Jackie Contreras, Director of the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), called the Prevention and Promotion Systems Governing Committee (Committee) meeting to order at 8:17 a.m., followed by reading of the L.A. County Land Acknowledgment. She then confirmed that a quorum of members was present.

1. Chair's Remarks. (23-4062)

Chair Dr. Contreras outlined the directive by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (BOS) in their July 25, 2023, motion: Building Los Angeles County's Prevention Infrastructure. She acknowledged the commitment and contributions of the Committee members. She noted that the inaugural meeting will be informal and the December 20, 2023, meeting will include the adoption of the bylaws and electing a Vice-Chair. She stated that the Committee's "specific and immediate focus" is to oversee the coordination and collaboration of prevention and promotion services Countywide. The Committee will work to narrow the scope of their focus and identify and prioritize immediate next steps.

Attachments: [PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE](#)

2. Committee Member Introductions and Video to Ground Committee Members in the Work. (23-4063)

Chair Dr. Contreras introduced the Obama Foundation Summit video presented by Bryan Stevenson. Committee members were then instructed to write down their reflections and thoughts on notepads provided.

Robin Engle, President and Founder of Star Insights, and Facilitator requested each Committee member make self-introductions stating their name, title, department, and provide a personal reflection on the video as it relates to the tasks of this Committee.

Attachments: [VIDEO LINK](#)
[PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE](#)

ADJOURN FOR BREAK

3. Group Agreements for Committee Member's Participation During the Meeting. (23-4064)

Chair Dr. Contreras reviewed the Group Agreements and Board Directives and instructed the Committee to keep the alignment in focus during the meeting.

Attachments: [PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE](#)

II. DISCUSSIONS

4. Committee Members Discuss Alignment on Committee Purpose and Scope. (23-4065)

Mr. Engle provided a brief background on the activities that the Committee will be engaged in for the day and initiated the discussion on the alignment on the Committee's purpose and scope. In that effort, Chair Contreras, Ph.D., provided a brief background on the schematic (Chart) that outlined the BOS' directives. The Chart outlined the deliverables, a brief description in the steps toward that effort, and the department/committee that will take the lead. The first deliverable is to identify Population-Level Outcomes as it relates to racial/ethnic disproportionality and disparity. She then provided information on each deliverable as she reviewed the Chart and concluded with the Operational Plans and Agreement whereby departments' roles, commitments, timelines, metrics, and milestones are prepared in an outline and submitted to the BOS on a semi-annual basis.

Member Dr. D'Artagnan Scorza, Executive Director, Anti-Racism Diversity, and Inclusion (ARDI) highlighted that the BOS Motion called for the creation of a Prevention and Promotion Coordination Implementation Team (PPCIT) as a

cross-departmental body that would help coordinate amongst 13 different functions related to programming and data. The PPCIT Interim Program Manager is Carlos Pineda. The PPCIT will:

- **Support coordination and collaboration.**
- **Be comprised of high-level decision makers with each department that possess subject matter expertise related to policy/procedures/practices on administration, program design, and program monitoring.**
- **Use journey mapping to identify issues.**
- **Identify legal, policy, and regulatory analysis to help better leverage and rate funding.**
- **Produce data sharing reports and dashboards.**
- **Develop a contracting plan (in coordination with ISD Equity and Contracting Unit).**

Discussion ensued. During discussion, questions were posed and answered as follows:

- **Staffing needs are currently being addressed by staff reassignment, and loan staff from other departments. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will re-evaluate funding for a long-term staffing plan once the focus area of the Committee is defined and administrative work and service delivery are determined. Each named body will submit temporary staffing needs for the funds that have been already provided. Requests for additional staffing will go into the next budget. The PPCIT will have one manager and possibly up to two support staff.**
- **Member Dr. Scorza clarified the work of the PPCIT. It will be responsive to the requests and activities of the Committee. There will be certain efforts that are specific to the PPCIT, e.g., the PPCIT will work on an interdependency mapping for the coordination of requests from the Committee so that the products that come out of the PPCIT will inform the Committee, and the Committee will also provide feedback and guidance as necessary.**
- **The PPCIT, in its current configuration, is intended to be a temporary body. Once their work is done, they will sunset.**
- **Engagement with other department subject matter experts will be built into the process with the Committee moving forward, as well as with the PPCIT.**
- **Regarding the process for drafting and circulating reports to the BOS, it was noted that the initially set January 2024 report back has been provided an extension, and further information regarding that process will be provided to the Committee at a future meeting.**
- **The distinction between the “Population Level Deliverable” and the “Data Plan Program” reflects 1: how lives will be made better because of the work of the Committee, and 2: how progress will be measured. It was suggested that they are interconnected, and the data and work will**

be well aligned. Also, data will be utilized to inform new processes to better enable prevention and promotion.

Attachments: [PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE](#)

5. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Committee on items of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Committee. (23-4070)

There were no in person, written or virtual public comments.

The Committee adjourned for recess at 9:27 a.m. The meeting was reconvened at 9:50 a.m.

Attachments: [PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE](#)

6. Committee Members Discuss How to Prioritize the Committee's Work. (23-4066)

Member Brandon T. Nichols, Director, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), advocated for the population level outcomes to be focused on children and families. The concept is if children and families are helped upstream, it will mitigate downstream issues.

Many times, there is a better answer for families' needs other than separating them from their children. He then discussed:

- **Tertiary Prevention – when a child has been or is about to be hurt. What efforts can be made toward prevention of further harm.**
- **Secondary Prevention – engaging with populations at risk. There may be a call into the DCFS Child Protection Hotline (Hotline).**
- **Primary Prevention – children that DCFS is blind to, the community at large.**

He stressed that if the focus population for the Committee is children and families, then there needs to be a determination on which sector in this population will be addressed: Tertiary, Secondary, or Primary. Also, DCFS does not have funding or control over many of the aspects of Primary Prevention, issues unseen such as:

- **Domestic Violence**
- **Mental Health Issues**
- **Drug Dependency**

Efforts have been made around disproportionality and the intake of Black families into the system has been reduced continuously for several years. He attributes the reduction to Cultural Brokers and engaging with community, especially with the Eliminating Disproportionality and Discrimination Roundtables. He then discussed:

- **Plans of Safe Care** which is a successful program and is a hospital-based care for mothers who may have a positive toxicology.
- **Mandated Supporting**, whereby reporters can be provided alternatives to calling the DCFS Child Abuse Hotline (Hotline) when a child/family simply needs assistance with clothing/food insecurity.
- **Developing a “Fast Pass,”** a means of providing needed services quickly rather than becoming part of the child welfare system.
- **Community partnerships** are also crucial, and coordination with the community will be helpful. DCFS can enhance various successful programs with additional funding such as prevention and aftercare.

Member Karla Pleitéz Howell, Executive Director of First 5 LA, shared the following:

First 5 LA conducted a ten-month landscape review of children and families and found:

- **There are over 500,000 children in Los Angeles County.**
- **10% to 15% are suffering from deep poverty or lower aspects of poverty.** This is an issue that First 5 LA is focusing on.
- **Over half of the stated population is housing insecure.**
- **Caregivers are struggling with economic insecurity and unemployment.**

These are systemic pressures on the families. It is important to look at the family and not just the individual. Aspects to consider while looking at the population of 0 to five years of age is to consider the basic needs of the family, the survival relationships, the built environment that children are in, and what is needed to thrive. Various strategies would be to consider public policy, building out the children’s budget, and engaging in a social movement especially with the prenatal to five age population.

Member Dr. Barbara Ferrer, Director of the Department of Public Health (DPH), highlighted that DPH has a major responsibility and substantial funding in the support of children and families. Departments need to be interconnected with the same services, such as referring mothers with positive toxicology to resources rather than to law enforcement.

She stressed that Black infants die three-to-four times the rate as white babies. Although infant mortality has dropped across the board over the last 20 years (two infants in every 1,000), it has increased for Black infants. Black women are also dying at four-times the rate from childbirth complications. She suggested reducing the exposure of violence in families and increasing home visits.

She then highlighted the following programs: children's medical services; women with addictions and other initiatives; and various programs for men.

Discussion ensued regarding the concept of creating a "fast pass" for families in need, and the necessity of connecting families to programs already proven to be successful. Director Nichols discussed how violence in a home stunts brain development in children, and stated that once the priority is determined, there needs to be appropriate funding and connection of families to services.

Member Fesia Davenport, CEO, summarized the discussion and highlighted the following points:

- Consider the focus area of preventing children from coming into the child welfare system (system).
- Address the conditions that drive children and families into the system.
- Develop better coordination and alignment of the work, as well as with programs already underway.

Member Dr. Lisa H. Wong, Director of the Department of Mental Health (DMH), discussed how the tertiary intervention for one population becomes the primary intervention for another. For example: If a parent has mental illness that is being addressed, it benefits the children in the home. She suggested looking at the whole life cycle of prevention and not carving out one population.

Member Cheri Todoroff, Executive Director, Homeless Initiative, stated that she views the focus of the Committee will be to take the vast resources of the County and align them in intentional ways for the greatest impact. The challenge is using resources in a way that follows outcomes all the way to the end. She stressed that it will be up to the PPCIT to uncover all the resources available so that the Committee can determine how they are to be utilized.

Member Dr. Scorza asked what should be done to promote positive outcomes to prevent children from entering the system? Director Nichols responded that it would be to address the root causes that have families entering in the system initially, for example, freedom from substance abuse, better mental health, less stress about food and housing insecurity.

Member Davenport stressed that there are areas in which the County can intervene, other areas can only be influenced by County resources, and other issues such as income insecurity are caused by societal, environmental structure of which the County has no control. These may be priority areas to focus promotion.

Member Dr. Ferrer highlighted that there is a challenge in providing resources for all populations in need due to limited funding streams.

Member Davenport indicated that LA County has four guaranteed income programs that were set up in a way that provides proof of concept for State and federal purposes. Even without sufficient resources, the resources that the County has can be better deployed since the State and federal funding is usually provided after-the-fact, and the County focuses on prevention.

Chair Dr. Contreras discussed the customer service survey around the poverty alleviation initiative in DPSS. She then discussed collaboration between County departments. She questioned the types of things that can be done upstream in prevention such as alleviating disproportionality in youth arrests and school expulsions. She then discussed the level of scrutiny for the various populations coming into the system.

Mr. Engle facilitated a discussion around population outcomes as it relates to behavioral health. Member Dr. Ferrer spoke about emotional wellbeing and the connection to substance abuse. On the promotion side, DPH provides programs that engage with individuals to help them develop and navigate healthy emotional relationships. The primary prevention activities in DPH are focused on strengthening and investing in young people.

She continued that there are 40 wellbeing centers in various high schools throughout L.A. County. There are also core centers within public health centers that assist with referrals and information sharing. Additionally, it has been determined that there is not just one high-risk behavior in some children, but multiple high-risk behaviors, that have a correlation to depression. The vision is to create schools that are communities that foster emotional wellbeing. There needs to be time carved out of the school day for youth to center their feelings, and programs need to be made available so that youth can develop skills to manage their feelings. She stressed that it is crucial that the people providing care are trained in trauma-informed care.

She then reported that seven-to-nine people die every day in L.A. County due to overdoses, the majority being fentanyl and meth. Due to the way the care system is designed, 95% of individuals struggling with substance abuse will not seek care. She summarized her comments by stating that behavioral health ought to have two areas of focus: Youth emotional wellbeing and addressing substance abuse. Both contribute to families losing their children in addition to food and housing insecurities.

Member Dr. Wong discussed that when DMH began early intervention and

prevention programs, the utilization rate was minimal (approximately 4%), until there was enough understanding by the community that mental health affects almost every aspect of a person's life. Those with genetic disorders such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder utilize the programs to a greater extent. She agreed with centering on one segment of the population and taking a fast-track approach.

Member Dr. Ferrer spoke about policy issues and how community coalitions are funded to look at density issues, such as the number of alcohol and cannabis outlets in certain communities. These coalitions look at the environment within various communities to determine where harmful exposures can be reduced.

Member Todoroff spoke about population outcomes as a focus area. She discussed prevention in the area of homelessness and reported that the rate of people falling into homelessness exceeds those being helped out of it. Since the BOS declared homelessness as an emergency, it has provided delegated authority to amplify the issue. Under the emergency declaration there are four missions:

- **Encampment resolution**
- **Housing**
- **Mental Health and substance abuse**
- **Eviction prevention**

She spoke about the fact that County investment in keeping people in their homes is less than County investment in providing homeless services, rent burden, and housing instability. All these factors are greater for the Black and Brown communities. She suggested that eviction prevention be a starting place to keep people in their homes. She stressed the importance of rent control and managing rent increases and providing financial or legal support for those at-risk. It would be important to target and maximize current resources to align with other departments. There are those individuals who identify themselves as requiring assistance, and there is also the County's data system in using predictive analytics to identify those at high risk of losing their housing. There are three areas of work in this area:

- **Providing resources to individuals who are not lease-holders, however, are at risk of becoming homeless.**
- **Connecting at-risk individuals with County resources to establish stability.**
- **Stabilizing those who have exited homelessness with needed resources.**

Mr. Engle requested members speak to the interconnectivity of homelessness:

- Member Nichols noted that there is an interconnectivity of a family at risk of becoming homeless that provides stress upon the family to the point where a child may be neglected and enter the system on that basis. There are also families who have addressed their inter-relationship issues or high-risk or mental health issues, however, do not have a home for the child to return to.
- Member Dr. Ferrer noted that there are programs assisting women with bridge housing, a nine-month program, who are at risk of becoming homeless upon completion of the program. It is crucial to understand all programs available for housing.
- Chair Dr. Contreras stated that regarding homelessness, it is important to determine who the constituents will be and how resources will be maximized. She noted that it is important to know community resources and how to connect to them.
- Member Dr. Wong stated that it is also important for the community to accept facilities and resource housing in their neighborhoods, and there needs to be a better connection to extended family members. The narrative needs to be such so that the community wants to be part of the work.
- Member Davenport spoke on there being no institutional memory and each issue is handled in isolation. Many pilot programs are not being appropriately moved forward, or some County policies create challenges or obstacles to the work that needs to be addressed. Programs and interventions need to be sorted, pilots need to be brought up to scale, and the County needs to stop programs that no longer align with the declared highest priority.
- Member Dr. Ferrer spoke about Medicaid policies and the various other policies that can be changed to better assist the homeless or those at risk. She then discussed the TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) Program. Perhaps some of the benefit packages can be revisited to determine viability and how funding can be redirected.
- Member Davenport spoke about legislative funding requests and how this year's budget request will include a wider County approach overall rather than focusing on specific department needs. Discussion ensued regarding maximizing the available revenue and the areas where that might be possible, such as within Cal Aim, or rewriting Medical Memorandum of Understanding's (MOUs).
- Member Peter Loo, Chief Information Officer (CIO), indicated that it would be helpful to know what information is required in terms of interconnection and operations. There are many referral programs, and it will be important to ensure that all departments have access to the referral database.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)
[SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)
[PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE](#)

7. Committee Members Identify the Committee's Next Steps. (23-4067)

Mr. Engle facilitated an exercise for the members to identify next step priorities. In this effort, members listed areas to be prioritized and then rated them in order of importance from 1 (most important), 2 (important but less of a priority), and 3 (least important). After the exercise, comments were organized and assigned the following categories:

- Community Engagement
- Cross-Department Collaboration
- Data
- Inventory and Resource
- Metrics
- Miscellaneous
- Operational Plans and Processes
- Prioritization and Outcomes
- Metrics
- Miscellaneous
- Reporting
- Staffing

The comments from each member will be organized on a list with the importance grade and provided to the members for their consideration.

A summary from this meeting will also be provided with key learnings highlighted for future consideration.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)
[PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE](#)

III. MISCELLANEOUS

Public Comment

8. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Committee on items of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Committee. (23-4068)

No members of the public addressed the Committee.

Attachments: [PUBLIC COMMENT/CORRESPONDENCE](#)

Adjournment

9. Closing Remarks and Adjournment. (23-4069)

Chair Dr. Jackie Contreras, adjourned the meeting of November 8, 2023, at 12:00 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 20, 2023, at 9:00 a.m., at Vermont Corridor 510 S. Vermont Ave. Conference Room 9K02 (Press Room), Los Angeles, CA 90020.