

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH**  
**Strategic Communications Division**

**Eastern-European / Middle Eastern (EE/ME) UsCC Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

October 28, 2020

2:00PM – 4:00PM via Teleconference

**Present:** Sarkis Simonian, Mariam Nahapetyan, Rima Safaryan, Dr. Heather Laird, Emme Fayez, Dr. Shushan Kalantaryan, Avo Soltanian, Armine Stepanyan, Seta Haig and Nayden Akhrabadi  
**DMH Admin:** Anna Yaralyan, Dr. Jorge Partida Del Toro, Dr. Sandra Chang, Kelly Wilkerson and Connie Acosta Castaneda

Agenda Items	Comments/Discussion/Recommendations/Conclusions
<b>Introductions</b>	Everyone introduced themselves.
<b>9/30/20 Meeting Minutes - Review</b>	Minutes were reviewed and approved by Dr. Heather Laird and seconded by Sarkis Simonian.
<b>Discussion about COVID-19 and other community current events – Sarkis Simonian</b>	<p><b>(i.e. War in Armenia)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avo Soltanian shared with the group, that he is feeling much better now and back to his old self, after surviving COVID-19. He asks that everyone be careful and take the virus seriously.</li> <li>• Armine Stepanyan shared with the subcommittee about the casualties of war in Armenia. She explained that civilians, seniors, children, and soldiers from both sides of the war are dying. It has been affecting all the Armenian families all over the world, including herself. Armine joined a group that gives distant support to women/mothers who have lost their children due to war in Armenia.</li> <li>• Anna Yaralyan shared with the group that she has started giving weekly virtual consultations to Armenian Mental Health Professionals in Armenia that work with frontline soldiers and families who have been affected by the war. She also has been working with one Soldier and provides him with emotional support, counseling, and with Mental Health educational information and resources.</li> <li>• Anna Yaralyan also reported that she is currently monitoring Agents on the LACDMH Emotional Support Line (ESL). She expressed that the ESL has been getting calls from Armenian community members concerned about the war in Armenia. Many Armenian community members are also contracting COVID-19, here in LA, due to being at close proximity to each other while protesting the war.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Health Promoters Program</b> – Sarkis Simonian</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Promoters program started with the Latino UsCC subcommittee approximately 10 years ago. Promoters are trained ambassadors, that go into the community and conduct meetings with different social groups, churches, and libraries, in various settings in their community.</li> <li>• Los Angeles County provides the resource to help promote mental health. The program has received funding to expand to other ethnic groups. Monies/Funding for this new program need to be spent by December 31, 2020.</li> <li>• The Department of Mental Health created; The United Promoters Program and will have Health Promoter positions available for hire. The department will quickly review all applications and will start the interview and hiring process.</li> <li>• DMH is looking for qualified candidates. They would need to pass fundamental training, and successfully pass final exams, also (proven) 6 months working with their communities and have lived experiences in the field of Mental Health.</li> <li>• Most importantly the applicants should be very committed to helping others. Pay rate and other information on flyer. (Please see flyer)</li> <li>• The Department of Mental Health is creating a packet that will explain the process of hiring for the United Promoters Program.</li> <li>• Dr. Jorge Partida asked for volunteers from the subcommittee to translate the flyer/document; “United Mental Health Promoters, Eastern European/Middle Eastern” into four different languages, Persian, Arabic, Armenian and Russian.</li> <li>• Mariam Nahapetyan and Rima Safaryan volunteered to translate the document into Armenian.</li> <li>• Dr. Heather Laird will translate in Arabic and has a colleague that will translate in Russian.</li> <li>• Mastaneh Moghadam will be asked if she could help and translate in Persian.</li> <li>• Dr. Sandra Chang received the document in Farsi from Dr. Heather Laird, this document will be shared with the subcommittee. When all translations of the flyers are done, they are to be submitted to Dr. Chang.</li> <li>• When all documents are completed in the requested languages, they will be posted on DMH’s website.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Armenian Mental Health Professionals United</b> – Dr. Shushan Kalantaryan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Shushan Kalantaryan gave a PowerPoint presentation to the subcommittee, titled “Armenian Mental Health Professionals United.” She spoke about their Mission, Plan of Action and the Accommodations and Legal aspects of the program.</li> <li>• Armenian Diaspora began to mobilize in support of those affected in Artsakh from raising funds and awareness to sending humanitarian aid and traveling to Armenia.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Kalantaryan is asking the Department of Mental Health for monetary assistance for the program to help with the need in Armenia.</li> <li>• Follow up item to speak with Mirtala Parada Ward and Dr. Sandra Chang regarding funds.</li> </ul>
<b>Future Meeting Times &amp; Dates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• November 25, 2020 from 2:00pm – 4:00pm</li> <li>• December 30, 2020 from 2:00pm – 4:00pm</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Join Microsoft Teams Meeting</u></b></p> <p>+1 323-776-6996, 107931669# United States, Los Angeles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone Conference ID: 107 931 669#</li> </ul>