

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
Strategic Communications Division

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

August 26, 2020

2:00PM – 4:00PM via Teleconference

Present: Sarkis Simonian, Mariam Nahapetyan, Mastaneh Moghadam, Rima Safaryan, Dr. George Gharibian, Dr. Heather Laird and Avo Soltanian

DMH Admin: Anna Yaralyan, Dr. Sandra Chang, Dr. Luis Guzman and Connie Acosta Castaneda

Agenda Items	Comments/Discussion/Recommendations/Conclusions
Introductions	Everyone introduced themselves
Discussion about COVID-19 – Sarkis Simonian	<p>(i.e. How members are doing individually and ensuring that everyone is safe)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Members each shared their stories related to COVID-19 • Rima Safaryan: Shared that her Daughter-in-law and her young child contracted the virus. Her Daughter-in-law is sleeping a lot and it was advised for her not to sleep on her back, to sleep on her side, for better breathing. • Anna Yaralyan: Shared that she has been taking care of her Elderly parents by going to the grocery store with them and accompany them to the doctors' appointments. She expressed that COVID-19 is having a negative effect on the Elderly and children. It is creating anxiety and fear. • Miriam Nahapetyan: Her Daughter and Daughter-in-law are being affect by all the responsibilities they are having now due to COVID-19. They are expected to work, clean, homeschool, and take care of their children all at the same time. It is a heavy burden for the parents that have to homeschool and work. And they are very worried about the low quality of education and how much their children will learn. • Heather Laird: Shared how her Daughter graduated this year and how it was a unique graduation due to COVID-19, and she has been concerned about the College students with this new virtual platform, the lack of socialization and social skills. She believes the Elderly and the Youth are the most vulnerable. There is a sense of loss. • Dr. Sandra Chang: The mental health consequences of COVID-19, and the recovery efforts must be talked about. Together we can pull through this. • Dr. George Gharibian: Shared how it is difficult for the Elderly in convalescent hospitals to receive professional Mental Health services as mental health professionals are not allowed in the hospitals. The Elderly are the population with the most needs. Technology is another challenge for them. In terms of receiving virtual mental health services, one of the struggles is the confidentiality aspect.

<p>Capacity Building Projects Updates:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastaneh Moghadam: She shared that they are still trying to complete the Russian and Iranian Theater projects. Due to COVID-19 they can no longer stage the projects in a Theater. They sent a motion to amend the proposal to DMH that was accepted. The Russian community decided to do a Table Read and try and film all the actors individually. The idea is to put everyone on ZOOM and in costumes with minimal staging and have them act with each other on the ZOOM platform. We are trying to get this done for the Russian community. For the Iranian community, the Director and Editor figured out a way to film everyone individually and edit it so that it looks like it has special effects and not so much looking like a ZOOM platform. Mastaneh has a clip of it and will share it with the subcommittee. Moving forward, the rehearsals will be online. We are hoping to have everything filmed and edited by the first week of October 2020. For the Russian Mental Health Theater project, the actors will act on the ZOOM platform. Anna will get with Regina for the amendment. • Avo Soltanian: Had to cancel his project due to personal reasons. The curriculum of the Armenian Mental Health Parenting Seminars will be extremely helpful for the community and hopefully can be done next year. • Dr. Heather Laird: The project was completed back in the Spring of 2020. It was an educational and successful project with a great deal of follow-up interest.
<p>Brainstorming ideas about Capacity Building Projects in COVID-19 pandemic and ways to increase EE/ME UsCC subcommittee membership – Dr. Heather Laird</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Heather Laird: We propose to consider other brainstorming ways to be effective without funding to continue serving our community in these days of COVID-19. They can still continue to grow and increase our community capacity for Mental Health. • Dr. George Gharibian: Suggested that the subcommittee can focus on work that can be done online, such as talks, meetings, and Town Hall meetings. Online virtual informational discussions can be helpful to provide Mental Health information to the public. A big issue is that it is not easy to advertise without a targeted audience. Also, privacy is especially important. The subcommittee PSA's are uploaded onto the LACDMH website and can be shared by sending the PSA links. There needs to be more advertising about the EE/ME Subcommittee, and we need to contact other agencies and organizations. Dr. Gharibian reported that he will speak at the Armenian American Mental Health Association virtual meeting regarding the uncertain times of COVID-19 and Mental Health issues. It will be open to the public.
<p>Announcements:</p>	<p>Changing Leadership and Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Sandra Chang announced that Mirtala Parada Ward will be going to a new position. Dr. Sherin and the Executive management has appointed Dr. Jorge Partida De Toro as the new Chief over the UsCC's and the Cultural Competency unit. This unit will be dedicated to everything related to cultural diversity and cultural inclusivity and responsiveness. Dr. Partida is looking forward to working with all the subcommittees. • Mirtala will continue to work for the Department of Mental Health. She will manage a clinic. • The EE/ME subcommittee has worked with Dr. Partida before was a guest presenter talking about the Transgenerational Transference of Trauma from the Armenian Genocide, at the Armenian Genocide Event in 2019, and are happy to be working with him again.

**Future Meeting
Time & Date**

- September 30, 2020

Join Microsoft Teams Meeting

+1 323-776-6996 United States, Los Angeles (Toll)
Conference ID: 985 297 792#