

County of Los Angeles – Department of Mental Health

OFFICE OF THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

May 27, 2021 - Minutes

Brittney Weissman, Chair, Presiding

APPROVED: June 24, 2021

Motion made by Commissioner Ogawa 2nd by Commissioner Friedman

DISCUSSION

Call to Order

Call to order – Brittney Weissman, Chair

a. Roll Call – *Commission Staff*

Present: Imelda Padilla-Frausto, Susan Friedman, Bennett Root, Reba Stevens, Harold Turner, Stacy Dagleish, Kathy Cooper-Ledesma, Patrick Ogawa, Kevin Acebo, Mike Molina, Judy Cooperberg, Brittney Weissman, Larry Schallert, Andres Corey – **QUORUM PRESENT**

Absent: Teresa Banko

- b. Approve meeting minutes. February, March, April minutes were approved on the motion of Commissioner Molina 2nd by Commissioner Ogawa unanimously carried by vote, this item was approved with one abstention.
- c. Chair Announcements - Welcomed two new commissioners, Larry E. Schallert - Supervisorial District 5, Bennett W. Root – Supervisorial District 1

II. Non-Agenda Public Comments

Osbee Sangster – Announced the service area ad hoc is excited about the leadership team project hoping to improve outcomes for people in communities who are struggling and understand the real work to deliver promises and hopes in the Mental Health Services Act.

William Leger, BLACCC – Comments about homelessness and employment, if Commissioners can help the homeless.

III. Department of Mental Health Update

Curley Bonds, Chief Deputy Director, Clinical Operations

Updates

- COVID-19 has decreased, 50% of the Los Angeles County population are vaccinated
- Unaccompanied minors who need housing are being located temporarily at the LA County Fair Grounds

Outline of DMH Activities with Justice Involved Population (see supporting documentation)

Forensic Psychiatry Division

- Jail Linkage/Reduction of Jail Population Transfers and Releases from Correctional Health Services
- Jail/ORD Referrals to DMH During COVID-19 Pandemic
- CDCR Linkage/Reduction of CDRD Population
- DMH Services to AB 109 Clients
- Parole Outpatient Clinics/Behavioral Health Reintegration
- Mental Health Court Linkage Program (MHCLP)
- Co-Occurring Disorders Court (CODC)

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- Rapid Diversion Pilot
- Office of Diversion and Re-Entry (ODR)

Commissioner Q&A

SD 5 - Questions resolved

SD 4 – Would like # of contract beds in the private and public system available for LA County population.

Action: Schedule a presentation from Women/Men Reintegration programs

SD 3 – Stated concerns involve funding streams for programs, warm hand offs for the criminal justice population, quantification of unmet needs

SD 2 – Is DMH responsible for reintegration wraparound services like housing and substance use?

SD 1 – 1) The focus of the analysis is on how resources and people move throughout the system. How is the data changed over a period and how do you expect it to change in the next three to three years? 2) Break down data on unprecedented need for mobile vans, okaying racial and ethnic inequities and who’s getting those services.

IV. Presentations

- a. The Failures and Solutions Official Report, Mother Advocates for the SMI (Seriously Mentally Ill)

Panel discussed system failure issues for severely mentally ill family members and solutions to obtain adequate support, professional services, regular treatment team meetings, therapy in IMD to promote healing and not trigger failures, and quality nutrition.

Action: Commissioner Delgleish volunteered to form a group to meet with the Mother Advocates for SMI.

- b. Latino UsCC, Ad Hoc on Mixed Status Families-Undocumented Immigrants

Panelist discussed unmet needs and recommendations for undocumented immigrants. 1) Expand mental health services for undocumented community members. Members face enormous barriers to access mental health care because of fear or unknown potential consequences on their status. 2) Expand outpatient mental health services to provide cultural and competent resources in the indigenous languages that are spoken in LA County service areas.

Action: Commissioner Padilla-Frausto volunteered to provide any data to support Mixed Status Families-Undocumented Immigrants work.

V. Reports from Community Co-Chairs (SALTS & UsCC & CCC)

SALT 2 – Marcus, Co-Chair

There's a general lack of warm handoffs. A lot of times, when people are being introduced to new service providers, or they're receiving services from a new entity, and they are going from a previous entity there's like, usually no coordination and also, people seem to not be getting regular contact from their service providers in general. They reach out and don't receive a call back for weeks, sometimes months, oftentimes, never. So, it seems to be a big issue in the Service Area. This issue has been brought numerous times. Other than that, there's nothing to report out.

SALT 5 - Penny Mehra, Co-Chair

Summarize the issues your Service Area/Cultural Community is currently addressing: SA5 providers are in the process of returning to non-virtual services and figuring out what works best for clients and staff. Future presentations will address lessons learned. SALT 5 is continuing to work on SALT 2021-2022 Goals. We are planning future SALT presentations and developing strategies to outreach for increased community membership. Part of the plan is to promote enrollment

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in CAF for consumers and family members. Low reimbursement rate which has remained \$25 per meeting since the 1990’s continues to be an issue. Difficulty using SALT allocated funds is a concern based on past experience.

Key struggles this month: Homelessness continues to be an issue in Service Area 5. Many community members - including consumers, families, DMH & agency staff, SA residents – are concerned with safety and well-being of those without housing. The tensions are being exacerbated by politics along Venice Beach with rallies, news articles, and possible changes in policing authority. There is vocal resistance to siting any shelters or permanent housing in the community. It is disheartening to all that there are no solutions in sight. Empathy training for shelter staff has been requested. Fear of violence has been expressed by community members.

Key successes this month: Service Area 5 has had the benefit of a directory of services published twice a year by the Westside Mental Health Network. Updates ceased during the pandemic but will resume this summer. This directory is posted on the Painted Brain website and shared with SALT5 list as a pdf document. Printed copies have been distributed when funding is available. It is widely used by agency staff. Health Neighborhoods have requested copies.

What priority community issue(s) from your SALT or UsCC should the MH Commission be aware of: SALT members would like to know a realistic date for Therapeutic Transport availability is SA5. Also the community has asked if there is planning for increased partnership of police and mental health staff to respond to appropriate emergency calls.

SALT 6 – Dorothy Banks, Interim Co-Chair

Last SALT meeting details:

- Two presentations, 1) ACCESS for all underserved cultural communities, and 2) SB 803 from Catherine Clay and Kumar Menon
- Working on ideas for improving our membership to host back to school giveaways sometime in late August or early September.
- Working on ideas for community events and activities, also adopting homeless families.
- In April Co-Chairs Kevin Collins and Joyce Sales were elected. They will provide reports after this meeting. SALT is very happy to have them join the group and I enjoyed the opportunity to help the new leadership.

SALT 8 – Paul Stansbury and Llanette Morgan, Co-Chairs

Summarize the issues your Service Area/Cultural Community is currently addressing:

At the May 7th Mental Health Month we had an excellent panel on “Cultural Diverse Pathways to Resilience and Healing” The panel focused on the community level and dealing with adverse community environments with the importance of the cultural perspective. We have observed in SALT 8 the persistence of disparities despite efforts to address which have now only been exacerbated by the COVID pandemic. We have had a history of underrepresentation of Asians being served and African American males being more likely to be homeless and incarcerated. Pastor Cedric Nelms And Rev Osie Leon Wood addressed the role of churches in developing resilience for the African American community with churches being natural places to seek and receive support, develop values that strengthen resilience and have healing and strengthening of families.

Catherine Clay provide perspective on the role of churches and addressing bias. Amber Cardenas addressed building resilience for infants and young children. SALT 8 members had many questions and extensive discussion with the panel especially with regard the to disproportionate number of African Americans males being homeless and incarcerated. The SALT 8 members were appreciative of the efforts of Ms. Ann Lee and Ms. Keely Gilmore to arrange this very informative panel.

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We also had a presentation by Catherine Clay on the SB 803 peer certification process and implementation. We have an active peer mentoring workgroup in SALT 8 that has been following and very interested in the peer certification implementation. Ms. Clay was able to provide an overview and information about future steps. The peer mentoring group is planning to stay involved with the process and looks forward to having Ms. Clay back for more discussion about the implementation.

The issues in SALT 8 continue to be with addressing impacts of COVID on services especially with regard to racial disparities, the anti-Asian hate racism, vaccination disparities, access to services for those persons who have technology barriers, youth and transitional age youth, the increased level of mental health challenges with the anxiety and stress because of COVID and how MHSA funding and programs can and are being used to address these issues and the ongoing programs. With regard to MHSA, understanding the impact that COVID had on some of the changes, the members are concerned about how to evaluate the use of FSP teams, performance-based approach, the flow of clients, addressing the demographic disparities, community-based PEI efforts with schools and libraries, the innovation programs and how are the changes specifically addressing SALT 8 issues. Also, SALT 8 wants a peer resource center in the service area. The peer members are very appreciative of the current Peer Resource Center but believe peers could be better served with a local one also.

Key struggles this month: The struggle to meet the needs of persons with a mental illness in the COVID environment and address the disparities continue. The panel this month help to highlight the issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. Part of the struggle is to connect with the communities and areas in SALT 8 where the disparities exist to educate on services and programs available and overcome problems with trust. The increase in hate crimes and racial incidents especially with the Asian community has become a key struggle. SALT 8 has very good attendance. We continue to try to recruit persons to take on responsibility to become official members and report on the needs and challenges within their cultural community and organization.

Key successes this month: The information and discussion on social justice issues including members involvement in MHSA, Measure J and social justice issues demonstrate a continuing interest and involvement in SALT 8 members as they represent their community. The panel this month was very successful in informing and understanding the issues of diversity, equity and inclusion. The SALT 8 members want to examine and understand more cultural groups and challenges of dealing with disparities.

What priority community issue(s) from your SALT or UsCC should the MH Commission be aware of: Providing mental health services in the time of COVID19 is an ongoing priority including addressing racial disparities, and the increase problems with mental health due to the anxiety within the community. The access to vaccinations and education on COVID and vaccination is still an ongoing priority as the stress for persons with a mental illness, mental health staff and the general community. Recruiting members willing to represent stakeholder groups as opposed to just attending meetings is an ongoing priority.

VI. Commission Business

a. Chair Update

Chair proposed to move agenda to public comment and postpone item c. Priorities/Ad Hoc Report Status. Commissioners stated the report would take two minutes and would like to proceed. Another piece will be presented next month.

b. FY 2021-2022 Election Next Steps Chair presented the slate for 2021-22 Executive Committee election June 24, 2021.

c. Priorities/Ad Hoc Report Status - Executive Committee Leads

Budget & Accountability (see supporting documentation)

- I. Commissioners Cooperberg and Molina requested information on FY 2021 \$2.9 billion budget and accountability, an overview of services and allocations, dollar allocations in the areas of outpatient treatment beds, public guardian and administration, and a breakdown of state, federal and

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local revenue. Commissioners met with DMH Finance Division staff who presented a transparent and positive report that included a roll over in the budget for 3-5 years. A report back on resources by service area and continuum of care will be presented next month.

Comments/Feedback/Questions

1. Comment: Regarding carryover dollars, contractors are on three-year cycles but there is still an enormous amount of dollars available that could be used in other ways.
2. Recommendation: Get feedback to accompany what you are looking at in terms of distribution.

VII. Public Comments

Anonymous – Presented several questions on COVID-19 data on recovery and recidivism.

Barbara Wilson (via email)

I wanted to comment about the report regarding the ODR and the relationship between ODR and DMH. I hear comments and complaints from family members, mostly parents, about the ODR program. Most complaints seem to center on:

- 1) Poor follow-up of clients
- 2) Are staff trained mental health professionals?
- 3) Community placements seem to be clustered in Skid Row/South Central despite families who reside in SFValley or Santa Clarita
- 4) There seem to be no consequences when clients fail to follow their guidelines
- 5) There seem to be no adequate coordination to coordinate a conservatorship even when the judge and the staff all agree that conservatorship is indicated as the most appropriate treatment.
- 6) There seems to be no direct involvement between DMH and ODR.

VIII. Adjournment

Next Meeting – June 24, 2021 – Microsoft Teams (Online Virtual) @ 11 am