

Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health

OFFICE OF THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION

January 27th, 2022 – Minutes

Stacy Dagleish, Chair

APPROVED: February 24, 2022

Motion by Commissioner Okonji, second^{ed} by Commissioner Weissman

DISCUSSION

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Commissioner Root (AE), Commissioner Padilla-Frausto (AE), Commissioner Friedman (P), Commissioner Stevens (P), Commissioner Turner (P), Commissioner Dagleish (P), Commissioner Banko (P), Commissioner Okonji (P), Commissioner Molina (P), Commissioner Acebo (P), Commissioner Cooperberg (P), Commissioner Weissman (P), Commissioner Schallert (P), Lily Sofiani (P) – **QUORUM PRESENT**

2. Welcome and Introductions

3. Acknowledgements: ASL interpreters, Spanish interpreters, CART captioner, technology and multimedia team, and staff support

Administrative Matters

4. Approval of the December 16, 2021, meeting minutes

On motion of Commissioner Banko, seconded by Commissioner Cooperberg, and duly carried by the following vote, the MHC approved the minutes for December 16, 2021, with discussion from Commissioner Weissman to include Commissioner comments and/or discussions after presentations, unless none are made.

Ayes (10): Commissioner Friedman, Commissioner Stevens, Commissioner Turner, Commissioner Banko,
Commissioner Okonji, Commissioner Acebo, Commissioner Molina, Commissioner Cooperberg,
Commissioner Schallert, Commissioner Weissman

Absent (2) Commissioner Padilla-Frausto, Commissioner Root

5. Announcements

- a. Pinki Mehta, MHC Executive Assistant, will be leaving mid-February to join the Chief Administrative Office. Dr. Sherin joined today's meeting to speak on behalf of Pinki's departure and significant progress she influenced in DMH, along with her professionalism, work ethic, personality, and heart, Pinki will be missed.
- b. Commissioner Ogawa was removed from SD4 due to redistricting, another tremendous loss to MHC.
- c. Commissioner Acebo reappointed in SD4, congratulations Commissioner Acebo.
- d. New Commissioner Kathleen Austria, appointed by SD2. Welcome Commissioner Austria.

Public Comment

6. Public Comment: Agenda & Non-Agenda Items

"Jim The Hat – Spoke about looking forward to better days, meeting in-person, sharing positive vibes and words.

Presentations

7. Department of Mental Health Report – Dr. Lisa Wong, Senior Deputy Director, Outpatient & Community Services

Dr. Wong presented an update on the Peer Resource Centers (PRC) implementation including accomplishments and plans for 2022. See documentation

- Olive View Wellness Center/PRC
- West Covina PRC
- Vermont PRC
- Behavioral Health Center at MLK/PRC
- Bienestar Wellness Center/PRC

Dr. Wong gave an update on the department’s current workforce which included, hiring efforts, a gap analysis, and challenges and solutions to increase hiring especially among directly operated programs. See documentation.

Dr. Wong reported adding new FSP teams building capacity across all eight service areas. FSP current enrollment is 10,223 (80.4%) a slight decrease from the last quarter however, capacity building will continue with more staff aboard.

MHC Comments/Discussions

- Commissioner Acebo inquired about a board action from second and fourth district on doubling the psychiatric mobile response teams and proposed a question what’s the status on response teams and hiring of peers? Commissioner Acebo requested a quantitative follow up from the department. Dr Wong suggested the Commission invite Dr. Amanda Ruiz to speak on the response teams and psychiatric mobile vans.
- Commissioner Turner inquired about the mental health clinic in service area 6 (former West Central) relocation status. Dr. Wong responded real estate costs have increased consequently locations are limited. Commissioner Turner hopes to keep West Central in the service area and would like continued updates on the status.
- Commissioner Weissman inquired about the workforce how many positions are vacant, how many candidates are available.
- Board Deputy Lily Sofinai inquired on the number of therapeutic vans in the county and number of SEIU vacancies.
- Commissioner Schallert stated that more hires are needed in the Santa Clarita Valley in both directly operated and legal entities. Commissioner recommended providing incentives for FSP clinicians and/or a field bonus. Dr. Wong responded there is a board motion regarding a bonus for field staff. Commissioner Schallert inquired how soon will crisis residential housing be available? Dr. Wong responded residential housing will be implemented right away.
- Commissioner Molina inquired would loan forgiveness and financial incentives for non-clinical staff be offered in the future.
- Commissioner Friedman stated the state has more money than ever and could incentivize mental health workers by paying tuition.

- Commissioner Dalgleish commented on an incident experienced with Office of Consumer Affairs that no one answered the phone. Commissioner Stevens recommended obtaining an alternate number to leave a message or call 911 be added.

8. Update from the Latino UsCC ad-hoc committee on Mixed Families/Undocumented Immigrants

Jose Guevara (Presenter) introduced subcommittee members, Daniela Hernandez Chong Cuy, Rem Nunez, and Betty Mendoza

Presenter stated the subcommittee members are a professional group of lawyers, licensed social workers, researchers who all work in mental and traditional arts. Presenter spoke about the MHSA funding allocated to underserved cultural communities does not reflect inclusion of the 1.5 million undocumented population in Los Angeles County. We hope to provide constructive feedback as well as recommendations for the MHSA three-year plan.

Danella Hernandez, Co-Chair, Latino Underserved Cultural Community reported 68% of the undocumented population in LA County are residents for more than a decade. Ms. Hernandez recommended MHC work with DMH to collect data to; 1) measure unmet needs, 2) address the language justice problem, only 5k practitioners serve 42% of the Spanish-speaking population which is a 1% ratio, 3) LA County provides no adequate support for immigrants facing deportation and are not working with service providers to ensure they receive the required care.

Rem Nunez reported for the past three years their program, Innovations Two has supported undocumented families and mixed status families through training community members to be mental health peer workers. One June 30, 2022, two program sites are scheduled to end. How do we hire more people and incentivize more professionals?

Betty Mendoza reported it would help if the professionals were provided an untraditional healing training for trauma informed care because the undocumented and unaccompanied minors suffer from trauma. Seeing from a prevention and early intervention perspective to have a group of professional providers that understand trauma trained in natural healing as an alternative can compensate for the lack of staff.

- Commissioner Okonji suggested MHC invite DMH staff to have a conversation on Innovations Two soon and obtaining a copy of the report would be useful.
- Commissioner Schallert stated Collage of the Canyons (COC) have great resources that addresses undocumented issues and please come to COC to check out the resources.

9. PEH Housing at the Top Floor of Parking Structure – Paul Jenkins (see documentation)

Paul Jenkins presented a concept called Top Floor Creative Community. The concept involves developing modular units on the top floor of county owned parking structures to provide housing/shelter and case management to the homeless population. The roof can be used for art, music, BBQs, and fresh air. The top floor helps control access and provides security and protection, and easily connect utilities. Cost including the needed amenities and support offices is projected for \$60 – \$70k per bed, housing units would be the size of a parking space. The concept is straight forward, construction-wise, and easy to get people off the streets quickly.

- Commissioner Acebo stated when using public dollars there are labor agreement negotiations particularly Prop H or Prog HH, and loss of revenue for parking lots. Commissioner suggested to pilot the concept.
- Commissioner Weissman inquired how can MHC support the concept.
- Commissioner Friedman inquired has anyone talked with the homeless people as to whether they want to move into this housing situation?
- Commissioner Stevens inquired about plumbing. Presenter stated the design company included plumbing and everything is put in place.
- Commissioner Stevens inquired about the metal containers described in the presentation appeared to be uncomfortable. Presenter stated the design company factory assembles the modular units.
- Commissioner Dalgleish stated Santa Monica City officials inquired about weight and seismic issues.

10. Community Reports, SALT, UsCC, CCC Co-Chairs

SALT 2 Marcus Thompson, Co-Chair, spoke about the SALT Community Mental Health Worker program not having enough people to apply for open positions. People were filling the positions, but they were also resigning. We also had a presentation from an Officer [indistinct] who is the senior lead officer for the Van Heise division, and she pretty much discussed the many programs that LAPD have that are in relation to mental health issues and she shed some light on things, and it was very productive. We are also in the planning process of figuring out what events we will be having this year and we are trying to have everything ironed out so that we do not have any issues in procuring supplies and having the events function normally and regularly and in concert with other service areas. Things have been business as usual, and we are having the same problems with bringing on community members. There is a lot of participation from organizations that provide services, but for stakeholders and community members it is another story.

SALT 5 Penny Mehra, Co-Chair

Summarize the issues your Service Area/Cultural Community is currently addressing: ALT 5 had been struggling with getting the Community Participation events up and going. On December 21st we had our first event, and it was a great success! The event was organized in collaboration with the Mar Vista Gardens Boys & Girls Club, NAMI, and DMH SALT 5. 120 families were invited. It featured a 5k Jingle Bell Run for youth and lunch. Information packets were distributed that contained the SALT brochure and application, United MH Promoters workshops, Westside MH Network directory, and information on NAMI and Latino UsCC. City Councilman Mike Bonin contributed a food truck that served free tacos. It took place in a large outside area in Mar Vista Gardens Housing Project and plans are being made to make it an annual event. Other SALT 5 events – Del Rey Community Homeless Education Panel in January panel and Black History Month in February so far.

Key struggles this month: The Service Area 5 continues to struggle with homeless issues. SALT members and the community at large are trying to figure out how to deal with the issue. Who do you call? If you call to report an incident or someone in need – what is supposed to happen? Do shelter beds exist during the pandemic? Who is responsible for homeless individuals who are struggling with drug addiction? Who is responsible for housing? We hope the January SALT event will help us articulate these questions and produce answers and may be useful in planning other community forums.

Key successes this month: See first paragraph.

What priority community issue(s) from your SALT or UsCC should the MHC be aware of: How does the pandemic impact community mental health? Just when we thought we could see the light at the end of the tunnel, omicron descended upon us. Are there any materials that SALT members can distribute to family, friends, and community groups. How to help. What to look for. Beneficial wellness activities.

SALT 8 – Paul Stansbury, Co-Chair

Commission Priorities - During FY 2020-2021, the MHC has focused their meetings on several strategic priorities. If possible, please provide information in your report-back on one or more of the following topics: (1) Criminal Justice; (2) Homeless/Housing; (3) Integrated Care Services/Cultural Competency; (4) COVID Disparities; (5) Budget Accountability; and (6) Data Oversight

Summarize the issues your Service Area/Cultural Community is currently addressing: There was no SALT 8 meeting in January. There was a meeting Peer Mentoring Group to continue discussion regarding Peer Certification and employment of peers. Also, there was a meeting of executive group to plan on agendas and solicit agenda items requested by members and participants. Items included the peer certification process, working with schools on the Community School Initiative, the implementation of 988 crisis number, hybrid meeting models, and recruiting person willing to take more active role in becoming representative members of community groups.

Key struggles this month: Continuing challenge of dealing with COVID and meeting in a virtual environment. Virtual meetings are convenient but the lack of meeting in person has made getting members more actively involved problematic.

Key successes this month: The continuing efforts by the Peer Mentoring Work Group to develop peers and work on getting ready for peer certification.

What priority community issue(s) from your SALT or UsCC should the MHC be aware of: Developing a hybrid approach to meetings was an expressed need. Also, addressing the different perspectives on the state of the pandemic where some believe it is over, the concerns about variants, the large number who haven't been vaccinated and that it will be with us for a long time to come was an issue. The up and down nature of the COVID surges is creating concern on what will happen next.

Recruiting members willing to represent stakeholder groups as opposed to just attending meetings is an ongoing priority.

BAH UsCC – Wendy Cabil, Co-Chair, I am the only Co-Chair for 10 months now, and we had a great time starting off the new year with a couple of presentations and then it went sour during the piece community engagement, which I had to advocate to put on our agenda as an item. And there was an uproar about the community being more involved in the planning of the agenda and so forth. I am concerned that we have not made progress in that area, and we need a more concerted effort, and it would also be beneficial to know the clarity of those with responsibilities. I was looking at the [distinct] and I see that the community is supposed to be more involved and have a voice. With our liaison having a double duty, it is difficult to meet our needs in a timely manner -- I've already sent it through email -- and I don't know what the time is but I don't want to lose -- what I really want to say is that in the 16 months I have been in my position, it is my second time being Co-Chair and it has been a rough experience and I have been going up and down on this roller coaster with them. I have tried my best to work within the Department and I am so glad that I finally had the courage to go to the Mental Health Commission and ask for help and support, and we still need intervention. I think we need to be in what I would call a reconstruction era period so that we can all be on the same page, and more transparency and better communication. On that

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note, unfortunately I have decided that I'm going to have to resign my position at the end of the month and I need to take more time to recover and get into a better space and place -- but I just need time now for me.

11. General Discussion Items – None discussed

12. Chair & Commissioner Reports –

Appreciation - Commissioner Acebo expressed thanks to SD4 for Patrick Ogawa's service on the Commission and provided a seamless transition and sensitivity for both Commissioners Acebo and Molina.

13. Adjournment – Adjournment in recognition of National Holocaust Remembrance Day