

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH  
OFFICE OF PREVENTION  
Latino UsCC SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES**

March 21, 2023  
2:00PM – 4:00PM

**Community Participants:** Angel Marin, Audrey Cruz, Belia Lopez, Betty Marin, Betty Mendoza, , Britany Flores, Carmen Perez, Claudia Razo, Dalila Jimenez, Elsy Molina, Eric Hernandez, Erika Valencia, Eugenia Cervantes, Felipe Ocampo Jr, Gabriela Gonzalez, Gloria Leiva, Hector Ramirez, Josof Sanchez, , Luz Hernandez, Maria Arauco, Maritza Lebron, Martha Ortiz, Martin Almanza, Mayra Echeverria, Michael Cook, Norma Ruiz, Oscar Alvarez, Paco Retana, Patricia Veliz Macal, Rosario Moreno, Sara Mijares, Stacy Dalglish, Stephanie Castillo, Suyapa Umanzor, Sylvia Gonzales-Youngblood, Veronica Solano, Yolanda Becerra-Jones, Yue Hua Xu

**DMH Staff:** Dr. Luis Guzman, Dr. Robert Byrd, Mary Barraza

**Interpreters / CART:** Claudia & Losha Soriano / Lindsay Hovermale,

Agenda Items	Comments/Discussion/Recommendations/Conclusions
<b>Welcome &amp; Introductions –</b> Subcommittee Members	<b>A. Housekeeping, Attendance</b> Each attendee (On Microsoft TEAMS and on phone) introduced themselves
<b>Review of Meeting Minutes</b>	<b>A. Tabled</b>
<b>LACDMH Office of Prevention</b>	<b>A. Discussion with Director &amp; Deputy Director</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Dr. Guzman introduced LACDMH Office of Prevention Senior Deputy Director Mary Barraza and Deputy Director Dr. Robert Byrd</li> <li>ii. Mary shared the background on the newly created Office of Prevention</li> <li>iii. Mary and Dr. Byrd shared their vision for the Office of Prevention as well as the role of Mental Health Promoters, UsCCs, and Anti-Racism Diversity Inclusion Division (ARDI) within this new office.</li> <li>iv. Goal is to infuse the work of the Promoters and ARDI into the fabric of the Department</li> </ul>

- v. Both Mary and Dr. Byrd expressed the importance to place an increased priority on children and youth mental health

**B. Community Questions/Feedback**

- i. Latino community specifically has expressed how they feel left out by LACDMH. They do not feel respected and feel like the community is being left behind intentionally by the Department
- ii. Community member asked how the Department was going to start meeting their cultural and linguistic needs when it came to mental health services because DMH has traditionally not done a good job of this
- iii. Community shared support for idea to look at equity contracting and ensuring that contracts truly meet linguistic and cultural needs of the community
- iv. Mental health promoter requested that DMH provide more support and resources to Mental Health promoters and Spanish support groups because they currently do not have enough of either
- v. Community would like for DMH to concretely show what the Department has done and is currently doing to address the wide-ranging mental health needs of the Latino community; previous requests have been ignored
- vi. Continued inequity of Latino mental health services and funding with Latino community being more than 60% of unmet mental health needs in DMH
- vii. Mixed status families, recent immigrants, and Latino indigenous community is most unserved and provided with lower quality treatment
- viii. Distribution of services and funding and staff is different depending on supervisorial district

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ix. Community request that Office of Prevention/ARDI ensure languages access and language justice is a priority for the Department because current experience of community is as second-class citizens</li> <li>x. DMH Leadership and workforce is not representative of Los Angeles County particularly when it comes to the Latino community</li> <li>xi. Office of Prevention should increase support for Community-Defined Evidence Practices that are more culturally responsive than some Evidence-Based Practices currently in use</li> <li>xii. Community shared concern that Latino community continues to be excluded from equitable funding as approximately only 10% of budget goes to providing services to Latino mental health consumers</li> <li>xiii. <b>Community member shared being subjected to racial slurs about the Latino community including going to DMH Service Providers/clinics with peers and having been called “a wetback” on several occasions because clinic staff assumed he did not speak English. “I hear my DMH staff. We have some great ones. But I hear DMH staff say, oh, look, they’re just here for benefits. Ohh, another ‘wetback’. Ohh, and that’s the attitude that we have in a lot of our clinics still to this date. It’s by some of our service providers, you know, and our community.”</b></li> <li>xiv. Latino stakeholder community has worked very hard over the last two years to identify issues, needs, and potential solutions to help DMH improve responsiveness towards community with 87 recommendations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Capacity Building Projects 2023-2024</b></p>	<p><b>A. Brainstorming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Interactive Mental Health Awareness campaign in English and Spanish specifically focused on the Latino community who are hard to reach</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. Stories of Resilience for older Latino adults where they can video-record their stories about ways their culture has served as a protective factor and helped them recover/heal from mental distress/poor mental health</li> <li>iii. Cohort of Latinas to learn how to break the circle of domestic/interpersonal violence and heal as well as to become ambassadors on mental health and breaking the cycle for other Latinas</li> <li>iv. Proposal for a youth mental health leadership academy helping young people advocate for their mental health and well-being and being able to do peer support in their schools</li> <li>v. Suggestion for a PSA campaign targeting the diverse Latino community including doing the PSA's in different languages and by Latinos of that specific Service Area to honor diversity in Latino backgrounds and experiences</li> </ul> <p><b>B. Discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Community would like to continue brainstorming next month and have a vote on which projects should move forward shortly after next month's Latino UsCC meeting</li> </ul>
<p><b>Identifying Latino Mental Health Priorities</b></p>	<p><b>A. Current Status of Latino Mental Health</b></p> <p><b>B. Brainstorming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Comprehensive data would help better meet needs</li> <li>ii. Children and youth are facing mental health crisis</li> </ul> <p><b>C. Identifying Specific Request/Solution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Better mapping tools/data collection needed urgently from DMH that are public facing and show the need, gaps in services, demographics, where MHSA funds are spent based on Service Area, and for whom.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. Need for DMH to also focus on children and youth; historically, focused on adult population</li> <li>iii. Equitable funding</li> <li>iv. Latino community requested in Sept 2022 for DMH to develop or began working on a comprehensive pipeline for bilingual bicultural clinicians; Request that LACDMH prioritize this</li> </ul>
<b>DMH/Community Announcements:</b>	<p><b>Items Not on the Agenda</b></p> <p><b>A. DMH Updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. None at this time</li> </ul> <p><b>B. Community Announcements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Latino UsCC is still recruiting Latinx youth ages 16-24 to train as mental health leaders and to have them record their stories of mental health struggles and resilience to eventually share through social media</li> </ul>
<b>Next Meeting</b>	<p><b>April 18, 2023, from 2:00 pm – 4:00pm</b>  <b>Virtual Venue: Microsoft TEAMS</b></p>