

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

**Eastern-European / Middle Eastern (EE/ME) UsCC Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
5/31/2023**

2:00PM – 4:00PM via Teleconference

Present: Rima Safaryan, Seta Haig, Dr. Heather Laird, Sarkis Simonian, Mariam Nahapetyan, Monique Svazlian, Mastaneh Moghadam, Lucinda Babayands, Anna “Captioner,” Your Hua Xu.

DMH Admin: Dr. Anna Yaralyan, Mirtala Parada Ward, PM III, Dr. Darlesh Horn.

| Agenda Items | Comments/Discussion/Recommendations/Conclusions |
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| Introductions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone introduced themselves. |
| Meeting Minutes Review and Approval | EE/ME Subcommittee meeting minutes on 4/26/2023 were approved by Mastaneh Moghadam and Dr. Heather Laird second. |
| Announcements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mirtala Parada Ward began employment as Program Manager III at LACDMH. She will oversee the LACDMH’s Anti-Racism and Inclusion Division, ARDI, Undeserved Cultural Communities, USCCs, and the Promoters Program. These programs aim to reduce mental health stigma throughout Los Angeles County; particularly in historically underserved cultural and linguistic communities by increasing awareness about mental health issues and improving access to culturally and linguistically appropriate resources. EE/ME USCC Subcommittee members welcomed Mirtala and expressed joy and excitement about her new role. |
| Capacity Building Project | Capacity Building Projects selected for the EE/ME Subcommittee, UsCC FY 2023-2024 – Anna Yaralyan |

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| <p>Updates FY2023-2024</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Arabic Speaking Poetry Night Mental Health Outreach Project 2. Mental Health Parenting Seminars for the Armenian Community 3. Sharing Our Stories: Immigrant Journey’s Towards Mental and Emotional Well-being <p>✚ Anna Yaralyan reported these three SOWs are currently in LACDMH Procurement Department and awaiting to go out to bid.</p> |
| <p>New Capacity Building Projects, Brainstorming</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EE/ME USCC Subcommittee members presented ideas for new Capacity Building Projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Mastaneh Moghadam reported that mental health art projects could be beneficial for Russian & Farsi speaking communities. Looking at personal and cultural issues through a different view can be helpful. ❖ Seta Haig stated that self-expression through art has been helpful and effective in the Armenian Community. Social media podcasts about different mental health issues and mental health TV programs could be effective for this community as well. Given the stigma attached to mental health within the Armenian Community, people feel safer in the privacy of their own homes when searching for mental health resources. ❖ Dr. Laird reported that within the Arabic speaking community, younger generations are more open and want to have their voice heard when it comes to mental health vs. the older generation. As a result, there is a divide among generations within this community. ❖ Dr. Darlesh Horn stated that we must include more young people in the process of receiving mental health education, resources, and services. • New Capacity Building Proposals will be presented in the August 2023 EE/ME Subcommittee meeting. |
| <p>Capacity Building Project Updates FY2022-2023</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Russian and Farsi speaking Mental Health Film Project – Project Vendor, Mastaneh Moghadam provided updates for the Russian and Farsi speaking Mental Health Movies. <p>The purpose of this project is to develop and implement Russian and Farsi speaking Mental Health Films. There will be a development of the two 90-minute film productions in English language, with one of the films Farsi and the other in Russian subtitles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This project is going well. • The films have been sent out for sound & volume check, and check for final translations. Vendor is still waiting for this part to be completed. • Vendor is also currently working on the Film Poster and will submit it to LACDMH for approval. • The films will be in English, with Russian and Farsi subtitles. |

- Vendor is hopeful for the movies to be posted on YouTube channel for everyone to see soon.

2. The Arabic Healing Through Art Mental Health Outreach Project – Project Vendor, Dr. Heather Laird provided updates for this project.

This project will consist of ten (10) art events, one (1) time a month, for ten (10) consecutive months, utilizing painting to express thoughts and feelings and open the door for healing. Each event will be conducted in at least one of the eight (8) Los Angeles County Service Areas and will last total of four (4) hours in length. The first hour will introduce the idea of well-being through art, one & half hours will be painting, and the last one & half hours will include expression of thoughts, feelings, and mental health discussions.

- The Arabic Mental Health Art Event project has been an enormous struggle because Vendor has been challenges getting enough participants.
- Vendor reported that to date total of 8 Art Events have been completed, however, only one will be counted, due to lack of complete participation.
- At least 10 new & unique participants must attend each Art Event for it to be counted and there have been around 5 - 7 participants during each Arabic MH Art Event, which is not enough. This may be due to stigma attached to mental health, community members shunning away from sharing their personal information, and lack of trust towards government.
- The flyers have been completed for the Art Events. However, after distributing them to community members, they decline participating, possibly due to seeing the LAC Department of Mental Health Logo, which indicates government, and the Title which is, “The Arabic Healing Through Art Mental Health Outreach Project,” which may indicate mental health issues.
- Vendor reported that one of the positive aspects has been to include senior citizens and tailor the events for this target population; they loved the art events.
- Vendor also reported that more people are excited about the poetry projects, which might be the next project proposal.
- Sarkis Simonian suggested having the art events at different community locations or even online.
- Mirtala Parada Ward suggested to possibly remove the mental health project title from the flyers and call it, “art events.”
- LACDMH approved for this project to end on 6/30/2023.

3. Armenian PSA Mental Health Project – Anna Yaralyan

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Armenian mental health PSAs continue to air on USArmenia TV station 10 times a day. This project is going well and as planned. • There are total of eight (8), 90-second PSAs. Three of the PSAs are both in English and Armenian languages. • The PSAs continue to air on TV and posted on different Social Media Sites, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and other social networking platforms for a period of 12 months. • Overall USArmenia TV station has been receiving positive feedback from community members about the PSAs. • Some community members contacted USArmenia TV station and reported that they had challenges when calling the LACDMH’s (800) 854-7771 Help Line to ask for resources and referrals. They get anxious and discouraged at times from calling, as they first hear the “English language.” If possible, they would like to have Armenian speakers answering the phones initially, for them to be more comfortable to express their wants & needs. • Vendor has been submitting quarterly progress reports and monthly Airing Logs of the PSAs to LACDMH. |
| Future Meetings Times and Dates | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Next meeting will be on Wednesday 6/28/2023, from 2:00pm – 4:00pm ❖ EE/ME Subcommittee members voted to go DARK in the month of July 2023. |
| | <p><u>Join Microsoft Teams Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (323) 446-6996 United States, Los Angeles (Toll) Conference ID: 985 297 792# |