

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

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

4/26/2023

2:00PM – 4:00PM via Teleconference

**Present:** Rima Safaryan, Seta Haig, Dr. Heather Laird, Joann Jaimes (captioner), Sarkis Simonian, Dr. Haydeh Fakhrabadi, Mariam Nahapetyan, Monique Svazlian, Mastaneh Moghadam, Avo Soltanian, Dr. Shushan Kalantaryan, Armineh Stepanyan,

**DMH Admin:** Dr. Anna Yaralyan.

Agenda Items	Comments/Discussion/Recommendations/Conclusions
<b>Introductions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone introduced themselves.</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting Minutes Review and Approval</b>	EE/ME Subcommittee meeting minutes on <b>3/29/23</b> were approved by Dr. Laird and Sarkis Simonian second.
<b>Announcements</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dr. <b>Shushan Kalantaryan</b> reported that there are openings for Russian speaking clinicians, trainees, and providers at her private practice.</li> <li>2. <b>The Fifth Annual Armenian Genocide: Transgenerational Effects &amp; Healing - Mariam Nahapetyan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mariam Nahapetyan provided updates on the Fifth Annual Armenian Genocide: Transgenerational Effects &amp; Healing Event.</li> <li>• This event took place on April 8, 2023, 10:30 AM – 2:30 PM at ACF Beshir Mardirossian Burbank Youth Center.</li> <li>• The event was in-person, and included mental health professionals, journalists, politicians, and community leaders.</li> <li>• The main speaker of the event was Psychologist Dr. Lucina Babayants. She provided important information about the transgenerational transference of trauma from the Armenian Genocide and healing aspects. It</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

	<p>also had amazing set of panelists, including mental health professionals, a City Councilwoman, and Chanel 11 News Anchor, Araksya Karapetyan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The event also included entertainment, such as Armenian Cultural music, singing, dance and appetizing food. Armineh Stepanyan played the piano. There were also Armenian folk dancers who were young ladies and danced 2 different dances, beautifully. There was also a duduk player, who made unforgettable music.</li> <li>• Given that week was a holy week, and that evening before Easter Sunday, which is an important Holiday for Christian Armenians round the world, Seta Haig brought cooked edible colored Easter eggs to this event. Seta and Mariam demonstrated how to play the traditional “Egg Cracking Game,” where all family members, especially children play during Easter family gatherings. To play this game, each player holds a colored egg, and one taps the end of his or her egg lightly against the end of the other player’s egg. When one egg’s end is cracked, the person with the unbroken egg uses the same end of the egg to try to crack the other end of the opponent’s egg. At the end, out of the 2 players, whoever’s egg remains unbroken and/or only one side of the egg is left uncracked, wins the game.</li> <li>• Subcommittee members who participated in the event reported that overall, the event was interesting, wonderful, and educational, exhibiting the Armenian culture and traditions at its best.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Capacity Building Project Updates FY2023-2024</b></p>	<p><b>Capacity Building Projects selected for the EE/ME Subcommittee, UsCC FY 2023-2024 – Anna Yaralyan</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. The Arabic Speaking Poetry Night Mental Health Outreach Project</b></li> <li><b>2. Mental Health Parenting Seminars for the Armenian Community</b></li> <li><b>3. Sharing Our Stories: Immigrant Journey’s Towards Mental and Emotional Well-being</b></li> </ol> <p>✚ Anna Yaralyan reported that the SOWs have been approved by LACDMH upper management and are currently in LACDMH Procurement Department to go out to bid.</p>
<p><b>New Capacity Building Projects Brainstorming</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anna Yaralyan reported that as per LACDMH upper management, Capacity Building Project Proposals, CBPs, will be presented during the EE/ME Subcommittee Meeting on 5/31/2023.</li> <li>• Subcommittee members expressed that they are in the process of brainstorming for new ideas of CBPs, as a result, need more time submit proposals.</li> <li>• Co-chairs and liaison will inquire from upper DMH management about the final timeline for submitting CBP proposals and possible extension on project proposals.</li> <li>• Monique Svazlian talked about her project ideas of working with children in schools. Recently she has been working voluntarily in the elementary schools in Glendale, California, to teach children some of the leadership skills she has been teaching adults. She wishes to create programs for children in diverse communities within Los Angeles County, including the Armenian Community. Monique is interested in creating a project which includes helping kids learn social/emotional and life skills.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seta Haig felt that Monique’s idea is good and stated that it could also work for other groups and ethnicities living in LA County. Seta added that parents, including Armenian parents may also need information, guidance and support from mental health professionals, especially Armenian mental health professionals who have cultural knowledge &amp; understanding in parenting practices.</li> <li>• Mariam Nahapetyan reported that a Mental Health Project which includes Art Therapy Events could also be helpful and beneficial for Armenian Community members.</li> <li>• Avo Soltanian talked about providing information and knowledge through mental health podcasts on a YouTube Chanel. This can be conducted in the English language for Armenian youth, monolingual English-speaking Armenians and other Armenians who have lived in USA for a long time and are acculturated &amp; assimilated to the American culture.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Capacity Building Project Updates FY2022-2023</b></p>	<p>1. <b>The Russian and Farsi speaking Mental Health Film Project</b> – Project Vendor, Mastaneh Moghadam provided updates for the Russian and Farsi speaking Mental Health Movies.</p> <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"> <li>• This project is going well.</li> <li>• The final editing of the films is completed.</li> <li>• The films have been sent out for color and sound check, and check for final translations.</li> <li>• Vendor reported that hopefully the movies will be posted on YouTube channel for everyone to see by June 1, 2023.</li> </ul> <p>2. <b>The Arabic Healing Through Art Mental Health Outreach Project</b> – Project Vendor, Dr. Heather Laird provided updates for this project.</p> <p>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 &amp; half hours will be painting, and the last one &amp; half hours will include expression of thoughts, feelings, and mental health discussions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Arabic Mental Health Art Event project has been somewhat slow moving and continues to be in the second phase of implementation.</li> </ul>

- Vendor reported that she is still in the process of identifying venues for the art events in different Service Areas.
- The vendor once again discussed reasons for low participation in the events. Not many people in the Arabic community want to participate in the events due to stigma attached to mental health, not wanting to discuss personal information, and lack of trust towards government.
- Vendor received the approval from LACDMH to reschedule and extend the Arabic Mental Health Art Events Project due challenges in participant requirements. The new project end will be 6/30/2023.

**3. Armenian PSA Mental Health Project – Anna Yaralyan**

- 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.
- The PSAs include the following Mental Health Topics:
  1. Mental Health Awareness
  2. Depression/Anxiety
  3. Substance Abuse
  4. Domestic Violence
  5. Elder Abuse
  6. Self-Esteem
  7. Anger Management
  8. Stress & Stress Management
- TV station has been receiving positive feedback from community members about the PSAs.
- Vendor has been submitting quarterly progress reports and monthly Airing Logs of the PSAs to LACDMH.

**Future Meetings Times and Dates**

❖ **Next meeting is on Wednesday 5/31/2023, from 2:00pm – 4:00pm**

**Join Microsoft Teams Meeting**

- (323) 446-6996 United States, Los Angeles (Toll)  
Conference ID: 985 297 792#