

**Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
LGBTQIA2-S UsCC Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 5, 2023, 2-4 pm**

Welcome/Introductions

Present: Ana Bernal, Bill Sive, Nicole Kristal, Cynthia Ruffin, Hector Ramirez, Rex Wilde, Eden Luna, Alex Salazar, Paul Vallejo, Mark Gonzalez, Azucena Saldana, Alexis Glenn, Miguel Villegas, Sharon Chapman, Rebecca Gitlin, Vicky Xu, Toni Craigs-Thomas, Andrea Aoun

DMH Admin: Kelly Wilkerson, Darlesh Horn, Mirtala Parada Ward

Getting To Know You – Azucena Saldana shared about herself.

September 2023 Meeting Minutes – Meeting minutes approved (first-Bill Sive, second-Cynthia Ruffin).

Co-Chair Updates

- Co-chairs updated the subcommittee regarding the recent CCC/UsCC Leadership meeting where MHSA Administration shared regarding the recent MHSA amendment bill (SB 326) and some potential changes down the road. The leadership group also reviewed and provided feedback on the UsCC governing documents including bylaws and capacity building project guidelines.
 - Mirtala provided an update that the County and the Board of Supervisor have not taken a position regarding SB 326 at this point. Mirtala shared regarding some of the potential impacts of the bill including Suicide Prevention services being centralized at the state level.

DMH Updates

- Mirtala shared with the subcommittee that each group is able to host a 1-2 day retreat that would be facilitated by Rigo. Goals of a potential retreat could include brainstorming about future initiatives, exploring opportunities to further engage community into the stakeholder effort, and how to recruit more membership for your subcommittee.

MHSA Feedback Request – Discussion

What are the unmet needs, service gaps, and recommendations for the LGBTQIA2-S community as it relates to:

Prevention/Early Intervention (PEI)

- Explore a non medical, non western, non binary approach to mental health programming, move away from medical model as it's not culturally relevant or appropriate to our community – in particular Transgender Gender Expansive (TGX) communities
- There are a lack of therapists from community, therapy one of most sought out services but least accessible, numerous barriers to accessing services

- Black, Indigenous, AI/AN, lot of CBOs working in silos, lack of equitable access to funding, lack of dedicated funding to high impact areas of County such as Service Areas 1 and 2
- LGBTQ+ youth high suicide rates, elders as well, disabled communities,
- PEI programming to recommend non traditional programming, community based therapeutic models, increased partnership with our cultural CBOs
- TGX community housing model that looks at aging LGBTQIA2-S+ community-in particular consumers and folks w/ mental health needs
- Transforming Families (organization) – working w/ whole family systems around providing services for family, TGX, multiple group, family integrated model, increase continued support for those youth, how do you apply it and ensure being done in an intersectional way, expand across County
- Educate existing CBOs re: LGBTQIA2-S+ community and needs, as well as schools, religious institutions – how to create a supportive and welcoming environment where clients feel respected/affirmed/etc.
- Spanish speaking communities, not seeing enough services
- Alternatives to Law Enforcement/first responders for crisis, complaints from local communities, shared w/ 911 first, cannot provide adequate care, individual detained, further displacement and decreasing access to care, loss of personal belongings, more challenging to access; creation of a centralized phone number for crisis support w/out having to contact law enforcement, provide care on the streets, provide funds for experts in County to provide those services,
- The Village Family Services – look at their programming, providing services in Service Area 2, outreach teams, make contact with TAY youth through drop in center which include showers, case managers, shelter, transportation; adult FSP, employment services, therapy w/ no MediCal billing, workshops, offer incentives for communities, ride share
- Look at other models that are working
- Services for sex workers, criminalized, targeted, records make it harder to find work, record expungement, clear records programs; educate service providers on the differences between types of folks who engage in sex work; possible partnerships with SWOP LA, national chapter as well, providing resources including mental health and Other Womxn-local collective-provide support to TGX sex workers including on the ground support and assistance
- Filing for taxes, benefits, public benefits, difficult to access, meet w/ financial providers to educate regarding how to support LGBTQ+ in navigating systems

Homeless Services and Housing Resources

- Tap into some of the models in West Hollywood, homeless outreach teams, collaboratives with different organizations including Peoples Concern/Step Up on Second/Tarzana Treatment Center/etc.
- Providers go out specific hours/days to provide wraparound services for unhoused LGBTQIA2-S folks, how do we provide care Countywide
- Relocation/wraparound services, HOUSING FIRST model, extremely limited housing options for TGX, shelters struggle with housing TGX community as most shelters are binary focused
- Some housing for TGX youth and elders, but very little for adult age
- Providing services and partnering with libraries, more central locations

- Safe parking overnight for folks living in cars
- Mobile showers

Workforce Education and Training (WET)

- Big shortage of LGBTQIA2-S providers
- Offer training incentive like loan forgiveness for those at the BA level – create pipeline from Community Colleges
- Provide financial support, scholarships, housing, tuition support, stipends, outreach during high school years – can give youth something to look forward to, help with degree completion, prevent drop out
- Help students prep for the outside world – what comes next
- Academia can be a barrier, the opportunity cost, working/renting/school, lack of generational wealth, systems of academia and licensure can be challenging, mentorship programs, cohorts, assistance with applying for programs, work with peer-based models and folks on the ground, unlicensed folks working under licensed person, consider liabilities, just getting in the door is the biggest barrier, livable wages
- Support or incentives for LGBTQIA2-S+ staff who are providing services, to protect them and support them, highlight for incoming staff as well, incentivize lived experience
- Mental health providers in general are often not polyamorous/non-monogamy informed which has an impact on folks regardless of identity, but also specifically impacts the greater LGBTQ+ community. Education and training to elevate mental health providers' knowledge and cultural competence around polyamory is something I see in the community in an increasing way. I think having that as an additional focus area in the WET planning would be a critical point of care.

Follow up questions for DMH:

- Next steps
- Implementation
- Funding
- How do we make this become a reality
- Mobilize
- Make this into a recommendation for funding/budget allocation
- Change policy
- Transparency – show us where the money is going, clear

Current and Future Capacity Building Projects – Update

- Updates on capacity building projects currently being implemented and status of the upcoming projects.
 - What We Think Project – currently in Phase 4, townhalls being conducted, project will be completed by October 31st.
 - The Panthera Project – cohort meetings completed, survey responses being gathered, will be completed by January 31st.
 - Bi+ Affirming Mentorship and Storytelling Lab – awarded to Still Bisexual, initial vendor meeting scheduled.
 - Transforming Community Care: API LGBTQ+ Mental Health and Wellness Project – awarded to KH Consulting, initial vendor meeting scheduled.

- Proyecto Mariposa Monarca – awarded to Eden Luna, initial vendor meeting scheduled.
- Two-Spirit Storytelling Project – awarded to Wombat Mental health Services, initial vendor meeting scheduled.
- Neurodivergent Voices Album Project – final meeting with PIO 10/11, then SOW will be finalized.
- LGBTQIA2-S Violence Prevention Lab Project – out for solicitation until 10/16.
- LGBTQIA2-S Housing Listening Sessions Project – out for solicitation until 10/16.
- Liberation Workshop Series Project – submitted in Procurement system, Kelly will alert subcommittee when sent out for solicitation.

General Announcements/Resources

- Send any resources to Kelly via email (KeWilkerson@dmh.lacounty.gov) to be sent out to the listserv.

Upcoming Meetings (first Thursday of the month, 2-4pm): 11/2/23, no meeting in December, 1/4/24, 2/1/24, 3/7/24, 4/4/24

[Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#); 323-776-6996, Conference ID: 542 042 921#

Meeting minutes can be found at <https://dmh.lacounty.gov/about/mhsa/uscc/lgbtqia2-s-uscc/lgbtqia2-s-uscc-meeting-minutes/>