

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

Access for All UsCC Minutes

October 11, 2023

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Stakeholders Present:

Maria Arauco, Erik Escareno, Alison Freeman, Cody Hanable, Angy K., Amy Kay, Carol Kou, Mercedes Moreno, Junko Nagamatsu, Hector Ramirez, Maria Tan, Rosy Tellez, Gabriela Velasquez, Irma Velasquez, and Jennifer Yates

DMH Staff Present:

Angel Baker, Robert Byrd, Mark Cheng, Carey Grier, Oliver Harris, Laura Kerr, Martin Jones, Jenny Nguyen, Maria Ortiz, Mirtala Parada-Ward, Suyapa Umanzor, Elaine Waldman, and Vickie Xu

ASL Interpreters:

Andrea and Sharon

Spanish Language Interpreters:

Isabel and Lucy

CART Transcriber:

LaDawna

Agenda Item	Discussion and Recommendation
Motion to Approve Minutes	Erik Escareno motioned to approve September meeting minutes, and Mercedes Moreno seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.
Co-Chairs' Update	Co-Chair Alison Freeman shared that she and Co-Chair Hector Ramirez have met with Robert Byrd, Angel Baker, and Mirtala Parada-Ward over

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	<p>the course of several months to propose a plan to establish an essential ASL services infrastructure at DMH.</p> <p>Hector Ramirez has been appointed to serve as a Commissioner with the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities.</p>
DMH Managers' Updates	<p>Angel Baker shared that she and DMH managers have elevated the Co-Chairs' recommendations to the executive management team; and are developing a proposal at this time. Progress to date includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring access to bilingual bonus for ASL-fluent staff • Creating Civil Service job exam bulletins targeting ASL-fluent candidates • Including fluency in ASL as a "desired" requirement, which gives candidates extra points and more chance of interviewing for open positions • Meeting with DMH Chief Deputy to advance recommendations for ASL interpreter training in mental health and ASL training for staff <p>Angel Baker shared that Alex Elliott, in his new role, will be helping with ADA compliance. Angel will continue to work with Robert Byrd and Mirtala Parada-Ward on ASL infrastructure development.</p> <p>Mirtala shared that training topics were collected from all UsCCs for upcoming workforce education activities. This group provided 17 topics, which were included in the plan.</p>
Discussion: MHSA Community Planning (Mental Health	<p>Erik Escareno shared that he submitted four proposals to be considered for MHSA funding and is awaiting next steps. Robert Byrd encouraged</p>

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<p>Services Act, two-year funding) and Priority Topics</p>	<p>everyone with questions on MHSA funding proposals to reach out to MHSAAdmin@dmh.lacounty.gov with inquiries.</p> <p>Access for All UsCC needs representatives to participate in the online and in-person MHSA community planning process. Each UsCC has two voting representatives. Martin Jones shared that he is co-chairing a work group discussing services gaps and encouraged as many people as possible to get involved in the community planning process.</p> <p>Alison Freeman highlighted the importance and impact of language deprivation on the deaf and hard of hearing community, which experiences great challenges and needs services to be fully funded. Robert Byrd shared that the resources are finite; and decisions will be made using an equity lens.</p> <p>Amy Kay shared that there are insufficient services for people who are deaf and hard of hearing, and that there should not be only one agency specializing in serving this population. Robert Byrd shared that there is data to show that both DMH and the network of legal entity (community-based) providers uses ASL interpretation to work with deaf and hard of hearing clients. Mirtala Parada-Ward will give a data presentation at our next UsCC meeting.</p> <p>Carol Kou asked about the names of the agencies, the cost of interpretation services, and the numbers served. Erik Escareno asked if there are delays in clients accessing needed interpretation and if any clients are turned away. Amy Kay asked about programs with ASL-fluent</p>
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	<p>staff and has been in contact with Angel Baker to find out more. Erik Escareno asked about community needs assessment data.</p> <p>Alison Freeman highlighted the example of a culturally competent, effective, fully staffed program at St. Johns which had seven ASL-fluent clinicians, a psychiatrist, and a director.</p>
Brainstorming Unmet Needs, Part 2	<p>This month, the group conducted part 2 of the brainstorming session to develop recommendations to include in the MHSA community funding process. Input shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inform students with disabilities of opportunities in the mental health field• Strengthen the cultural identity of people with disabilities, since this is a protective factor• Career development assistance for foster youth, partnering with regional centers, youths in congregate settings• ASL services provided by deaf and hard of hearing interpreters; there are conflicts between hearing and deaf culture. Deaf and hard of hearing interpreters understand their clients' experiences• The history of oppression of the deaf community, mental health institutionalization, and continuing marginalization necessitate significant investment of resources in this next funding cycle• Outreach with deaf people is critical since language deprivation has a lifelong impact• Recruit and retain deaf clinicians; establish incentive programs and tuition reimbursement• ASL support groups needed

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expand opportunities for Latino workforce members with disabilities• Address and eliminate linguistic and racial discrimination; eliminate barriers to speaking diverse languages at DMH• Hire and retain staff who speak languages other than English• Develop plain language methods and materials• Ensure access to primary, preferred, and expected languages• Reduce stigma of self-disclosure• There is no deaf batterers' program• There is a need for a "know your rights" initiative• Lack of affordable housing, permanent, supportive, transitional, and independent living• Safety, fall prevention, and healthy conditions in Section 8 apartments are needed• Create opportunities for staff to learn ASL and use it on the job and in the community
Next Meeting	The next meeting will take place on Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 11/8/2023, 10 AM to 12 PM.