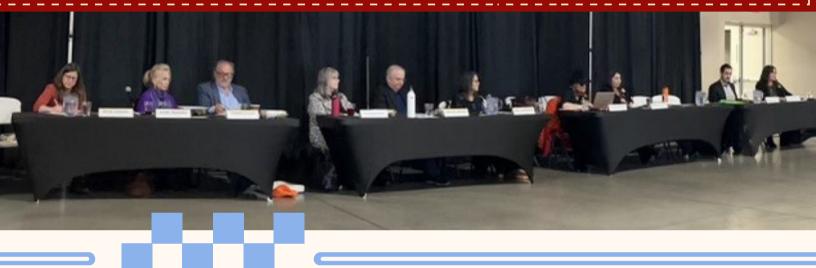


LA COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION



SERVICE AREA 1 TOWNHALL REPORT

This report provides significant insights into the issues raised by the Antelope Valley (AV) community in their public comments during the event. Additionally, it presents a thorough evaluation of successful elements and offers recommendations for the organization and execution of future town hall meetings.

Prepared By: Kenia Fuentes

February 2024



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The Mental Health Commission (MHC) partnered with the Department of Mental Health Service Area 1 Team to host their first town hall event in AV. The primary objective of this event was to foster meaningful interaction with the AV community, providing them with a platform to express any issues pertaining to the insufficiency, unmet requirements, or gaps within their regional mental health services and provider network.



Bridging Gaps and Access to Information

There persists a deficiency in disseminating information regarding pertinent organizations and agencies available to assist citizens seeking support. It is imperative to proactively identify community resources and establish effective partnerships to address these gaps. We advocate for heightened information exchange and collaborative efforts to elevate the quality of community services.

Regional Planning and Funding

Limited access to hospitals and programs persists due to fragmented regional planning. To enhance mental health services and support, a regional planning strategy for hospitals and programs is essential. One viable solution involves unifying the efforts of the three counties through regional planning initiatives.

Transportation for Healthcare

We are encountering ongoing challenges with transportation accessibility to hospitals and healthcare facilities for medical appointments. It is imperative to address these transportation issues, particularly for individuals with specialized medical requirements.





Homelessness Outreach and 211 Services

Challenges arise in providing assistance to homeless individuals due to unresponsive outreach services. It is imperative to improve the accessibility and responsiveness of 211 services. This necessitates the expansion of 211 services in the Antelope Valley to strengthen outreach efforts.

Information Dissemination on Proposition 1

There is a significant deficiency in public awareness regarding Proposition 1. Enhancing strategic communication and the dissemination of information is imperative to facilitate a deeper understanding among the public of the implications and effects of Proposition 1 on mental health service funding.

Behavioral Urgent Care and Prevention:

The limited capacity under SB43 diversion highlights a significant mental health crisis, underscoring the urgency to enhance preventive measures and effectively address capacity constraints. Measures need to be taken to manage the increasing involvement of law enforcement in behavioral health and to clarify the allocation of mental health funding.





Peer-to-Peer Support Spaces

There is a shortage of space for peer-to-peer support services. It is imperative to expand the availability of spaces for individuals in recovery to participate in support groups and enhance access to these essential support services.

Service Delivery and Cultural Appropriateness

Disempowerment and inadequate culturally tailored services highlight the necessity for enhanced accountability in service provision and a stronger focus on culturally centered services. Bridging the gap between agencies and enhancing the cultural relevance of services are imperative steps to address these challenges.

Support for Substance Abuse and Mental Health

Substance use is on the rise in the Antelope Valley, emphasizing the critical need for resources dedicated to substance use prevention. Enhancing support for evidence-based research and culturally sensitive mental health services, particularly geared towards parents, children, and youth, is imperative in addressing this escalating concern.





Community Advocacy and Accountability

Insufficient accountability within organizations and challenges within domestic violence shelters underscore the critical need to enhance accountability and problem resolution within service-oriented entities. Furthermore, there is a growing necessity to bolster accountability and responsiveness towards public inquiries.







LOOKING BACK

VENUE AND FOOD

The venue offered ample space, allowing for additional seating to accommodate more attendees and room for the resource fair. Complimentary and plentiful parking was provided. Nevertheless, the venue's expansive size led to concurrent discussions between organizations and attendees at the resource tables during speeches and public comments, causing disturbances for individuals seated towards the back. Moreover, the decision to opt for boxed lunches proved beneficial, efficiently serving approximately 185 attendees while reducing food wastage.

DATE AND TIME

The chosen date and time for the event were well received by the local team, evident in the positive community response and attendance.

RESOURCE TABLES

The participating organizations demonstrated preparedness and remarkable effectiveness in both engaging community members and the commission. The arrangement at the back of the room facilitated successful initial engagement. However. conversations that ensued after the meeting commenced appeared disruptive.



LOOKING BACK

AUDIO, VISUAL, AND INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

The audio and visual components at the venue operated as intended, facilitating the display of American Sign Language (ASL) and Live Captioning on expansive screens. Although the setup process was time-consuming, we had appropriately budgeted time to accommodate any complexities.

Regrettably, the internet connection quality proved subpar. This resulted in intermittent delays in the audio and visual experience for our virtual audience. Moreover, attendees present in person encountered a slight delay in the Live Captioning service.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

All speakers were well-received as they provided pertinent and relevant information. Moreover, they actively encouraged attendees to express any unmet needs during the public comment period. The quantity of speakers invited and the allocated speaking time for each individual appeared to be appropriate.

PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

The predetermined time slots for each speaker proved to be efficient, and the spontaneous of approach inviting commentators to provide their public input was well received by the audience. Requesting speakers to stay at their designated tables while we circulated among them to invite participants who wished to speak appeared to be a more practical choice compared to having them form a queue, especially given the substantial turnout.

LOOKING BACK

PLANNING AND COORDINATION

The <u>LA County Town Hall Coordination Guide</u> emerged as a vital resource during the planning and coordination stages, harmonizing seamlessly with the proactive engagement of the Service Area 1 DMH Team from project initiation. The local team significantly contributed to rallying local stakeholders for active involvement in the Town Hall event, thereby nurturing community participation. Regular bimonthly meetings were instrumental in identifying venue requirements, staffing needs, and additional necessary resources.

PROMOTING THE EVENT

Issuing a "Save the Date" notification two months in advance, coupled with distributing a flyer three weeks before the event, emerged as an effective approach. Furthermore, collaborating with the local team to disseminate information within their respective networks played a pivotal role. Our approach involved sending email bulletins to the MHC email list, direct emails from the SA 1 local team to their contacts, posting notices on the MHC website calendar, and sharing updates on social media platforms.



FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

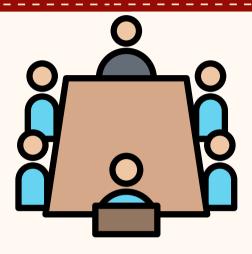
RESOURCE TABLES

For forthcoming town hall meetings, it is crucial to address the background noise generated by networking activities at the resource tables, which can be disruptive. One potential solution is to relocate the resource tables outdoors. If this is not feasible, an alternative approach would be to request that organizations involved in the resource tables conclude their networking activities once the meeting commences and join the other attendees.

INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

The MHC Staff will request that DMH acquire a mobile internet access service for MHC's use during off-site meetings from the DMH Headquarters building.

MHC MEMBERS



Second District

Kathleen Austria Reba Stevens Vacant

Fourth District

Victor Manalo Michael Molina Marilyn Sanabria

First District

Susan F. Friedman Imelda Padilla-Frausto Bennett W. Root, Jr.

Third District

Stacy Dalgelish Kevin Peng Xu Thomas Roache

Fifth District<u>J</u>udy Cooperberg Larry Schallert Brittney Weissman







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