

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


**Eastern-European / Middle Eastern (EE/ME) UsCC Subcommittee Meeting Minutes  
1/31/2024**

2:00PM – 4:00PM via Teleconference

1. **Present:** Seta Haig, Dr. Heather Laird, Mastaneh Moghadam, Dr. Haydeh Fakhrabadi, Rima Safaryan, Dr. Heather Laird, Sarkis Simonian, Mariam Nahapetyan, Avo Soltanian, Peyman Malaz, Riku Matsuda, Yue Hua Xu, Stacy Dalglish.

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

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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewed &amp; approved 11/29/23 EE/ME Subcommittee meeting minutes. Minutes were accepted by subcommittee members. There were no subcommittee member objections.</li> </ul>
<b>LACDMH Updates</b>	<p>Mirtala Parada Ward provided the following LACDMH Updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervising Clinical Psychologist for all USCC's has been hired to provide supervisory support to UsCC Liaisons. Her name is Dr. Jennifer Alquijay. She will attend the next EE/ME Subcommittee meeting as she is feeling under the weather today.</li> <li>Mirtala urged EE/ME Subcommittee members to make referrals for Russian, Armenian, Farsi &amp; Arabic speaking Promotors, as it is needed to promote Mental Health information &amp; resources to these communities.</li> <li>Mirtala urged Subcommittee members to start brainstorming for new Capacity Building Projects, CBPs.</li> <li>CBPs should be monthly USCC Meeting Agenda Items, so subcommittee members would always think about a new project to do.</li> <li>New UsCC Bylaws will be in use from 2/1/2024. Changes have been done due to suggestions made by USCC Co-Chairs. They have made contributions to the protocols.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This voting year Prop. 1 is a measure on the March ballot. Prop 1 would shift much of California's millionaires' tax for mental health services towards supportive housing and treatment beds for people with mental illness and/or substance use disorder across the state.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Co-Chair Selection Discussions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General subcommittee discussions on EE/ME Subcommittee Co-Chair recruitment.</li> <li>• Sarkis Simonian once again urged for the recruitment of new subcommittee members and for those members who have had regular attendance to the EE/ME Subcommittee meetings, to run for co-chair positions. They will receive \$150 per meeting. It is imperative to increase subcommittee membership &amp; apply for co-chair positions.</li> <li>• Mirtala stated that one of the best aspects of being a USCC Co-Chair is also to be a leader &amp; give back to the community.</li> </ul>
<p><b>EE/ME Subcommittee Capacity Building Updates FY 2022 - 2023</b></p>	<p><b>Capacity Building Projects selected for the EE/ME Subcommittee, UsCC FY 2023-2024</b></p> <p> <b>The Arabic Speaking Poetry Night Mental Health Outreach Project</b></p> <p>❖ This project involves a consultant developing and implementing 20 community Poetry Night events. There will be two (2) events a month, for 10 consecutive months. Each event must be at least two (2) hours in duration. Poetry is an important part of the Arabic culture and is traditionally used as a tool to help individuals heal from their mental and emotional problems. The Poetry Night Mental Health Outreach Project will provide a place for Arabic speaking adults and older adults to get together and interact with one another and share their stories. Project estimated end date is August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Heather Laird is the Project Vendor.</li> <li>• Vendor completed and submitted the first phase of this project.</li> <li>• Vendor started working on identifying venues and times &amp; dates for the Poetry Night Events.</li> <li>• The First Phase of this project includes the development of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Project outline and event</li> <li>○ Project content development</li> <li>○ Pre/post survey evaluation form</li> <li>○ Flyer/promotional materials</li> <li>○ Recruitment of poets</li> <li>○ Selections of list of cultural poems.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### **Mental Health Parenting Seminars for the Armenian Community**

❖ This project involves a Trainer implementing a parenting seminar targeting Armenian parents and community members. There will be total of 14 parenting seminars. One parenting seminar will be repeated 12 times in person in a period of a year, in different locations and venues throughout Los Angeles County, and 2 times virtually, (via Zoom, Teams, etc.). Seminars will be conducted at public and private schools, dance, sports, and art schools, academic institutions, after school child and parenting programs, churches and other community organizations in the larger Los Angeles County areas that fit the target population.

- Avo Soltanian, MFT, from Anchor Counseling Group a Professional Corporation for Individual, Marriage, And Child Therapy, is the project Vendor.
- Project began on 10/16/23 & the project estimated end date is 10/16/24.
- Vendor completed and submitted the first phase of this project.
- Vendor started working on identifying venues and times & dates for the parenting seminars.
- The First Phase of the project includes the development of the following:
  - Parenting Seminar Curriculum Development
  - Pre/Post Survey Evaluation Form
  - Flyer/Promotional Materials
  - Community Resources List
  - Identifying Venues; possibly in Armenian Private School, Glendale Unified School District, LA Unified School District, community organizations, etc.

### **Sharing Our Stories: Immigrant Journey's Towards Mental and Emotional Well-being**

❖ This project targets the Russian and Farsi speaking communities of Los Angeles County at large. It aims to create two coffee table books, one for Russian and another for Farsi speaking communities. The books will consist of short stories gathered from Russian and Farsi speaking immigrants where each person in the community gets the opportunity to share their story of a mental health, emotional, social challenges, and/or crisis that they experienced as an immigrant in United States.

- Mastaneh Moghadam, LCSW from Cross Cultural Expressions Community Counseling Center is the project Vendor.
- Project began date on 11/1/2023.
- Project estimated end date is 10/1/2024.
- Vendor is in First Phase of the book development project, which includes the following:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning, story collection &amp; organization phase.</li> </ul>
<b>EE/ME Subcommittee Capacity Building Updates FY 2023 - 2024</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Support Group and Mental Health Educational Seminar for Afghan Refugees</b></li> <li>2. <b>Arabic Coffee &amp; Tea Conversation Project</b></li> <li>3. <b>Armenian Festival Project</b></li> <li>4. <b>Armenian Poetry Circles for Mental Health</b></li> <li>5. <b>Russian and Farsi Mental Health Film Project #2</b></li> </ol> <p>Anna Yaralyan reported that all five SOWs are currently completed &amp; pending for supervisor review and approval.</p>
<b>Next Meeting</b>	<p>❖ <b>Next meeting will be on Wednesday 1/31/2023, from 2:00pm – 4:00pm.</b></p>
	<p><b><u>Join Microsoft Teams Meeting</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (323) 446-6996 United States, Los Angeles (Toll) Conference ID: 985 297 792#</li> </ul>