

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

Access for All UsCC Minutes

March 13, 2024

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Microsoft Teams Meeting

Attendees: **Maria Elena Arauco, Aaron Icedo, Racquel Decipeda, Ruth Wen, Maria Tan, Sarah Murad, Amy Kay, Irma Velasquez, Gabriela Velasquez, Carter Dallian, Cody Hanable, Natalia Magana, Judith Davila, Héctor Ramirez, Lourdes Rabello, Angy Kaufman, Maia Slider, Ann Marie Yamada, Mercedes Moreno, Steve Parks, Commissioner Fran Sereseres, Commission Stacy Dalglish**

DMH staff: **Mary R. Barraza, Darlesh K. Horn, Hyun Kyung Lee, Robert Byrd, Martin Jones, Alex Elliott, Sharon Little, Elmer Orlenias, Laura Kerr, Ashley Armstrong, Keianna Crenshaw, Oliver Harris, Rubou Sous, Mirtala Parada Ward, Jennifer Alquijay, Jenny Nguyen, Elaine Waldman, riKu Matsuda, Suyapa Umanzor, Tracy Tisino, Martha Ortiz**

Microsoft Team: **Keith Wells, Shubham Jadhav**

Interpreters and captioners: Alex (Spanish), Lucy (Spanish), Darcy (ASL), Sharon (ASL), LaDawna (CARTS)

Agenda Items	Discussion and Recommendations
Welcome and Disability Etiquette	Héctor Ramirez opened the meeting and invited riKu Matsuda to share disability etiquette. Microsoft support folks, Keith Wells and Shubham Jadhav, support behind the scenes if participants experience problems accessing the meeting via Teams.
Land Acknowledgment	Héctor gave the land acknowledgment and shared the link to the LA City/County Native American Indian Commission- https://lanaic.lacounty.gov/
Approve January Minutes	Racquel Decipeda called for motion to approve. Motion to approve by Irma Velasquez, seconded by Héctor. Motion passed with no objection.

DMH Update

Mary R. Barazza, Senior Director over Prevention and Child Well Being, UsCCs and the ARDI Division, presented on the reorganization in the division. Mary welcomed riKu as the new liaison and thanked Elaine for an excellent job. Mary shared a presentation on the reorganization to align initiative and programs the department is prioritizing.

Mary shared updates on the ADA unit that is responsible for ensuring compliance issues and oversight of the ADA leadership committee. The ADA unit will work closely with the Public Information Office to develop communications to meet digital accessibility requirements under section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act in Title II of the ADA.

Mary celebrated successes led by Angel Baker, Mirtala Parada Ward and Dr. Robert Byrd. Mary noted the hiring of Alex Elliot as the first ADA Coordinator and Sharon Little as our first ASL specialist.

ASL fluent clinician Andra Grimes will backfill to serve countywide.

The ASL bilingual bonus was approved and Dr. Wong is actively recruiting ASL fluent clinicians. Dr. Wong is dedicated to this recruitment effort.

In fiscal year 22-23, 88 deaf and hard of hearing clients were served in the clinics. 48,000 deaf and hard of hearing individuals in LA county. Fiscal year 22-23 and 23-24, DMH expanded with five acres to expand services across the county, 201% increase in the number of deaf and hard of hearing clients served across LA county. In 2023, DMH served 87 unique clients for 4,446 service appointments. For meeting and events fiscal year 2022-23, a total of 80 ASL and 25 cart services for meetings and events, an increase of 240% from fiscal year 21-22.

DMH is dedicated to ensuring all request for service, including language, regarding ADA requirements to meet the needs of the community members we serve, working with the purchasing department to include language in agreements we disseminate.

Héctor requested a copy of the presentation and said the information did not reflect their experience and the experience of other consumers. They also appreciated the presentation and noted the long way to go.

Amy Kay asked for all the data. She mentioned the numbers likely represent one-off appointments and do not reflect ongoing therapy. She said they would need a lot more interpreters and scheduled sessions for that to be ongoing therapeutic sessions. Amy asked where you are getting the number of 201% of increase?

Dr. Byrd confirmed the information came from the President and CEO of 5 Acres.

Commissioner Dalglish reminded everyone to participate in the MHSA budget review and make public comments.

Héctor mentioned the MHSA report is not ADA accessible and only available in English.

Sharon Little introduced herself and shared that she has worked in the deaf community for

Co-chair Update

Héctor acknowledged the fast change between liaisons, Elaine and riKu, caused stress and anguish with co-chairs (Héctor and Dr. Freeman). After meeting with DMH management about their concerns, Dr. Freeman decided to resign as co-chair. Dr. Freeman sent an email to the group explaining her departure. She was offered an opportunity to speak and declined. Héctor acknowledged the courage necessary to become a co-chair and the significant learning curve because of the system (not the UsCC). They mentioned the expectations from co-chairs is burdensome.

Héctor thanked Dr. Freeman for her service and wished her good luck. Héctor encouraged others to become co-chair and requested an onboarding process from the department. Héctor invited riKu to share and he thanked the co-chairs and Elaine for supporting him in the transition.

Elaine expressed gratitude and appreciation for the co-chairs and everyone in the UsCC. She said, "I wanted to share with you how much of a sense of honor I have felt in serving as your liaison over the past year. I have learned so much from you. I would like to thank the extraordinary co-chairs. Just, the depth and breadth and blood, sweat and tears you have put into this collective group is profound and is remarkable.

I say that having been to lots of different meetings over lots of decades. This group and this set of individuals coming together in such a cohesive inspired way has been very moving to me personally and professionally. Thank you. Access is love. I learned that from you, Hector. This dedication that you and the group have demonstrated and your critical input, fearless input, necessary input has been palpable and so vital. I'm very grateful to each of you and the collective for having had the experience of working with you. I'm really happy that I get to work in a division with riKu and get to know him. I'm really excited to hear what goes on over time with this group. I wish you all good health, peace and abundance in your efforts, individual and collective. May the force be with you."

Héctor thanked Elaine for her work and expressed relief hearing from her. Amy Kay, Cody Hanable, Martin Jones and others expressed their love and gratitude for Elaine.

<p>Capacity Building Project Update</p>	<p>riKu updated there are two project in the works that are 99% completed. One is the African American Family Mental Health and Disability Awareness Project and the Mental Wellness Art Series for Young Adults with Disabilities.</p> <p>Mirtala explained the three-layered process to complete the SOW process and award vendors. She explained the logistical struggles with the Internal Services Department (ISD). Héctor briefly explained the brainstorming and voting process for the capacity building projects.</p> <p>Amy reminded us to be sure vendors are serving people with all disabilities. In the past, there has been difficulty with vendors producing work that isn't helpful for the Access for All UsCC.</p> <p>Mirtala responded to Amy's concerned and excused herself to another meeting. Mirtala encouraged people to attend the new vendor orientation.</p> <p>Héctor said the information wasn't shared with the group and others chimed in to share they hadn't received the invitation to the orientation. riKu will follow up.</p>
<p>Retreat Planning</p>	<p>Racquel shared the retreat will be on May 8 from 11am-3pm at DMH Headquarters, 510 S. Vermont, Terrace Level. Parking is free and there will be food. Please let riKu know if you plan to attend. riKu will send a form to RSVP.</p> <p>Héctor shared the background on why we're having a retreat, to focus on priorities, to build community with other Access for All UsCC members.</p> <p>Amy clarified it's only for UsCC members.</p> <p>riKu shared that Dr. Horn has agreed to facilitate the retreat.</p> <p>Dr. Horn shared that she is honored to facilitate and wants to make sure that we premeet to have a solid agenda. She invited everyone to share feedback and ideas for the retreat agenda.</p> <p>Brief discussion about budget and food.</p>
<p>Announcements</p>	<p>Abilities Expo, 39th CSUN Assistive Technology Conference, "STUCK: Los Angeles County's Abuse and Neglect of People on Mental Health Conservatorships in Jail and Locked Psychiatric Facilities", MHA process, participate in the feedback, DMH employee shared that as a result of attending Access for All UsCC meetings, she has received the devices and accommodations requested since 2022.</p>

<p>DMH Follow-Up Items</p>	<p>Dr. Alquijay follow up: New: Make sure all projects are accessible to all people living with disabilities Recruit vendors with lived experience and subject matter expertise Send vendor recruitment meeting information to all Schedule MHSA update for April Old: Create manual with communication component in a month Copy of ADA presentation Language around disabilities Update from Dr. Byrd and senior management Proposals getting lost or neglected. MHSA invitation to present WE will get right people to the meetings Access to experience consultants Standardizing communication with UsCCs Live demo of iPrevail Large print agendas Where do disability requests go? DMH staff gets their accommodations Budget for retreat Timeline to transition non-ASL clients for A. Grimes Request for Angela Kaufman, emergency response team Request for CA Dept of Civil Rights and DRC</p>
<p>Labor Acknowledgment</p>	<p>Racquel Decipeda gave the labor acknowledgement</p>
<p>Closing</p>	<p>Racquel reminded everyone to attend the next meeting on April 10, 10am-12pm. Héctor thanked interpreters, captioners and everyone for a great meeting.</p>