

## **Usarmenia TV Mental Health PSA Project Summary**

Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, LACDMH, put a great deal of effort to educate the Armenian community of different aspects of mental health, drug abuse and much more, through Educational Public Service Announcements, PSAs, pertaining to the mental health needs of the Armenian Community. The Armenian PSAs were broadcasted eight times a day on USArmenia TV. The Armenian PSAs included large amount of audience due to being broadcasted on USArmenia TV & social media, such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, etc.

US Armenia TV is an open-air public Chanell, licensed by Federal Communications Commission, FCC, which can be viewed by children and adults, with a worldwide viewership of 3,000,000. This viewership includes the Armenian Diaspora around the world. In LA County areas, US Armenia TV includes satellite broadcasting with the largest concentration of Armenian community members. US Armenia TV has the following social media general subscribers, on YouTube, 500,000, Instagram, 110,000 & on Facebook 180,000.

Some of the Armenian Mental Health PSA views on social media, specifically, on YouTube from January 2023 – January 2024 is the following. Domestic Violence, in English, by Araksya Karapetyan, Chanel 11, Morning News, Journalist, 713 views. Elder Abuse, in Armenian language, by Alina Khachatryan, Journalist, in Armenian: 937 views. Substance Abuse Issues & Treatment, in Armenian by Rafayel Mnatsakanyan, TV Journalist, 973 views. Domestic Violence, in the Armenian language by Dr. Anna Yaralyan, LACDMH, Clinical Psychologist, 1.178 views. Mental Health Awareness, in English by Dr. Anna Yaralyan, a Clinical Psychologist, 1,600 views. Self – Esteem, in the English language by Dr. Anna Yaralyan, LACDMH, Clinical Psychologist, 1,115 views. Mental Health Awareness, in Armenian by Ashot Ghazaryan, an Actor, had 680 views.

As shown above, the Armenian PSAs included popular and influential Armenian Celebrities, Mental Health Professionals, and Armenian Community Leaders. The PSAs were translated from English to Armenian in a culturally sensitive manner. They were very well written, translated into the Armenian Language, conducted, recorded, and edited. The PSAs were meaningful, impressionable, and educational for the community and in turn were very well received from Armenian Community members.

The airing of the PSA's had a great impact on the Armenian community. The chosen mental health topics such as Domestic Violence, Substance Abuse Issues within the Armenian Community, Self-Esteem Issues, Mental Health Awareness, Anger Management, Elder Abuse, and Stress & Stress Management are all mental health issues relevant to this community. Overall, its message was powerful and informed the community about the mental health issues within this community and available mental health treatment and resources in LACDMH.

The Armenian PSAs had its strengths and challenges. Some of the challenges were that some of the Celebrities, who grew up in USA, couldn't read in Armenian, so the PSAs had to be written in the English Alphabet while delivering it in the Armenian Language. Additionally, recruitment of Armenian Celebrities presented certain challenges, as there was scheduling conflict with some of the Celebrities and/or a few of the identified Celebrities had traveled out of the country, as a result, couldn't be recruited at the time. This delayed the recording process. The proper and accurate translation of the Armenian PSAs was somewhat challenging and time consuming as well, as certain phrases & sentences had to be modified and vetted within the community members various times for clarity and accuracy.

Some of the other barriers were the following. A few community members informed the TV Station that when calling the LACDMH Hotline Number, it was challenging for them to get to the right department and speak to an Armenian speaking administrative staff. There were too many transitions, various times callers were placed on hold, and waiting time was too long to get to someone who could assist. Additionally, the LACDMH responders were English speaking only, and there was not a direct phone number with an Armenian speaker to answer phone calls and make proper referrals. All these aspects presented as barriers. The way PSAs often work within the Armenian Community is that if community members have challenges utilizing the phone numbers presented while airing the PSAs, they usually avoid utilizing it later, when needed.

Some of the strengths of the Armenian PSAs were the following. The PSAs accurately captured different mental health issues prominent in the Armenian Community; as a result, they were culturally relevant. Additionally, some of the PSAs included both the Armenian & English versions, which was very important & effective to have in order to embrace the monolingual Armenian Community members and Armenian Youth who have difficulties understanding the Armenian language.

Overall, there was a great deal of positive feedback from the community about the PSAs. After LACDMH televised the Armenian PSAs, we received many calls from our viewers, requesting information and referrals regarding the services offered by LACDMH. This itself indicated the success of the PSAs. As stated earlier, the PSAs were educational and powerful. As a result of this project, LACDMH demonstrated a commitment to support the mental health needs of the Armenian communities in Los Angeles County.