



▶▶ **Update on Innovation 8 –
Early Psychosis Learning Network
EPI-CAL**

Quality, Outcomes and Training Division
Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
**DEPARTMENT OF
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▶▶ Overview of the Early Psychosis Learning Health Care Network – EPI-CAL

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Description

- The Early Psychosis Learning Healthcare Network (LHCN) allows counties who use a variety of Coordinated Specialty Care models to treat Early Psychosis to collaborate about best practices and to collect common outcome data.
- The LHCN analyzes outcome data to inform treatment, engage in cross-county learning and inform Statewide policy around Early Psychosis care.
- Participation in the LHCN connects California counties with a national effort to promote evidence-based Coordinated Specialty Care models to effectively treat first episode psychosis.

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County Participation

- LACDMH's Coordinated Specialty Care program for Early Psychosis is the PIER Early Psychosis Program. It is an outpatient program that provides specialized care for youth with Early Psychosis.
- The PIER program identifies and treats individuals ages 12-25 who are at clinical high risk for developing psychosis or have experienced their first psychotic episode.
- Five contracted teams were trained in PIER as of December 2019 and began community outreach and direct service in January 2020. Since then, 442 youth have been screened by PIER programs and as of September 30, 2024, 104 clients are enrolled for services across Los Angeles County.

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Timeline

- LACDMH received approval from the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) to use County Innovation funding for this multi-county 5-year project on December 17, 2018.
- The project received initial approval by the LACDMH Human Subjects Research Committee on April 23, 2020. DMH entered a contract with UC Davis to execute this project as of July 1, 2020.
- The project transitioned from Innovation funding on June 30, 2024 to funding by the Department of Health Care Services through the SAMHSA Mental Health Block Grant Early Psychosis set-aside
- Additional funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) obtained by the LHCN has allowed an expansion of participating sites with a new name umbrella name: **EPI-CAL**

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Results – Beehive Application

- LACDMH has access to Beehive, a tablet- and web-based application that was developed through EPI-CAL.
- Beehive is used to collect consumer, caregiver and clinician responses to questionnaires about symptoms and treatment progress. Beehive makes these data immediately accessible to clinicians and creates visualizations of data that can be reviewed in session with consumers.
- Clinic and County administration also has access to cumulative data to track overall trends and track enrollment and progress of programs.
- EPI-CAL uses de-identified data collected in Beehive to identify Statewide trends and inform California's initiatives for Early Psychosis Care

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Results – Beehive Application

- LACDMH Consumers have reported that it has been helpful to see their self-reported questionnaire scores put into graph format so they can visualize their progress over time
- LACDMH Clinicians have reported that having the Urgent Issue Alerts system as a part of Beehive has been very helpful. Urgent Issue Alerts are sent via email to a treatment team when consumers endorse suicidal ideation, homicidal ideation, imminent homelessness or a plan to stop taking medications when completing questionnaires. Clinicians have found that clients may not always be forthcoming with this information in person.

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Results – DHCS support of Early Psychosis Care

- The efforts of the LHCN/EPI-CAL has led to a commitment to funding Early Psychosis care by DHCS
- Early Psychosis care is integrated in updates to BHSA through Prop 1 and BH-CONNECT
- DHCS is supporting more inclusive payment options for Coordinated Specialty Care Services through a bundled rate versus payment per service. This will help pay for components of care in Early Psychosis that are not otherwise covered by Medi-Cal (some Peer and Parent Partner Services, outreach and community education, etc.), supporting program sustainability and will make it a Medi-Cal benefit.

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Results – Training and Technical Assistance Center

- Counties receiving MHBG Early Psychosis set-aside funds participate in the Early Psychosis Training and Technical Assistance (TTA)
- The TTA provides high-quality live and recorded trainings, clinical consultation, administrative consultation and fidelity reviews for programs reducing the cost of these services to Counties.
- Fidelity Reviews are conducted by the TTA to ensure programs across the State meet standards for Coordinated Specialty Care and provide support for areas where Counties need improvement.

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Results – County Collaboration

- Improved collaboration between local Counties has led to opportunities to problem solve about common issues with providing Coordinated Specialty Care, sharing of ideas and adaptations for care with diverse populations, and improved referral networks.
- An EPI-CAL Annual conference has been established so that Counties across the State can gather annual for presentations, panels, breakout groups and in-person networking between Counties

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Next Steps – Statewide

- The LHCHN will continue to analyze de-identified data collected by Beehive to see how EP services compare with care as usual
- Improvements to Beehive based on Stakeholder feedback will continue
- DHCS is developing a Center for Excellence for Early Psychosis Care to continue to support Early Psychosis Care on an ongoing basis
- DHCS will finalize guidelines for bundled rates with input from Counties and stakeholders

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Next Steps – Los Angeles County

- EP Programs will continue to use Beehive in clinical care as well as Clinic- and County-level monitoring of trends and outcomes
- EP Programs will continue utilize asynchronous training to quickly onboard new staff into trainings offered online by the TTA
- Programs will receive additional staff training not previously available, including Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Psychosis, individual family therapy, and streamlined assessment methods
- LACDMH will be able to expand services across all eight Service Areas in Los Angeles County with the addition of three more EP clinics

Questions?



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