

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

**Eastern-European / Middle Eastern (EE/ME) UsCC Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
6/25/2025**

2:00PM – 4:00PM via Teleconference

Present: Nane Avagyan, Mitra Shabani, David Arakelian, Sarkis Simonian, Rima Safaryan, Nelly Ghukasyan, Jibril Hussen, Rhoda Addam, Magda Kirakosyan, Karima Sudan, Jamie Walker, Rubou Sous, Josephine, Riku Matsuda, Carla Jaramillo, Dewayne Hervey, Armineh Stepanyan, Seta Haig, Mastaneh Moghadam, Mikey Olbes, Angelina M. Amal Ibrahim, Josephine McMahan, Sydney Sonnier, Jayme Walker, Wali Hanifzai, Yue Hua Xu.

DMH Admin: Dr. Anna Yaralyan, Dr. Jennifer Alquijay, Yailin Noriega,

Agenda Items	Comments/Discussion/Recommendations/Conclusions
Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone introduced themselves. • Dr. Anna Yaralyan read the Board of Supervisors Land Acknowledgement.
Meeting Minutes Review and Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed & approved 5/28/2025 EE/ME Subcommittee meeting minutes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nelly Ghukasyan motioned to approve & Sarkis Simonian second. - Minutes were accepted by subcommittee members. There were no subcommittee member objections.
DMH Updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🚦 Dr. Jennifer Alquijay provided the following DMH updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Vendors must submit the Capacity Building Project Final Summary Report and the final invoice by June 30th as it is almost the end of the month, and this Fiscal Year ends on 6/30/2025. • We are in the transition period from the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) to the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) in California, which became effective on January 1, 2025. • LACDMH continues to have Community Planning Meetings, and we still have space for community members. We urge community members to attend these meetings. • LACDMH is looking for Armenian, Farsi & Arabic speaking Mental Health Promotors, those who are interested may apply for this position.

<p>EE/ME Subcommittee Capacity Building Proposals FY 2023-2024</p>	<p>🚩 The Arabic Speaking Poetry Night Mental Health Outreach Project – Dr. Heather Laird.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vendor completed the project. • Final project summary report has been submitted and approved by DMH. The final project invoice is currently being processed.
<p>EE/ME Subcommittee Capacity Building Updates FY 2024 - 2025</p>	<p>Project Vendors provided updates on their CBPs:</p> <p>🚩 Support Group and Mental Health Educational Seminars for Afghan Refugees - Qazizada Multicultural Therapy Clinic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vendor reported that the Support Group and Mental Health Educational Seminars for Afghan Refugees will be completed according to timeline. • Vendor thanked LACDMH for providing him the opportunity to conduct this project for the Afghan Community members. He also thanked EE/ME USCC Liaison for her assistance and support on this project. • The last seminar was completed on June 14, 20205, at 7323 Reseda Blvd., Reseda, CA, 91335. The title of the presentation will be “Qazizada Afghan Support Group, A Safe Space for Afghan Voices, Healing, and Community.” The presentation was conducted in Pashto & Dari language dialects. • The seminars focused on variety of mental health topics pertaining to the Afghan Community, including trauma, intergenerational conflicts, immigration challenges, difficulties adjusting to a new country, & the trauma from the Afghan War. • The Vendor is in the process of completing the Final Summary Report on the project. The final summary report will include the successes & challenges of this project. • The Final Summary Report and the invoice will be submitted for processing prior to the FY end date on 6/30/2025. <p>🚩 Armenian Wellness Festival Project – Nuway Express Inc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armenian Wellness Festival Project was on May 4th, 2025, at Pacific Community Center & Park. The address of the venue is 501 South Pacific Ave., Glendale, CA, 91204. • The event was successful overall as 250 participated.


- The Armenian Wellness Festival included 8 mental health presentations and 8 wellness & cultural activities.
- The event also had various resource tables.
- Some of the event highlights included, mental health seminars tailored towards the Armenian Community, wellness activities, traditional Armenian food, live music, DJ & Dance Group, children’s activities and more.
- The Vendor is in the process of making modifications on the final summary report.
- The final summary report will include the successes & challenges of this project.
- The Final Summary Report and the invoice will be submitted for processing prior to the FY end date on 6/30/2025.

 **Armenian Poetry Circles for Mental Health** - Prolific Styles LLC, Sydney Sonnier.

- Vendor reported that all the Armenian Poetry Circle Events were completed earlier this month.
- Vendor thanked Dr. Yaralyan for her assistance on this project.
- The poetry events were conducted at different adult day care centers in LA County and it created a safe space for Armenian elders to express their thoughts and feelings and listen to popular Armenian poetry in the Armenian language.
- Poetry is very important in the Armenian culture and the poetry events provided a great connection to the Armenian History & Community.
- The testimonials Armenian elders shared were positive, they were very thankful for the poetry events, and the project overall was very successful. Participants’ feedbacks will be captured in the final project summary report.
- The Vendor is in the process of modifying the Final Summary Report on the project. The final summary report will include the successes & challenges of this project.
- Vendor agreed to submit the Final Summary Report, and the invoice for processing prior to the FY end date on 6/30/2025.

 **The Arabic Coffee & Tea Project** – Karima Sudan Organization.

- Vendor completed all the coffee & tea events. All the events were very well attended & educational & eventful.
- The last event was held on May 25, 2025, 2pm – 6pm. Titled “Bridging Generations, Strengthening Emotional Bonds Between Moms & Teens.” The event focused on parenting &

	<p>youth, intergenerational conflict & bridging generational gaps. There were children’s activities and entire families were present. Additionally, there was a mental presenter, who discussed good relationship patterns between mothers and their children. Coffee, tea & cultural pastries were served.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vendor is in the process of completing the Final Summary Report on the project. The final summary report will include the successes & challenges of this project. • Vendor will submit the Final Summary Report, and the invoice for processing prior to the FY end date on 6/30/2025. <p> Russian and Farsi Mental Health Film Project #2 – Cross Cultural Expressions, Mastaneh Moghadam, LCSW!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vendor reported that the Russian and Farsi Mental Health Film project was successfully complete. • The movie premiers were well attended. Approximately 550 people registered for the films screening. • The movie was watched by entire families and there was a great deal of positive feedback from the community about it. • The movie will be shown at an International Film Festival. • Vendor agreed to submit the Final Summary Report, and the invoice for processing prior to the FY end date on 6/30/2025. The final summary report will include the successes & challenges of this project.
Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Labor Acknowledgement ❖ EE/ME USCC Subcommittee voted for the meeting to go “Dark” for the month of July 2025. ❖ Next meeting will be on Wednesday 8/27/2025, from 2:00pm – 4:00pm.
	<p><u>Join Microsoft Teams Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (323) 446-6996 United States, Los Angeles (Toll) Conference ID: 985 297 792#