



INNOVATION PLAN APPROVAL SUMMARY Sutter/Yuba County Innovation

Innovative Projects Included In Innovation Plan:

1. Improving Mental Health Outcomes via Interagency Collaboration and Service Delivery Learning for Supervised Offenders Who Are At Risk of or Have a Serious Mental Illness
2. A Culturally Competent Collaboration To Address Serious Mental Illness in the Traditional Hmong Population
3. Continued Mental Health and Wellness Support for the New Post-Transition Age Youth (TAY) Clients Who Are in Recovery from a Serious Mental Illness

Total Requested for Innovation: \$914,730

Duration of Innovative Programs: Three (3) Years

Staff Recommends: APPROVAL

**Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC)
Vote regarding Plan Approval:** October 24, 2013.

Review History

Sutter/Yuba counties submitted their Innovation Work Plan to the MHSOAC in May 2013. Commission staff were unable to recommend plan approval at that time because none of the included Innovative Projects fully met Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) requirements for innovative projects. Sutter-Yuba withdrew the plan in order to make modifications. Following technical assistance provided by Commission staff, Sutter/Yuba submitted their revised Innovation Plan on October 1, 2013.

Innovation Plan Summary

Sutter/Yuba Mental Health Services, a bi-county mental health department, is seeking the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission's (MHSOAC or Commission) approval for the three Innovative Projects named above. All three projects have three (3)-year timelines.

Project 1: \$634,520

Improving Mental Health Outcomes via Interagency Collaboration and Service Delivery Learning for Supervised Offenders Who Are at Risk of or Have a Serious Mental Illness

The primary purpose for this project is to increase the quality of mental health services and associated mental health outcomes, including co-occurring substance-use disorders, for Assembly Bill (AB) 109 and other supervised offenders who are at risk of or have mental illness in both Sutter and Yuba counties. Historically this probation population with mental illness does not experience recovery, lacks hope and resiliency, and has poor mental health outcomes and increased recidivism. Before Sutter-Yuba Mental Health Services, Sutter County Probation, and Yuba County Probation collaborated to design this Innovative Project, each county was going to approach improving services for this population in their own ways. As designed, this Innovative Project will provide an opportunity for Sutter-Yuba Mental Health Services to learn about and compare mental health outcomes that result from each county's differing strategies.

While both counties will provide a dedicated mental health clinician for the probation population at risk of or with serious mental illness, Sutter County Probation services will use a centralized, front-loaded mental health service approach. A mental health clinician will be embedded in a multi-disciplinary probation team to provide mental health screening and assessments, post-release recovery plans, and connections to ancillary services, prior to release.

Yuba County Probation will employ a de-centralized, community-based approach to mental health service delivery. The clinician assigned to Yuba County Probation will provide the same essential services following the probationer's release to the community.

The significant innovative element of this project is the concurrent evaluation of two different county service delivery strategies, an opportunity that is provided by Sutter-Yuba's structure as a bi-county mental health department.

Learning Objectives

1. To compare mental health outcomes that result from a community-based compared to an institution-based approach to providing mental health services to AB 109 and other supervised offenders at risk of or with a mental illness.
2. To compare the results of two mental health approaches – and specific strategies within each approach – for gender, ethnic, and language groups among the broader population of offenders coping with risk or onset of mental illness.
3. To learn whether either or both models, or the innovative process of piloting both simultaneously, enhances collaboration and strengthens working relationships among partner organizations and systems, improving their capacity to plan, implement and evaluate strategies for mental health service delivery for this vulnerable population.

Evaluation

Prior to project implementation all project partners will finalize selection of the data elements that will be collected within the three-year project timeframe. Identical outcome measures from each county setting will be analyzed to determine which approach is more likely to allow Sutter-Yuba Mental Health Services the highest quality mental health program with the best opportunity to improve mental health/dual diagnosis outcomes and recidivism rates. Both counties will administer the same measurement tools prior to beginning project services and at intervals throughout the term of the project. Two tools identified for use include the Static Risk and Offender Needs Guide (STRONG) and the Level of Care Utilization System for Psychiatric and Addiction Service (LOCUS).

In addition to specific data collection activities, all project partners will meet for an annual learning session that will include outcome presentations from all partners and client presentations on their experiences.

Project 2: \$41,759

A Culturally Competent Collaboration to Address Serious Mental Illness in the Traditional Hmong Population

The purpose of this project is to improve the quality of mental health services provided to Hmong persons with serious mental illness that will lead to improved mental health outcomes. The Hmong community in Sutter and Yuba counties is an underserved population with a unique understanding of and beliefs about mental health and mental illness. Western concepts of mental health and mental illness do not exist in the traditional Hmong culture. Frequently, among traditional Hmong clients, specific symptoms such as auditory and visual hallucinations, nightmares, poor appetites, racing thoughts, etc., are believed to stem from spiritual causes such as soul loss, soul wandering, and communication from ancestors. Generally members of the Hmong community prefer to access traditional healing practices and ceremonies, and are frequently unable to do so for various reasons, especially due to the cost.

Sutter Yuba Mental Health Services currently provides a Hmong Outreach Center where persons can receive culturally appropriate services. Previously, Sutter Yuba Mental Health Services created a Traditional Healers Project to bridge the gap between mental health clinical staff and traditional community healers. Mental Health clinicians and community healers come together to share information on western mental health practices and traditional Hmong practices and beliefs. This new innovation project is intended to be an innovative cultural collaboration that takes the next step in Sutter/Yuba's continuum of learning related to serving persons in the Hmong community with serious mental illness.

Innovation funds will support Hmong clients in accessing and coordinating traditional healing practices that address their spiritual concerns in combination with their established mental health treatment. The innovative element of this project is the integration of traditional healing practices with western mental health treatment. Project staff will assist clients in finding an appropriate Hmong traditional healer from the “Traditional Healers Provider List” created by the Traditional Healers Project. Medical staff will collaborate on this project, and assessment questions will be developed to help physicians refer appropriate Hmong clients with mental illness. Mental health staff will meet with the client and the selected traditional healer to understand the client’s needs and the healer’s diagnosis and recommendations based on the identified symptoms, client and family preferences, etc. Project staff will coordinate the client’s traditional healing services with their current mental health treatment.

Clinical staff including doctors, nurses, therapists and intervention counselors will test this approach with a minimum of ten Hmong clients each year whose symptoms of mental illness may improve with the addition of traditional Hmong healing practices.

Learning Objectives

1. If Sutter Yuba Mental Health Services provides an avenue for Hmong clients with mental illness to integrate traditional Hmong practices, rituals, and ceremonies into their mental health treatment plan and practice, this collaboration will increase the quality of services and result in improved outcomes for the Hmong population with mental illness.
2. A cross-cultural approach to evaluation will incorporate – and translate – Hmong and western concepts of mental health and mental illness, and will contribute to a shared understanding of desired outcomes and how to measure them.

Evaluation

Obtaining valid and reliable data from traditional Hmong clients with a serious mental illness is a complicated and sensitive cultural process. For this Innovative Project, Hmong outreach staff will work with evaluators to construct a survey for Hmong clients. The survey will collect data regarding symptoms of mental illness; relevant experiences of clients, family members, and service providers; outcomes; and other information. Survey questions will be translated and conducted pre- and post-onset of services.

Information from the client surveys administered in the first year of the project will be used as baseline information for learning in years two and three. The project will track key dates of both western mental health treatment and traditional Hmong practices. Data will be collected regarding the specific traditional healing practices used, service engagement, and treatment successes and failures. In addition to measuring outcomes, the evaluation will document client and family perspectives and recommendations, project coordinator notes and observations, clinical notes and observations, and traditional healer’s notes and observations.

Additionally, Sutter Yuba Mental Health Services will facilitate annual learning sessions to include client/family members served, stakeholders, project staff, healers, and clinical and medical staff to discuss outcomes, experiences, and progress of the project.

Project 3 - \$238,451

Continued Mental Health and Wellness Support for the New Post-TAY Clients Who Are in Recovery from a Serious Mental Illness

The target population for this innovation project is youth who are aging out of Full Service Partnership (FSP) services for Transition Age Youth (TAY), whose recovery support needs would not be well served in the adult FSP program or adult outpatient programs. Many youth for whom TAY FSP services have ended experience poor mental health outcomes because they are further transitioning and coping with life stresses from increased independence and responsibilities of adulthood, while also trying to maintain their recovery from serious mental illness without the in-place supports provided in the TAY program. The young adults (post-TAYs) formerly served well by the TAY FSP program too frequently becomes an inappropriately served and/or underserved population, with poor mental health outcomes and a poor quality of life.

This project will pilot and test a continuum of mental health services with a wellness and recovery focus for a post-TAY population between the ages of 21 and 30 who are in recovery from a serious mental illness, with significant risk of relapse. The Innovative Project will use an Intervention Counselor to provide mental health services and facilitate connections to community resources for housing stability, continuing education, and vocational support, tailored to support the recovery of these post-TAY clients and to support their transition to adulthood. Not merely create a bridge to ongoing adult mental health services, the goal for this program is to successfully launch these young people into the community and support them in their recovery from mental illness as they transition to adulthood.

Learning Objectives

1. Whether and how a continuum of age-appropriate mental health services with a focus on wellness and recovery targeted to post-TAY clients who are in recovery from serious mental illness with significant risk of relapse will improve the quality of mental health services and improve mental health outcomes: for example, fewer hospitalizations, increased vocational and educational success, and measurable improvements in mental, emotional, and relational functioning and well being.

Evaluation

Sutter-Yuba Mental Health Services will utilize the Milestones of Recovery Scale (MORS), a standardized tool that measure recovery from mental illness. Clients will be assessed using the MORS before service delivery and throughout the Innovative Project. The county hopes also to compare and analyze crisis readmission rates for the individuals served in this project with crisis readmission rates for comparable individuals who are not part of the post-TAY project.