



## **INNOVATION PLAN APPROVAL SUMMARY**

### **San Diego County Innovation**

**Name of Innovative Program: Family Therapy Participation Engagement**

**Total Requested for Innovation: \$3,381,000**

**Duration of Innovative Program: Three Years**

**Staff Recommends: APPROVAL**

#### **Review History**

County Submitted Innovation Plan: February 9, 2015

MHSOAC Vote regarding Plan Approval: February 26, 2015

#### **Innovation Plan Summary**

San Diego County is seeking the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission's approval for their Innovative Program, Family Therapy Participation Engagement (FTPE). The primary learning goal is to determine if the utilization of Parent Partners – defined as parent/caregivers of children/youth who are currently receiving services from a public agency that serves children/families for a mental illness – to provide outreach to, build relationships with, and provide motivational interviewing for caregivers of children in treatment encourages their engagement in family therapy services. Further, the program hopes to identify specific strategies and best practices that family partners can utilize to help caregivers see the value of consistently participating in family therapy.

The primary purpose of the Innovative Program is to increase access to services for underserved populations. It is well documented that parents who are actively engaged in the treatment of their child(ren) make crucial contributions to positive outcomes and lasting change. The County of San Diego has set a goal that 80 percent or more of children in treatment for serious behavioral health issues receive at minimum one family therapy contact per month with the client's biological, surrogate, or extended family member, a goal that is not being consistently met throughout their system.

Currently, San Diego County Parent Partners engage with families in a broader role and offer rehabilitative and case management services; this program would shift to a focus on engagement in family therapy. Research documents that parents' expectations predict subsequent barriers to and participation in treatment. A key program goal is to communicate to the caregiver the value of their involvement in treatment and how it will directly support the success and outcomes for the entire family. The program will explore and address caregivers' reasons for lack of participation in family therapy and their goals for the child's treatment and recovery. Parent Partners will represent the racial/ethnic,

cultural, and linguistic populations that the County's programs serve, and the program will include priority efforts to engage underserved populations such as Latinos and African Americans.

**Evaluation:**

The program will evaluate if the encouragement of a Parent Partner is more successful in involving caregivers in family therapy than a traditional model in which clinicians conduct outreach to the family. The program also intends to assess if repeated engagement efforts correlate with successful family therapy outcomes. An evaluation component will be embedded within the program to include the following:

- Changes in caregivers' participation in family therapy sessions: overall and compared across the six individual programs that participate in this Innovative Program
- Identification by each contractor of best practices that most successfully engaged caregivers in family therapy and had a positive impact on the child's treatment. An independent evaluator will determine the most useful modalities to gather and analyze data to identify best practices and to make recommendations, including perspectives of the children, caregivers, and Peer Partners.

The contract shall be monitored and communicated in the following ways:

- Quarterly Status Reports for each included program.
- Annual reports and final evaluation by the Independent Evaluator on the effectiveness of the Innovative Program.
- A Tool Kit to be compiled by the Independent Evaluator and made available to the Children, Youth and Families System of Care.