



INNOVATION PLAN APPROVAL SUMMARY San Diego County Innovation

Name of Innovative Program: Urban Beats

Total Requested for Innovation: \$1,211,613

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, Urban Beats (UB). The primary purpose is to increase the quality of services, including better outcomes, for severely mentally ill (SMI) Transition-Aged Youth (TAY) who are enrolled in behavioral health programs. UB will also serve at-risk TAY who show existing or emerging characteristics consistent with early onset of SMI.

The TAY population with mental health issues has historically been difficult to engage and has resisted traditional treatment modalities. UB will focus on engagement strategies for African American and Latino TAY in the Central Region of San Diego, using multiple models of artistic expression including visual arts, spoken word, music, videos, dance, and performances, including social media, created and developed by TAY. Staff will include peers who are representative of the TAY who have artistic and/or behavioral health experience. UB will also provide culturally responsive trauma-informed care for participants, as indicated, that fosters self-worth, dignity, healthy relationships and community connections, and healing.

While evidence-based practices regarding music therapy have been documented and TAY mental health programs utilizing artistic expression have been implemented, there is little to no research on engaging and retaining TAY at risk of or with SMI via diverse models of artistic expression. UB participants will communicate via TAY-friendly social media and artistic expression that creatively combine therapeutic, stigma reducing, cultural, and social justice messaging. The presentation and social media dimensions of the program will have the additional benefit of reducing stigma related to mental illness and mental health, expected to reach a minimum of 600 youth annually.

This program will provide San Diego County Behavioral Health Services (BHS) system of care an opportunity to pilot and evaluate alternative strategies that can be integrated into their traditional TAY array of services, and used to engage SMI and at-risk TAY more consistently and effectively. This program will also test if and how providing a safe and age-appropriate, supportive space for SMI and at-risk TAY fosters their creatively to express stories, experiences, and healing by improving their well-being and connection and increases their knowledge about mental illness, prevention, and recovery.

Evaluation:

In order to measure the impact of this intervention, the County proposes to assess clients over a three-year period. At monthly intervals, the contractor will report participation rates, self-rating scores, observer ratings, measurable outcomes and possibly school functioning reports. Additional evaluations will be conducted at six (6) months and at the end of years one, two and three.

Specific data to be gathered and evaluated include, but are not limited to, the following for both SMI and at-risk TAY:

- Increased access to services.
- Decreased levels of impairment (for example, using the Milestones of Recovery Scale).
- Decreased risk levels for a mental illness.
- Reduced stigma.
- Increased knowledge of how to access care and of whole health.
- Improved social functioning/connectedness.
- Client, family, community and staff satisfaction surveys; self-report of a positive impact from the artistic expression model.

The evaluation through methods to be determined will identify which program components are necessary for successful implementation and effectiveness. Data will be disaggregated for different age, ethnic, and cultural populations.

Community TAY Stakeholders, including clients and staff at participating sites, will be engaged to provide feedback to the evaluation design and to the program. These Stakeholders will also be involved in the review of the annual program evaluation and will provide essential feedback. Stakeholder collaboration and evaluation will include clients and staff at participating site(s).