



INNOVATION PLAN APPROVAL SUMMARY San Francisco County Innovation

Name of Innovative Program: Addressing the Needs of Socially Isolated Older Adults

Total Requested for Innovation: \$500,000

Duration of Innovative Program: Two Years

Staff Recommends: APPROVAL

Review History

County Submitted Innovation Plan: January 26, 2015

MHSOAC Vote regarding Plan Approval: February 26, 2015

Innovation Plan Summary

San Francisco County is seeking the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission's approval for their Innovative Program, Addressing the Needs of Socially Isolated Adults (ANSIA). The primary learning goal is to increase access to services by engaging and connecting vulnerable, socially isolated adults with social networks and behavioral health services through the use of the peer-to-peer model. Peer support services will be customized to the needs of individuals with and at-risk for mental illness, including opportunities to advocate for themselves, meet their goals for recovery, make connections inside and outside of the mental health system, gain employment, find better housing, and learn skills to live well and have a meaningful role in the community.

Older adults, particularly those who do not have many community connections are one of the most underserved populations in the city of San Francisco. Research demonstrates that there is a strong correlation between perceived isolation and mental health problems, especially depression, with particular risk for older adults. This project will focus on isolated older adults in low-income, depressed, neighborhoods with identified risk factors, including but not limited to the following: low-income, cultural and linguistic barriers, LGBT, lack of awareness of services, lack of appropriate interventions, stigma, lack of housing options, residence in single room occupancy housing (very frequent in San Francisco's Tenderloin), and physical and/or cognitive impairments

Specifically, the new program will endeavor to learn better ways to do the following:

- Incorporate a culturally-informed training curriculum, supervision/support plans, and engagement strategies and tools to improve San Francisco's system of support for socially isolated older adults.

- To build effective partnerships between individuals and organizations that promote mental health outcomes through peer support services and other programs for socially isolated older adults at risk of or with a mental illness.
- To develop a more coordinated system of care and support for socially isolated older adults.

There is an expectation that this project will strengthen San Francisco's network of peer support services increasing linkages among mental health providers, older adult systems of care, and the community. The project will also increase a cadre of peer supporters that are focused on the needs of socially isolated older adults and thereby promote positive mental health outcomes. San Francisco's peer-based model embodies principles of recovery and wellness by building strong relationships, to provide a system of support for peer supporters (a consistent San Francisco contribution).

Evaluation:

In addition to its system goals, the primary client goals for this project are to increase social connectedness, strengthen support for recovery and wellness, increase access to mental health services, and increase use of mental health services and supports. In addition, the project endeavors to support recovery and professional development goals for peer supporters.

The program will administer a survey to track clients' perceived and actual isolation/connection at the beginning of the program and at six month intervals. The program will also collect information about the experiences of peers, including types of supports they find most useful in their work with isolated older adults (e.g., frequency and type of supervision, training, team meetings). In addition, the program will hold a focus group at the end of the year to collect additional information from participants and peers about their experience. Results of the qualitative evaluation will be analyzed to determine the overall effect of the peer-to peer support model had on the engagement and overall wellbeing of the program participants.

San Francisco County will also assess changes that occur with regard to community partnerships and the added value of any increased collaboration.