



INNOVATION PLAN APPROVAL SUMMARY

Orange County Innovation

Total Requested for Innovation: \$18,410,300

Staff Recommends: APPROVAL

Review History

County Submitted Innovation Plan: May 20, 2010

MHSOAC Vote regarding Plan Approval: June 24, 2010

Innovation Plan Summary

Orange County Behavioral Health Services developed a community planning process in which nearly 400 stakeholders representing a variety of ethnic, linguistic and consumer, family member and provider groups, as well as the County Behavioral Health Service's community partners, were involved. Eighty-eight project proposals were submitted by groups representing 11 different primary languages and a diverse group of ethnicities. A subcommittee of the MHSOAC Steering Committee was appointed to review and prioritize the proposals. The priority rankings were presented to the full Steering Committee on March 29, 2010, and the ten top priority projects were selected to be included in this Plan. A linking goal of all the innovation projects, in addition to their other learning goals, is to increase paid employment opportunities for trained consumers and family members and to assess how well this works in each setting.

Integrated Community Services

This project provides two different approaches to integrating physical health, mental health, and alcohol/substance abuse treatments. Mental health care at primary medical care community clinics will be provided using trained consumer mental health workers supervised by licensed mental health staff. Consumers will be trained to coordinate and monitor the physical health care of behavioral health clients and will be supervised by registered nurses. The goal is to determine how this approach will impact the overall health for consumers of both physical and mental health services who have co-occurring disorders. This project will measure cost-effectiveness, improvement of health care utilization, and outcomes related to using trained consumers as Medical Care Coordinators.

Family-Focused Crisis Management and Community Outreach

The aim of the Family-Focused Crisis Management Team (FFCMT) is to assist families in learning, as soon as possible, about the support services and resources that are available to families who have a loved one with a mental illness. Family-Focused Crisis Management will provide short-term case management, facilitate family communication, and share knowledge and resources to assist in empowering the family as a whole. Family-Focused Crisis Management will offer services in all Orange County threshold languages (Spanish, Vietnamese and Farsi) and also in Arabic, Korean and American Sign Language. Satellite offices in the community will be co-located within ethnic specific agencies that have developed a NAMI affiliation (including an agency that serves the deaf and hard of hearing). These services will be provided by trained consumer and family member paraprofessional staff. This project seeks to learn how this approach will impact multiple psychiatric hospitalizations of the clients it serves compared to those persons hospitalized but not involved in the project; communication between well family members and the family member with a psychiatric diagnosis; the assistance of families and individuals in developing a plan of action to be used in the event of future crisis situations; community collaboration in the field of mental health; and the acceptance of services provided by consumer and family members across different ethnic and cultural communities.

Volunteer to Work

This community-based, consumer-run program uses trained consumer mentors to facilitate the preparation and involvement of program participants in volunteer and employment positions in the community. An innovative aspect of this program is that this preparation and involvement relies heavily on 'Outreach Groups' that are facilitated by trained mentors. These Outreach Groups are support and special interest groups that serve various purposes. Trained consumers will also be utilized to give empowerment trainings, train the trainer, and other workshops as needed. Collaboration with local partners will be a large component of this project. This project will demonstrate the value of using trained consumers in a consumer-managed organization, to support, role-model, and assist individuals in finding volunteer/job opportunities that match their unique skills and goals. The County will learn how this project will impact the involvement of consumers in the community and finding employment with community partners; quality of life outcomes; the ability of consumers to find meaningful roles in employment; consumer confidence levels; and outcomes for work retention and success. Orange County is proposing that the provider selected for this project be an organization that is completely owned and operated by consumers; this will separate this project apart from other existing supportive employment programs which only employ a small percentage of consumers of mental health services who are in recovery.

OK to Be Me

The innovative component of this project is in the utilization of the Promotora Model, where Transitional Age Youth (age 18-25) and adult peers will be trained to assist in providing culturally competent outreach, education, and linkages to mental health and co-occurring disorder services both via phone and in person. Peers will provide home visits to engage and assist in obtaining services for isolated high-risk (suicide,

depression, risky and self destructive behaviors) individuals from the LGBTQ community in Orange County. This project seeks to learn how this approach will impact the willingness of individuals to access culturally competent mental health information and care; stigma reduction; better engagement of individuals from that ethnic community into care; and bringing individuals from the LGBTQ community into mental health and substance abuse services.

Vet Connect

This project will create a centralized place for veterans and families to access services in an atmosphere that will decrease stigma, provide privacy, and reinforce positive interactions. The number of young men and women veterans from ethnic and cultural minorities has risen in recent year. The bulk of the outreach and support services will be provided by *employed* veteran peer mentors who are individuals in recovery with mental health conditions. This project will seek to employ peers from the same background as many vets to ensure cultural competency in service delivery and to reduce disparities for family members with language barriers.

In addition, Vet Connect will identify gaps in community resources necessary for veterans and families to successfully transition from military to civilian life and adjust to the experiences that occurred during their military service. The project will provide one, centralized contact/place for community providers to collaboratively interact to educate each other on and to maximize resources needed by veterans. It will also integrate approaches to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), and ensure outreach to community cultural groups to improve access to care and follow through. Vet Connect will create a network of providers and volunteers that are trained on military culture and resources.

Community Cares Project

This project uses an innovative approach to reach and provide mental health treatment to those who cannot get into the public mental health system and cannot afford to access the private mental health system. In this project, the private mental health providers will be organized into a system that offers pro-bono services to those who can't afford them and uses trained consumers and family members to provide outreach services to make this system available to those in need. This project seeks to learn about collaboration between the public and private mental health systems; the strength of using trained consumers and family members to provide services; and willingness of private mental health professionals to participate in a pro-bono system.

Education, Training and Research Institute

This project is the development of an Education, Training and Research Institute that is able to apply for public and private grant money to provide an ongoing vehicle for leveraging non-MHSA funds to support education and training activities. This project seeks to answer the learning question of whether the goals of the MHSA can be pursued by a government agency through the use of a non-government funding mechanism. This Institute will be expected to develop its own mechanisms for sustaining itself using funds from grants it receives. It will also secure funding to maintain or augment WET or Innovation projects that are viewed as high priority by county mental health and consumer and family member stakeholders. The project will test whether this represents a viable method of securing additional funding to maintain

and develop education, training and research projects that fall within MHSA guidelines but may not be able to be fully funded with MHSA dollars.

Project Life Coach

Project Life Coach is a program for underserved monolingual or Limited English Proficiency Latino, Iranian and Asian Pacific Islanders with mental illness, which will use family strengthening and counseling approaches and community collaboration between and among ethnic businesses and ethnic service providers to promote employment and improve the functioning of persons with mental illness. The underlying approach for Project Life Coach is the use of life-counseling (also called life coaching) techniques to promote self-esteem, help-seeking behavior, personal development, and family integration among clients who are monolingual speakers of languages other than English and who are not currently employed. Project Life Coach will develop innovative collaborations, first between a network of community-based social service providers long-established as gatekeepers in the Latino, Korean, Vietnamese, and Farsi-speaking communities and second between this network of providers and local ethnic businesses and leaders within each community. The ultimate aim of this project is to help underserved Latino, Iranian and Asian/Pacific Islander mental health consumers gain employment at local ethnic businesses as a method of maintaining or developing their integration within the community in which they live. The County hopes to learn if provision of community-oriented life counseling and employment within ethnic communities improves the overall outcome of clients who participate in the program; and if discussion and comparison of experiences across ethnic-specific mental health service providers is helpful in identifying the services and methods that are useful across ethnicities and those which are only useful for some ethnic communities and not others, or require modification for use in different ethnic communities.

Training to Meet the Mental Health Needs of the Deaf Community

This project utilizes an existing accredited Mental Health Worker Certificate training program to train individual consumers and family members from the Deaf community using ASL as the primary language. Graduates of the program may assume mental health worker or peer mentor positions within the public mental health system, using their certificate to gain entry into employment. They may also continue in their educational program to gain an AA degree, and then go on to a bachelor's or graduate degree in the mental health field, thus, eventually bring licensable people from the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community into the mental health field. Finally, the project is expected to contribute to sensitizing the community to mental health needs of the Deaf. The County will learn how this project will impact: the willingness of individuals in the Deaf community to choose mental health as a field of work and to access culturally competent mental health information and care; and the engagement of individuals from a specific ethnic community who are deaf and the ability of getting them into care.

Childhood Mental Health

This project will provide brief behavioral intervention services to families of young children using consumer and family members to provide short-term intervention services for families with children experiencing behavioral problems related to transitions from childhood to young adulthood. The consumers and family members providing services will be trained to provide interventions, such as family groups, under

the supervision of licensed professionals. The County will learn how this project will impact their current system and existing policies in promoting high-quality mental health services for children, as well as reducing barriers to the provision of such services; facilitation of better entrance and navigation of the mental health system; cross-discipline collaboration in the various settings, services, and providers used by children; identifying and addressing eligibility gaps; and, the use of paraprofessionals to access services and reduce disparities, improve transitions across care settings, and impact rates of both physical and mental illness in children.