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On Wednesday, January 23, 2008, the first meeting of the Co-occurring Disorders Workgroup of the California Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) will take place. The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn (I-80), 5321 Date Avenue, Sacramento.

Mental Health leaders from state and local government, mental health advocacy groups, and individual mental health consumers and family members, will meet to discuss current policy issues facing people living with co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse problems.

Up to 10 million people in the United States suffer from at least one mental disorder in addition to an alcohol or drug use disorder (SAMHSA, 2002, Report to Congress, as cited in a recent ADPI Report).

According to a 1999 U.S. Surgeon General Report, and as cited in the above 2007 ADPI report, "[F]orty-one to sixty-five percent of individuals with a lifetime substance abuse disorder also have a lifetime history of at least one mental disorder, and about 51 percent of those with one or more lifetime mental disorders also have a lifetime history of at least one substance abuse disorder."

A group of high-level officials will be joining the discussion: Stephen Mayberg, Ph.D, the Director of the California Department of Mental Health; Renee Zito, M.S.W., California Director of Alcohol and Drug Programs; Marvin Southard, D.S.W., Director of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health; and Sandra Naylor Goodwin, Ph.D, Executive Director of the California Institute for Mental Health. A total of 20 members will come together for the discussion.

The 16-member MHSOAC itself was established by Proposition 63 in 2004 which imposed a tax on income above \$1 million to help fund mental health services and provide prevention and early intervention for mental health.

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Co-occurring Disorders Workgroup agenda attached.