



**Summary Report
MHSOAC Community Forum – Placer County
Maidu Museum, Roseville – April 26, 2011**

Attendance

The MHSOAC sponsored a Community Forum in Placer County on April 26, 2011. The Community Forum, held in Roseville, had over 65 attendees, including stakeholders, county staff, community providers, MHSOAC Commissioners, Work Group members and staff. The increased attendance from previous Forums is attributed to having more time and resources focused on outreach. In 2010, the MHSOAC had much less lead time to conduct outreach for the Community Forums and did not have the assistance of a Community Forum Work Group to help with outreach. The Community Forum Workgroup, established in 2011, is made up of four members each from the Client and Family Leadership Committee (CFLC) and the Cultural and Linguistic Competence Committee (CLCC).

Overview of Roseville Community Forum

The Community Forum Workgroup and MHSOAC staff engaged in extensive outreach efforts for the Roseville Forum. These efforts included sending an invitation letter and event flyer in English and Spanish to the host and surrounding counties and email and phone calls to community based organizations representing underserved groups. There was additional outreach by county staff to county stakeholders, and outreach from statewide mental health groups and the Community Forum Workgroup itself. All of these efforts resulted in substantial stakeholder participation in Placer County, a small to medium sized county.

The Roseville Forum followed the format used at the prior MHSOAC Forums conducted in 2010 and early 2011. The Forum included a brief introduction by Commissioners followed by questions about participants' experience with MHSA local planning and services. All Forum participants sat together, theatre style, and raised their hands if they wanted to respond to the question asked.

The Roseville Forum was successful in achieving Community Forum goals including: (1) providing an opportunity to hear firsthand from stakeholders about MHSA successes and challenges; (2) gathering stories about the local experience and impact of the MHSA; and (3) expanding the presence of the MHSOAC by holding the Forum in Placer County.

What follows is a brief summary of comments expressed by persons attending the Forum that reflect both success and concerns.

Comments Reflecting Success:

- General satisfaction with MHSA services and benefits
- MHSA program enabled a transition age youth to leave conservatorship and live independently for two years
- An individual with lived experience became employed by the county
- Many successful MHSA programs in county hosting the Forum
- Success of permanent shared housing project made possible by the MHSA
- Development of a program focused on persons at high risk for hospitalization and/or incarceration that now has 81 clients
- Ethnic groups benefiting from multiple Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) programs including mental health home checks, and collaboration with police and nutrition projects

Comments Reflecting Concern:

- Concern and questions about the authority of persons conducting the Forum to help individuals receiving services and confusion about the roles of persons facilitating the Forum.
- Concern about whether the MHSOAC would act on individual complaints. (Commissioner explained the county and state issue resolution processes.)
- Concern that counties do not listen to individuals.
- Concern that family member had received fewer MHSA services over the past several years was associated with critical comments about MHSA and MHSOAC.
- Commission accused of merely rubber stamping local MHSA programs and State recommendations.
- Concern that Commission is not protecting the MHSA.
- Concern about PEI concept of “early warning signs” being an injurious approach with students. Suggestion that an alternative approach is to have more places within the school system for students to have their problems heard.

Commissioner Comments:

- Commissioners and Work Group members are all volunteers who do not have the power to fix individual problems.
- Although the Commission does not have the power to fix individual problems it may refer individuals to the appropriate local or state process to help solve their problems.
- There are specific organizations that may offer help to individuals such as Disability Rights of California.
- Concerns expressed about counties doing the right thing is further evidence of why it so important to continue the evaluation of MHSA programs on a regular basis and to share the results across counties.