Discussion Document

Summary of UCLA Recommendations from the
Summary and Synthesis of Existing Evaluations Regarding MHSA Values and PEI
with MHSOAC Staff Recommendations for Next Steps

May 16, 2012

UCLA's recommendations from these two reports have been summarized and grouped together below for discussion by the Evaluation Committee. Draft next steps have been proposed by MHSOAC staff for consideration and are included below in italics.

1. FUTURE EVALUATION CONTRACTS
    a. Focus future evaluations to understand the impact of MHSA on MHSA values. *MHSOAC approved principles for evaluations include being "consistent with MHSA objectives and meaningful to consumers and families." No additional action needed.*

2. STATEWIDE FRAMEWORK/MASTER PLAN
    a. Establish overall evaluation goals for PEI. *Provide this recommendation for consideration in the MHSOAC's evaluation master plan and to Rand who is working on statewide PEI evaluation system framework. Revisit this recommendation upon completion and approval of a master plan which will help guide overall MHSOAC evaluations.*

3. EVALUATION FUNDING PRIORITIES
    a. Focus resources on future evaluations of MHSA values in the areas that currently have greatest potential for meaningful cross-county analysis. Based on findings, MHSA value with greatest potential is reduction of disparities in access. *The Evaluation Committee made the recommendation to use some of the FY 11/12 MHSOAC evaluation resources for an evaluation of reduction in disparities. It was approved by the Commission and authority to contract by 6/30/12 was provided to the Executive Director. No additional action needed at this time.*
    b. Consider a future summary and synthesis of PEI evaluations that simultaneously reviews the individual level outcomes alongside program, system and community level outcomes which are most relevant to MHSA values. *See Recommendation 2a*.

4. STANDARDS FOR COUNTY DATA COLLECTION/REPORTING
    a. Develop small set of priority indicators and/or measure within each Key Community Mental Health Need and across target populations that counties should collect and report as part of an ongoing effort to evaluate PEI. Need long-term evaluation to capture change at these levels. *See Recommendation 2a.*

b. Provide clear guidance to counties to meet any new PEI evaluation/reporting requirements. *Not applicable currently because no new PEI evaluation/reporting requirements at this time. It's good practice which should be followed with any new reporting evaluation requirements.*
c. Provide guidance to counties to identify and collect outcome data on the individual/family, program, and system level to ensure that all levels are adequately included in their PEI evaluations. *See Recommendation 2a.*
d. Have counties report separately: 1) actual number of individuals served across prevention programs, 2) actual number of individuals served for early intervention programs and 3) estimated number of individuals served in prevention programs. Include number and characteristics of individuals served across PEI programs. *See Recommendation 2a.*
e. Develop a reporting format for local PEI evaluation findings such that outcome data are submitted to the State in a manner that facilitates an effective process of summarizing and synthesizing outcomes across counties. Include in the reporting format required content such as evaluation questions, study design, samples, measurement instruments and timeframes for data collection, data analysis, and interpretation of findings. *See Recommendation 2a.*

5. STATE LEVEL ANALYSES/REPORTS
    a. Ensure that counties understand how to use process-oriented data to help interpret program outcomes through reporting structure that 1) delineate between outcome and process-oriented data and 2) require an analysis of how process-oriented data help to explain outcome findings.
    b. Statewide analyses on PEI should group counties based on the type of projects they have chosen for their local evaluation. *The Evaluation Committee made the recommendation to use some of the FY 11/12 MHSOAC evaluation resources for an evaluation of early intervention strategies. It was approved by the Commission and authority to contract by 6/30/12 was provided to the Executive Director. One aspect of this analysis is to group counties based on type of their projects/strategies. No additional action needed at this time.*

6. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA)
    a. Dedicate resources to providing counties with TA on how best to design evaluation studies; collect and analyze data; fidelity monitoring; and report, disseminate and utilize findings. *Refer the evaluation technical assistance recommendations to those recommending priorities for use of state technical assistance resources.*
    b. TA should be tailed to the existing capacity of counties. *See Recommendation 6a.*
    c. Ensure that counties understand how to use process-oriented data to help interpret program outcomes. *See Recommendation 6a.*
    d. Help counties identify appropriate program/system level indicators so that they capture the full spectrum of potential effects of PEI. *See Recommendation 6a.*

e. Provide counties with resources, guidance and technical assistance to report specific contextual information required for interpreting the validity and strength of local findings on PEI evaluations. *See recommendation 6a.*