

PROPOSAL “Z” FOR FY 2012/13 MHSOAC EVALUATION

Name of Proposed Evaluation: Strengthening of Data Collection Systems and Standardized Reporting within the Community Services and Support (CSS) Component

Brief Description:

As part of its oversight and accountability role, the MHSOAC should be conducting statewide evaluations of services funded under CSS. It is therefore necessary for counties to collect precise program/provider, client, and outcome data and provide timely and accurate reports of this information to the MHSOAC. Without accurate data, we have no way to truly know the impact of the MHSA and consider how to improve services based on research-based knowledge of the MHSA’s current level of influence. Furthermore, generation of standardized information via reports is essential for statewide evaluations and cross-county comparisons. This project aims to provide resources aimed at improving the accuracy, availability, and use of program/provider, client, and outcome data on services funded under the MHSA within the CSS component.

The goal of this project is to collaborate with appropriate agencies, experts, and stakeholders in order to identify what steps are currently needed to address some of the problems that exist regarding available data, data quality, and reporting processes. Decisions regarding placing a focus on obtaining/reporting specific information and strengthening specific data systems will stem from evaluation goals regarding our ability to understand the impact of MHSA services, including program and client characteristics, on MHSA values (i.e., community/statewide, program/system, and individual/family outcomes).

This process will begin by identifying and describing shortcomings and limitations with current data and reporting systems that pertain to program/provider, client, and outcome data relevant to CSS, such as:

- 1) The quality of currently available data systems (e.g., the inability to accurately match data from dual reporting systems; high volumes of unknown or missing data; inability to fully verify existing data); and
- 2) The availability, quality, and consistency of current reporting systems (e.g., provider-level reports from FSP).

Identification of these gaps and areas that are in need of improvement should lead to recommendations for how the MHSOAC can provide leadership, as well as oversight and accountability, geared toward addressing these shortcomings (e.g., identification of strategies to overcome issues with data quality/access/availability, and approaches that would enable counties to provide standardized reports on needed data). Newly gained insights from this project as well as prior evaluation efforts that have begun to elucidate problems in data collection and reporting systems should be used to prioritize MHSOAC investment in these systems. Recommendations for investments would be driven by the need for the MHSOAC to obtain timely, accurate data on relevant program and client characteristics and outcomes, as well as the feasibility for other entities to collect and report on that information.

Finally, these recommendations would be acted upon with the ultimate goal being to improve the ability of counties to obtain and report on program/provider characteristics, client characteristics, and MHSA outcomes within the CSS component. Taking these necessary steps will enable additional evaluation of the impact of MHSA funded programs within the CSS component. Evaluation of this component will then facilitate the ability for continuous quality improvement of those programs and services based on data-driven knowledge.

Purpose (check all that apply)

- Inform and Improve Services Assess and Communicate Impact
- Inform and Improve Policy Gain Insight
- Affect Those Who Participate in the Inquiry
- Other, specify _____

Audience and Uses

The audience for accurate and useable data and reports on program/provider, client, and outcome level data from all CSS components includes the MHSOAC, policy makers, counties and their providers, clients and family members, and the general public.

Questions

- What are the current limitations and gaps in existing data within the CSS component that pertains to program/provider characteristics, client characteristics, and outcomes?
- What are the current limitations and gaps in the current reporting systems that facilitate county reporting of this information to the state?
- What needs to be done to improve the availability, quality, and timeliness of CSS data and reporting? How can the MHSOAC lead this effort and provide oversight and accountability that will facilitate needed improvements in these systems?

Priority Goals/Outcomes/Indicators from MHSA/SOC Statute

Community/statewide, program/system, and individual/family outcomes would be included.

Outcome Consistent with MHSOAC Logic Model

Strategies 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 (i.e., all goals from the statute).

MHSOAC Estimated Funding Need \$350,000-\$450,000

- One-year only Multi-year