

Summary: Innovation Concept for Regulations Discussion

This document is intended to serve as a framework for discussion of the proposed Innovation Regulations

Overall Purpose of MHSA Innovative Projects ((W&I Code §5830(a) (1-4); (b) (1-4); (c))

The MHSA-specified purposes for Innovative Projects are the following, all of which relate to the prevention of and/or recovery from serious mental illness: (1) increase access to underserved groups, (2) increase the quality of services including measurable outcomes, (3) promote interagency and community collaboration; and/or (4) increase access to services.

Each County's Overall Innovation Program Must Include All of the Following

MHSA Innovation funds are to be used for designing, piloting, and evaluating time-limited new or changed mental health practices, which have not yet demonstrated their effectiveness. The broader purpose is to infuse new effective mental health practices, consistent with the four MHSA purposes, into the overall public mental health system.

1. Design, pilot and evaluate a mental health practice that does one of the following: a) introduce new mental health practices or approaches, including but not limited to prevention and early intervention b) make a change to an existing mental health practice or approach, including, but not limited to, adaptation for a new setting or community, or c) introduce to the mental health system of a promising community-driven practice or an approach that has been successful in non-mental health contexts or settings (W&I Code §5830(b)(2)(A-C))
2. Decide whether/how to continue the Innovative Project, or successful element(s) of the project, without Innovation funding (W&I Code §5830(d))
3. Communicate results of evaluation and lessons learned and disseminate successful Innovative Projects to other counties (and beyond, if desired) (W&I Code §5830(d))

Innovation Evaluations (W&I Code §5830(d))

Evaluation is at the core of MHSA Innovation, since all Innovative Projects are pilots to be tested. Statewide success of the Innovation component involves the extent to which successful Innovations are implemented by counties as ongoing practices and are replicated by other counties and beyond. Innovation evaluations must include the following, at a minimum:

1. Measure outcomes, including outcomes associated with the selected Primary Purpose
2. Assess the effectiveness of whatever is changed, compared to existing mental health practice
3. Use sound method to determine which elements of the Innovative Project contributed to successful outcomes
4. Use evaluation data to determine whether to adopt the Innovative Project, or successful elements, and to disseminate to other counties successful practices and lessons learned

Timeline (W&I Code §5830(d))

1. The county designates a timeframe between one and five years from onset of Innovative Project based on the complexity of the evaluation.
2. The county develops a timeline with key milestones, focused on development and refinement, time-limited implementation, evaluation, decision-making, and communication
3. An Innovative Project is not funded beyond the approved end date unless the county submits and receives approval from the MHSOAC for a work plan extension.

Expenditure Plan (Budget) (W&I Code §5830(d))

1. The expenditure plan must be consistent with the focus on evaluating time-limited pilot projects.
2. The expenditure plan includes the total and annual projected cost of the Innovative Project, including both available funds and, if applicable, planned use of estimated revenue from future Innovation allocations.