



May 21, 2008

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The Mental Health Services Oversight and  
Accountability Commission  
1300 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1000  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Commissioners,

The Sacramento Native American Health Center, Inc. (SNAHC) regularly participates in meetings related to the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) including your Commission meetings. In addition, we participate in meetings and conference calls between the MHSA Government Partners and the MHSA Community Partners.

We were unaware of action items at last month's meeting in Bakersfield when Commissioners were asked to vote on specific proposals regarding the administration of PEI statewide projects. While it is understandable there are pressures for the OAC in being charged with the responsibility of redirecting the mental health system toward transformation -- we maintain that the participation of community partners is imperative.

The Sacramento Native American Health Center, Inc. continues to support the basic framework of the MHSA, which is intended to transform mental health care by mandating all services be based on consumer and family involvement; developed and monitored with a collaborative of community partners; and delivered with cultural competency focused on eliminating ethnic and racial disparities in services.

Our particular constituency sees the MHSA as an extremely important piece of legislation that will improve mental health care to our population. We have had positive experiences in building relationships with other constituencies and government partners concerned with mental health in California. The Sacramento Native American Health Center, Inc. wants to stay informed and give our full participation as a community partner. Therefore, we are making the suggestions regarding OAC votes:

1. Any proposal requiring the vote of the MHSAOAC must be available for public review at least 30 days prior to the scheduled vote.
2. Before any actionable issue is presented to the MHSAOAC, there should be discussion among stakeholders (both government AND the mental health community) in an attempt to reach a consensus.

3. The MHSOAC should not vote on issues about which there is not consensus between the government and community partners, unless there is an emergency.

Finally, the Sacramento Native American Health Center, Inc. supports the proposal that Senator Darrell Steinberg outlines in his letter to Stephen Mayberg regarding the strategy for expediting funding for Prevention and Early Intervention Statewide Projects. This letter was shared with Community Partners by Senator Steinberg's staff and discussed at a meeting between the MHSOAC Community Partners and Government Partners.

Sincerely,

Britta Guerrero, Executive Director

Sacramento Native American Health Center, Inc.