



MHSOAC Communications Unit Strategic Plan 2009

Mission Statement

The MHSOAC Communications Unit seeks to ensure Californians understand mental health is essential to overall health. We seek to promote wellness, recovery, resilience, and the reduction of stigma for individuals living with mental illness and their families. We will provide the public with information about income and expenditure of funds to ensure accountability.

Audiences

All Californians are our primary audience, with an emphasis on clients, families, providers, state government (particularly the Governor and the Legislature), counties, the media, community-based organizations, and unserved and underserved communities.

Guiding Principles

Achieving transformation of the public mental health system through:

- **Transparency in Government**
Offer opportunities to know what goes on when MHSOAC conducts business, including access to information and understanding about how decisions are made. In support of transparency, all MHSOAC meetings, including committee meetings, are open to the public and provide opportunities for public input.
- **Wellness, recovery and resilience**
Highlight strength-based approach to mental health that includes recognition and support for each person's unlimited potential, hope, empowerment, advocacy, respect, social and family connections, responsibility, mutuality, self-determination, and confidence.
- **Community collaboration**
Enhance access to effective shared decision-making among people with a stake in the MHSOAC and California's mental health, including public mental health agencies.

Principles continued

- **Client and Family driven policies**
Ensure that all levels of California's mental health system promote the priorities and perspectives of people with lived experience of serious mental illness/emotional disturbance, including clients of all ages, parents/caregivers and family members.

- **Cultural & Linguistic Competency**
Implement essential strategies to reduce disparities in access, utilization, and quality of mental health services and supports and mental health outcomes.

- **Prevention**
Promote mental health and well being, prevent adverse consequences of mental illness, and prevent, where possible, mental illness. Prevention strategies can be directed at risk factors or can reduce the severity, course, duration and associated disability of a mental health disorder.

- **Co-occurring Disorders Competency**
Move behavioral health and related systems, services, and supports toward achieving core competencies to serve individuals with co-occurring psychiatric and substance-use disorders.

- **Integrated service experiences for clients and their families**
Promote seamless service delivery by ensuring that all providers are aware of other providers and their services.

- **Being Trauma informed**
Move behavioral health and related systems, services, and supports to respond effectively to the impact of trauma and facilitate healing.

- **Measurable outcomes**
Assess and quantify the impact of MHSA programs, services and supports. Evaluating the outcome of MHSA funding is essential for accountability to taxpayers and the public.

Communications Goals

1. Keep the public, Commissioners, and stakeholders informed of the successes and challenges of MHSA implementation in order to promote transparency in government. This will be achieved through:
 - Published newsletter – May, September, and December
 - Website launch, expected in early June
 - Ongoing ListServe
 - Press releases at each MHSOAC meeting and as needed
 - Brochures and fact sheets as needed

Communications Goals continued

2. a. Develop strategies to overcome stigma in order to promote wellness, recovery, and resilience. (See MHSA, W & I Section 5845(d)(8)).
 - Package and market to all Californians: MHSOAC reports, evaluation documents, and other materials reflecting lessons learned.
- b. Provide Commission communication to the Governor or Legislature regarding actions the state may take to improve care and services for people with mental illness in order to promote wellness, recovery and resilience. (See MHSA, W & I Section 5845(d)(6). ---As needed
3. Establish two-way communication between stakeholders, public mental health agencies, and the MHSOAC through the use of the MHSOAC website in order to promote community collaboration.
 - Website launch expected in early June
 - Two-way features by September 2009
4. Raise public awareness and influence of the MHSOAC in order to promote client and family driven policies.
 - See activities from Goal #1
 - Highlight life experiences of Commissioners
5. Promote MHSOAC communication in threshold languages with links to translators on the website in order to build cultural and linguistic competency.
6. Highlight Commission funding of Prevention and Early Intervention programs in order to promote prevention goals of the MHSA.
 - Regular newsletter feature
 - Featured on website
7. Distribute and publicize the MHSOAC Report on Co-occurring Disorders in order to promote Co-occurring Disorders competency.
 - Post on website
8. Highlight successful examples of client and family experiences of service delivery and recovery.
 - Regular newsletter feature and posting on website

Communications Goals continued

9. Provide Commission and mental health stakeholders with information about topics of special interest, such as trauma, substance abuse, homelessness, and disparities.
 - Newsletter article May 2009
 - Regular newsletter article
 - First hand stories
 - Academic perspectives
 - Reading lists
10. Highlight MHSOAC, state, and county efforts to develop measureable outcomes for mental health programs.
 - Report MHSOAC evaluation progress in newsletter article for September 2009
 - Post articles on website

Activities

1. Public Information Tools
 - a. Newsletter:
 - i. Publish May, September, and December 2009
 - b. Website: Launch by June 2009, with the goal of providing the public with a more user friendly and interactive form of communication.
 - c. Listserve: Use the Commission Listserve to disseminate MHSA information.
 - d. Press Events: As required, the Communications Unit will invite the media to cover MHSOAC and MHSA activities to help spread the positive results of the MHSA.
 - e. Press Releases: The Communications Unit will regularly draft and send out press releases, as well as maintain relationships with members of the press, with the goal of encouraging coverage of the positive results of the MHSA and the activities of the MHSOAC.
 - f. Other Informational Material: The Communications Unit will develop, design, write, and produce brochures, fact sheets, and other non-electronic materials to inform the public of the goals and policies of the MHSA and the MHSOAC.

Activities continued

- g. Spokespeople: The official spokesperson for the MHSOAC is the Chair. When the Chair is unavailable, the Vice-chair, and subsequently, the Executive Director will speak with the press.
- h. The Communications staff lead will coordinate press calls and will answer questions when the Chair, Vice-chair, and Executive Director are unavailable.
- i. Commissioners will speak to the public on topics of special interest.

2. Outreach & Education

- Five Year Anniversary Event—November 2009.
- Site Visits by MHSOAC and staff to local mental health facilities.
- Community meetings with stakeholders.
- Presentations by Commissioners and staff to the public.
- Mental Health Planning Council visits.
- Local Mental Health Board visits (depending on staff availability)

3. Evaluation

- Monthly reports to MHSOAC on work in progress.
- Reports to Executive Director at weekly meetings.
- Year-end or twice a year summary to the Legislature on MHSA progress.

Timeline for 2009 Activities

May	June	July	August
Newsletter OAC Meeting - Press Release Site Visit Disability Day Booth	OAC Meeting - Press Release Site Visit Summer Event	OAC Meeting - Press Release Site Visit Summer Event	OAC Meeting - Press Release Site Visit Update Fact Sheet Summer Event
September	October	November	December
Newsletter OAC Meeting - Press Release Site Visit Update Brochures 2 Way Web Feature Summer Event	OAC Meeting - Press Release Site Visit	OAC Meeting - Press Release Site Visit Anniversary event	Newsletter

Other Activities Provided As Needed

Communications to the Governor and Legislature
 Press events
 Press releases
 Website updates, maintenance, and management
 Community meetings
 Communication Unit presentations to staff and public
 Administrative Support
 Unit Supervision and training
 Contract supervision and management
 Posting
 Public Records support
 OAC Planning support
 Op/Ed articles
 Outreach to Legislators and Legislative staff
 Response to Commissioner requests
 Equipment requests

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