



May 21, 2009

CHAD PEISON
Chair, Board
CALIFORNIA MENTAL HEALTH
DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

Stephen W. Mayberg, PhD, Director
Department of Mental Health
1600 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Dr. Mayberg:

The California Mental Health Planning Council would like to comment on the Issue Resolution Process that is being proposed. We have specific recommendations regarding the state-level aspects of this process:

1. The Department of Mental Health (DMH) should maintain a log of issues that are filed. The Planning Council will review this log on an annual basis to identify any trends in the issues that are raised.
2. The Department of Mental Health should send the issue filer a copy of all correspondence that occurs during the investigation of the issue, including communication with the county. This procedure will ensure the transparency of the investigation.
3. In addition to sending the disposition letter to the issue filer, county mental health department, MHSOAC, and the Planning Council, the letter should also be sent to the local mental health board or commission and to the county's local Quality Improvement Committee.
4. The DMH should establish a deadline for how many days the Department has to respond to the issue filer.
5. The Issue Resolution procedures should be posted in all facilities and mental health programs that receive funding from the Mental Health Services Act.
6. The DMH should establish an 800 number that issue filers can call to register their issues. Access to this number should be available in threshold languages.
7. The DMH should provide all the information on the Issue Resolution process in the threshold languages.

In addition to recommendations about the state-level process, the Planning Council also has some concerns about the Issue Resolution Process at the local level. First, we believe that the concerns related to the local-level process and its relationship to the state-level process are very complex and require additional time for careful deliberation. Thus, we are recommending that that the comment period for the Issue Resolution Process be extended to July 31, 2009.

We also believe that concerns related to the state-level process cannot be adequately resolved until the issues related to the local-level process are addressed as well. We believe that the integrity of the local-level process is very important. We understand that the California Mental Health Directors Association Social Justice Advisory

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May 21, 2009

Page Two

Committee is considering making recommendations about the local-level process, and we would like there to be time for that process to inform the discussion that is underway about the overall Issue Resolution Process.

We hope these comments are helpful. If you have any questions, please contact Ann Arneill-Py, PhD, at (916) 445-1217 or by email at Ann.Arneill-Py@dmh.ca.gov

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Dale Mueller, EdD, RN
Chairperson

cc: Denise Arend
Sophie Cabrera