

## Innovation Trends Report: Initial Findings

The Innovation component of the MHSA provides California the opportunity to develop and test new mental health models with the potential to become tomorrow's best practices. The MHSA purposes for Innovation programs are to:

- Increase access to services
- Increase access to underserved populations
- Improve the quality and outcome of services
- Promote interagency collaboration

Through the Innovation component counties design and test new or adapted programs and strategies with the potential to improve mental health delivery consistent with the MHSA-specified purposes identified above. The MHSOAC's Innovation Trends Report analyzed 86 Innovation MHSOAC-approved pilot programs from 32 counties. The report also assessed trends from 22 counties with 48 Innovation plans that were approved locally after the passage of AB 100<sup>1</sup>.

Some of the significant areas in which new mental health approaches are being developed, piloted, and evaluated by county Innovation programs include:

- Treatment approaches for transition-age-youth, including youth exiting the foster care system
- Alternative responses to mental health crises, including those involving criminal justice systems
- Expanded contributions to service delivery by persons with mental illness and their family members
- Community-based prevention, early intervention, and treatment models by and for diverse populations
- Comprehensive and integrated approaches for individuals with co-occurring mental health, substance-use, and/or physical health issues
- Efforts to increase access to treatment, especially for individuals currently underserved by the mental health system.

More than one-third of programs approved by the MHSOAC included one or more of these areas of Innovation. Seventy-two percent of MHSOAC-approved Innovation programs include a specific focus on individuals with serious mental illness; the rest address a broader range of prevention and early intervention, evaluation, collaboration, and funding approaches.

The MHSOAC provided support to the California Institute for Mental Health in its development of training and technical assistance for counties' Innovation efforts, including topic-based learning groups and an interactive e-learning curriculum on evaluation for Innovation that helps counties identify effective program elements that should be replicated and disseminated. MHSOAC staff also provided technical assistance to 45 counties to support the development of their Innovation work plans.

---

<sup>1</sup> A total of 47 counties had approved work plans for 134 Innovation programs as of December 1, 2011. This number includes seven counties that had Innovation plans approved both before and after the passage of AB 100. "Counties" includes Sutter-Yuba acting jointly, the city of Berkeley, and Tri-Cities consisting of Pamona, Claremont, and LaVerne.