

MHSOAC

Mental Health Services
Oversight and Accountability Commission



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor

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Chair

RICHARD VAN HORN
Vice Chair

SHERRI GAUGER
Executive Director

September 19, 2011

Jamila Guerrero-Cantor and Gwen Wilson
Co-Chairs
CMMC MHSA Assessment & Recommendations Committee
1127 11th Street, Suite 925
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Co-Chairs Guerrero-Cantor and Wilson,

Thank you for your letter dated September 6, 2011 regarding jointly improving the engagement of unserved, underserved and inappropriately-served communities. The Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (Commission) is committed to the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) value of reducing disparities in access to, quality of, and outcomes of mental health services and appreciates your shared commitment to this value.

Your letter raises process and outcome concerns regarding the AB 100 Work Group (WG). The AB 100 WG was convened by the Commission's Executive Director Sherri Gauger in March 2011. As such, I consulted with Executive Director Gauger about the concerns raised in your letter. It is my understanding that Ms. Gauger spoke with several members of the CMMC during the time the WG met about the WG composition, process and next steps related to the AB 100 WG report recommendations.

Executive Director Gauger convened the first AB 100 WG meeting on March 30, 2011 and the WG was tasked with quickly developing consensus on very high level issues that needed clarification as a result of the enactment of AB 100. The WG was composed of Executive Directors of statewide organizations that represent mental health clients and family members who hold stakeholder contracts with the commission, statutory partners, and one of the co-authors of Proposition 63, Rusty Selix, Executive Director of Mental Health Association of California (MHAC), the contractor administering the California MHSA Multicultural Coalition (CMMC) contract.

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By design, the discussions of the AB 100 WG were not confidential and members of the WG obtained input from their constituents on the proposed recommendations. For example, MHAC held telephone conferences to discuss the WG's proposals with organizations it represented and others including members of the CMMC. The feedback obtained from these telephone conferences were incorporated into the WG's recommendations. The Commission appreciates how these contributions improved the final report.

Before the Commission voted to adopt the AB 100 Work Group Report on May 26, it heard extensive public comment on the concerns mentioned in your letter. By approving the AB 100 WG report, the Commission was confident that the process and outcome of the WG, which was a consensus document, was aligned with the MHSA values.

Thank you for the suggestions on future methods for collaboration. Since the MHSOAC has statutory responsibility regarding the development of strategies for reducing disparities, we are committed to working closely with all stakeholders who share the commitment to achieve this goal. Thank you specifically to CMMC for its role in developing the strategic plan for reducing disparities. The Commission looks forward to hearing the progress as your members' diligently work toward the final report.

Sincerely,



Larry Poaster, PhD
Chair
Mental Health Systems Oversight
And Accountability Commission

cc: Darrell Steinberg, President Pro Tempore, California State Senate
MHSOAC Commissioners
Sherri Gauger, Executive Director, MHSOAC