
AGENDA ITEM 5A

Information

February 26, 2015 Commission Meeting

Presentation: Assembly Bill (AB) 1421 Panel

Summary: At the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC or Commission) meeting on December 18, 2014, the Commission received a presentation on the Assisted Outpatient Treatment program being operated in Nevada County under Assembly Bill (AB) 1421 also known as Laura's Law. Laura's Law seeks to address the needs of mentally ill adults at substantial risk for relapse and deterioration as a result of not having accessed mental health services or voluntarily maintained participation in such services due to the symptoms of their mental illness, by providing a process to allow court-ordered outpatient treatment. The legislation established an option for counties to provide a way for courts, probation and the mental health systems to address the needs of individuals who are deemed unable to benefit from mental health treatment programs in the community without supervision.

Throughout California, there has been disagreement regarding whether AB 1421 should be implemented. While many family members and other advocates have sought to have the program implemented, it has met with opposition from clients, service providers, advocates and disability rights attorneys. Today the Commission will be presented with information regarding the issues surrounding Laura's Law, the consumer perspective and alternatives to involuntary out-patient commitments.

Laura's Law is a controversial program and the MHSOAC has not taken a position on the issue.

Presenters:

- Sally Zinman, Executive Director, California Association of Mental Health Peer-Run Organizations
- Susan Gallagher, MMPA, Executive Director, Nor-Cal Mental Health America
- Megan Wheelehan, Staff Attorney, Mental Health Advocacy Project

Enclosure: None

Handouts: PowerPoint will be made available at the meeting.

Recommended Action: None

Motions: None