

Summary

Merced County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Ongoing Planning Council

November 19, 2020

9:00am

Behavioral Health & Recovery Services Department
Teleconference via Zoom

Present:

Sharon Jones, Fernando Granados, Monica Adrian, Micki Archuleta, Heydi Herrera, Christopher Jensen, Jennifer Jones, Cindy Mattox, Rebecca McMullen, Ismael Munoz, Jenna Nunes, Sophia Ornelas, Maria Orozco, Nancy Reding, Steve Roussos, Sandra Sandoval, Ralph Silva Rodriguez, Anna Santos, Ye Thao, Griselda Vasquez, Tatiana Vizcaino, Jennifer Xiong

Presentation and Discussion:

All Members

I. Call to Order / Roll Call

II. Approval of Minutes

The approval of minutes for October 15, 2020 was motioned/seconded (Nancy Reding /Jenna Nunes) and carried.

III. Update Planning Council Contact List

Fernando Granados, Chair, encouraged all attendees to confirm their attendance via chat or by emailing Maria Orozco.

IV. Notice to the Public

Nancy Reding announced that there is a group of women planning a virtual rally for Saturday, January 23rd. They are calling it "Celebrating Women Virtual Rally- Keeping the Glass Ceiling Broken." Nancy provided her email in the Zoom chat for anyone interested in helping with the planning or distributing the information.

Ye Thao introduced Merced Lao Family's new clinician, Bao Xiong, who will attend the meetings in the future.

Jennifer Xiong with Hlub Hmong Center shared about their virtual event on Friday, November 20th, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM. They will be showcasing Hmong educators who will come together to discuss priority for Hmong children and have a registered nurse to talk about healthy habits and mental health. Jennifer shared the flyer via the Zoom chat.

Jenna Nunes with Sierra Vista Child and Family Services announced that they have been awarded a grant through Public Health – the Road to Resilience contract, in which they will be working with pregnant women, assessing them, and referring them out to services, including a lot of case management work. There is more to come and it will tentatively start in January.

V. Chair's Report

Fernando Granados mentioned that we're back to purple tier for another 2 weeks. He noted that it has impacted a lot of programs as some are getting ready to start seeing clients in person and now going back to providing services virtually. Fernando asked everyone to be mindful of that and check in with clients and with each other.

VI. Director's Report

No director's report.

VII. Program Presentation: Community Initiatives for Collective Impact

Stergios (Steve) Roussos, Community Initiatives for Collective Impact, presented a PowerPoint on Lessons from a Health Impact Assessment of Merced County's Workforce Shortage for Mild and Moderate Behavioral Health. The PowerPoint provided information about the project's origins, collaborators, results, what counts, what it is, HIA Focus of MMBH Professionals, Health Impact Assessment, HIA methods, Merced County Adults, MMBH Disparities, personal and community consequences, benefits of MMBH care, demand for services & staff in Merced additionally impacted, challenges in local MMBH care, training barriers for trainee and organization, lessons and conclusions, and emerging recommendations. The link to the full report can be found on the PowerPoint.

Sharon Jones asked if there were any action steps as a result. Steve explained that Donna and NAMI helped disseminate some of the results. He hopes they can work with NAMI to move some of this forward. They had 2 different healthcare organizations in town who are working on getting them a pilot program that would increase actual reimbursement for training supervision and try one of the primary recommendations at the local level. One of the organizations did a cost-benefit analysis and figured out that if they could just raise the insurance reimbursement a little bit, they would pay for a supervisor that would do that locally. Steve mentioned that Human Services Agency (HSA) has had a program for at least 2 years, where they try to recruit licensed clinical social work graduate students in HSA and move them up the ladder to licensing; they definitely want to support and expand that program as well.

Monica Adrian thinks that this report could really support the need for workplace wellness programs. Outside of bringing more clinicians, she thinks we also need to really focus on prevention. She noted that the photos where Steve talked about workplace productivity are absolutely correlated with the mental health of the staff members. She thinks it is something that Steve can talk more about to businesses and other agencies across the county to really understand how it impacts them. Steve further discussed about a program in western Michigan that they found worth replicating in Merced. A foundation funded a program in western Michigan to do a pilot test which now has been formally sustained. Monica noted that Innovation was on the agenda today and that it is something we may think about the next go around.

Fernando Granados mentioned that the report is 4 years old, and that it focuses more on LCSW, but he thinks that as a whole in the field of mental health, even getting those masters level who may not be interested in the license but could still provide the service, were experiencing that. This pandemic cost a lot of the older employees to retire as they could not keep up with technology and providing virtual services. He thinks it would still look very similar to what their findings were but that if they were able to do it today they would find a greater need for even those masters level, not even looking at the licensed level individuals or providing services in the field. Steve agreed and shared about a UC Berkeley report done every 2 years that looks at all counties in California, staffing, and is broken down by ethnicity. From that report, it was surprising that there are a number of people who are licensed clinical social workers in Merced County, but are not necessarily working here in the county and providing clinical care.

Sharon mentioned that the Central Region Workforce Education and Training will be putting forth some initiatives like student loan forgiveness and other items; more is to come on that. This may be another way to help the workforce. Sharon will have report out on that soon.

Steve thanked the NAMI staff that helped do a larger community session. One of the limitations that kept coming up is that this health impact assessment did not focus on children. However, that was not the focus and was not in the report. Not only is it a limitation, it just kept coming up that it needed to be furthered to include teenagers and children; it is an ongoing challenge.

VIII. Discussion on Innovation

Sharon stated that there is a currently approved innovation plan, the Innovative Strategist Network for adults and youth. Now it is time to move toward developing a new innovation plan. The MHSA team will soon be setting up focus groups and discussion groups for the planning process; the holidays are coming but the work is still going to be moving forward in regards to Innovation. Innovation is one of the components of Mental Health Services Act and kind of functions like a pilot project where you're testing something out to see if it works for your delivery system or your community. Sharon noted that they also want to document the learning from the project to improve or maybe do it another way.

IX. Performance Based Contracts

Sharon mentioned that in 2016 they started the systems improvement for Mental Health Services Act adding the smart goals. Performance based contracts is still working in that area and making sure that we look at our performance; it is a way to improve the services we are providing. Sharon added that our contracts department is working on renewing or amending contracts that will come up in terms of performance based contracts.

X. Justice and Community Integration Pathway

Sharon stated that for many of our community members living with mental health concerns, they often interface with the legal system. She informed about the collaboration with probation as one of the pathways for the already approved Innovative Strategist Network to focus on individuals that end up in the legal system or try to prevent them from getting in the legal system. Earlier this year another pathway was opened for the homeless through Human Services Agency to try to eliminate barriers, build bridges, and build infrastructure to really help individuals in real time.

Fernando Granados asked Sharon for clarification on the collaboration with probation. Sharon explained that it will involve a clinician, peer support specialist and mental health worker. Fernando knows that the Innovative Strategist Network is mainly for

those not insured or having some sort of stigma with mental health. He asked if the strategist will be working with connecting them just like with the others that are being provided services through the Innovation. Sharon confirmed that it is still the same criteria for the Innovative Strategist Network. She further explained that with that program there are many pathways that we opened up such as a pathway to Marie Green, Mercy Hospital, to reach the homeless better, to reach the youth, and the pathway to BHRS to eliminate barriers to help with infrastructure and make sure people are getting care. It is the same approved innovation project but they will need a new one. Sharon clarified that this is a pathway, not a direct link.

XI. MHSA Three Year Plan

The three year plan was approved by the board. The next step is for it to go to Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability and the Department of Health Care Services. They have 30 days after the board approved to get it to the state on time.

XII. BHRS Capacity Assessment

Sharon informed that we are having a capacity assessment. For the Innovative Strategist Network, there are evaluator resource development associates doing all the evaluation for that project. It is being expanded to take a look at the entire BHRS system as an audit requirement for Mental Health Services Act. She noted that we had not received a formal needs assessment since 2005 when MHSA first was launched. This will be looking at our practitioners here at Mental Health, the programs we have, and how they're operating. Sharon thinks they are about to launch a survey soon. Sharon noted that this is one of the corrective actions through the Mental Health Services Act audit in September 2019. Sharon will provide updates on the capacity assessments and surveys.

XIII. Phase 1 Cultural Humility Initiative

Sharon announced that the Cultural Humility Initiative launch has started, with a presentation at the Senior Management group. The goal is to send out a mini survey on cultural humility and have several forums for individuals to speak about the importance and thoughts of cultural humility. Sharon will then present to the Cultural Humility Committee and report back to the BHRS leadership. The goal is to have cultural humility train the trainer training early or mid-February if the trainers are available to get all the necessary contracting paperwork in place. Then they will branch out with phase 2 to get the trainers to provide cultural humility training, and then they'll look at the system again in terms of evidence based practices, etc. There is a lot of work to do in terms of cultural humility about the lifelong learning, critical self-reflection, and mitigating the power imbalances. More is to come. Monica Adrian asked about the available slots for train the trainer. Sharon said there will be 15 slots; the 15 individuals who receive the training will be set up in cohorts to train other people in the community, BHRS and contract providers. The MHSA team is trying to get everything in place for Dr. Melanie Trevalon and Gen Marie Garcia who are doing the training.

XIV. Administrative Updates and Changes

No administrative updates other than the performance based contracts. When working with contracts, the topic may come up and may just require an additional chart in their contract. Sharon reminded everyone that smart goals are still required.

Fernando Granados asked if there are any updates on productivity based contracts. Sharon clarified that they are being referred to as performance based contracts. It is linked to performance and they will be having more of an appendix in their contract that spells out what they will be doing and at what rate. There is more to come, as it is steadily evolving. Fernando asked if the meetings have been set to discuss contracts with those programs going to be affected by this. Sharon explained that contracts are needed to be amended or extended. Fernando noted that all contracts were approved for 18 months and asked if this will happen at the 18 month mark or sooner than that. Dr. Jennifer Jones explained that they started with 2 contracts as the pilot to start this process. The Contracts department is going to extend to communicating with partners more, coming out and evaluating programs, and building a better relationship to provide room to grow. This is an internal and external process that contracts is expanding our rate to be able to provide additional support to the providers and walk them through the process of what it looks like for contract monitoring and going to the service based process. She noted that they are creating this process as they go and if programs have not been contacted, that means their contract has not changed in that process yet. Dr. Jones asked that they not worry if they don't have this information yet in their contract or if they have not touched base with them; it has not happened for them just yet. Contracts is also developing training protocols to better clearly identify what it looks like to interact with contracts and how to go through the process so they could have a PowerPoint that they can reference. Dr. Jones is tasked with developing this process and growing the contracts in that area. As it stands right now, contracts are often times dealt with over the phone or email. They want to make themselves present more in the contracts process and be there to train and educate as much as possible in the future.

XV. Possibilities and Success Stories

Sandra Sandoval, Public Health, announced their upcoming stress classes. They have a couple this month and next month already started. She will share the flyers with Maria Orozco to share with the group for those who work with community residents. All classes are being done virtually at the moment.

Steve Roussos thinks we need to get better at identifying success stories, even if it may be hard sharing them or trying to put them together. Fernando added that we need success stories right now with what we are going through. There are many programs having a lot of success in still being able to provide services for their clients.

Anna Santos, Transition to Independence (TIP) Program, shared about a client referred to them by a clinician at Livingston Community Health who just recently got a job at a market for 39 hours a week. The client is a young adult on the spectrum for autism. He started attending groups and the support counselor was working one on one with him. He also attended Empower, and completed their "Break the Code" program. His mom has been pushing him to sign up for disability but he has been saying he could do it on his own. About 2 weeks ago, they were working with him on his resume, interview skills, and then he got the call. The client is very excited and has asked the support counselor if it is the right time to talk to his mom about stopping the services she wants to get him. The next process is having a session with mom.

Sharon Jones shared that the Strengthening Families program is trying to adapt to meet the needs of the families and community. The SF program is on their 3rd book reading storytelling. They have been reading a lot of great books including Coco Chanel and Friday Kahlo, and will be having about 10 story book readings. This is coming out of the Le Grand Community Development Partners. They have been very successful with families coming on Zoom. During the book readings, they are also able to talk about depression, anxiety, and any support that the family might need during this time.

Jenna Nunes shared that the ISN-Youth program was getting some reports and dates from RDA and noticed that since quarantine in March, their contacts per client went up, even though they went virtual. They were able to contact clients multiple times per week where prior maybe one time per week. The amount duration of all of their contacts have gone up from half an hour for a phone call to over an hour for phone call or Zoom visits. Staff are definitely being innovative, reaching out, and making contact with all of their referrals. They have seen an increase in referrals due to a lot of barriers related to COVID. Jenna thinks it's a success that they are still able to provide the services especially at an increased amount.

Micki Archuleta noted that the LGBTQ virtual meeting mentioned in Sharon's report was not given by NAMI, but by the Merced LGBTQ+ Alliance on a grant from California Endowment. Mickey really enjoyed those, would like to see more, and wanted to make sure the Alliance got credit for it. Sharon asked if it was a collaboration with NAMI, if NAMI was in attendance, or if NAMI did additional groups in the community. Nancy Reding thanked Mickey for bringing this up and stated that it was the Merced LGBTQ+ Alliance. Nancy had announced this at the end of July and beginning of COVID, and noted that they did it themselves. It was a small grant from California Endowment. Sharon thinks that sometimes when it is reported, stakeholders in the community get it confused as to who is putting it on; she thinks it was just reported out the way the person said and probably misrepresented it or didn't understand that it was the LGBTQ Alliance.

Sharon added that coming together is the best way of learning and supporting. Cultural humility is at the forefront for her, along with cross collaborations, and working together to help our community, families, and individuals stay well.

XVI. Next Steps

Sharon will be putting on together focus groups for the innovative piece of MHSA. Fernando asked everyone to think of innovative programs they would like to see in the community and to participate in the focus groups. Sharon will be providing an update on the capacity assessment and cultural humility. The next meeting is scheduled for December 17, 2020.

XVII. Adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 9:54 AM