

Department of Developmental Services  
Mental Health Services Act  
Progress Report  
Fiscal Year 2011-12  
January 1, 2012 through June 30, 2012

**Background**

The Department of Developmental Services oversees eight innovative regional center (RC) projects designed to benefit consumers, families, direct service professionals, clinicians, and other professionals. The projects focus on the following priority areas:

1. Enhancing Community Capacity;
2. System Improvement;
3. Service Integration; and
4. Replication of Successful Model Projects.

**Regional Center Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Updates**

**Alta California Regional Center (ACRC)**

Project Title: ***Substance Abuse Reduction***

Priority Areas: 1, 2, 3, 4

Collaborative Partners: The Sacramento County Alcohol and Drug Services Division, National Association on Alcohol, Drugs and Disability, Inc., and the Joint Task Force (including consumers, families, courts, schools, hospitals, law enforcement, mental health, probation, and service providers).

Project Website: [www.altaregional.org/resources/mhsagrant/](http://www.altaregional.org/resources/mhsagrant/)

Project Background: The *Substance Abuse Reduction* project developed a multi-agency task force to address substance abuse and developmental disabilities. Through this project, consumers will have access to substance abuse educational classes focusing on prevention and wellness, in addition to a peer support group and a residential clean and sober facility. RC staff and service providers receive educational classes focused on substance abuse among individuals with developmental disabilities.

Project Update: On February 7, 2012, approximately 60 professionals, working in the fields of developmental disabilities, substance abuse, and mental health, participated in *Addiction Recovery for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities*. This forum covered the following topics:

- An overview of the RC system;
- An introduction to the substance abuse system; and
- A vision of how the two systems can work together to meet the needs of this population.

During the breakout sessions, many ideas were presented to improve collaboration between professionals in the developmental disabilities and alcohol and other drugs (AOD) fields. Priorities identified include:

- Collecting information on local AOD resources;
- Bridging gaps and overcoming obstacles that prevent access to services which are needed to facilitate intake and ongoing success;
- Networking with local providers to create partnerships between independent living and supporting living services; and,
- Tailoring treatment models to be more concrete, individualized, and longer in duration.

AOD Executive Directors (EDs) from CRC Health Group, Bi-Valley Medical Clinic, C.O.R.E Medical Clinic, Bridges, M.A.A.P. Inc., Volunteers of America Options for Recovery, and Associated Recovery Program for Women received an overview of the *Substance Abuse Reduction* project. The EDs expressed interest in having their staff participate in the program. They were confident the trainings would increase staff knowledge and awareness in working with individuals with developmental disabilities.

The EDs participated in a needs assessment interview and the results were used to create a training curriculum for AOD providers. The needs assessment results revealed that there is significant interest in learning more about:

- RC and early intervention services and eligibility requirements;
- Developmental services terminology;
- Utilizing case studies for discussions; and
- Adapting curriculum and counseling methods.

Project Title: ***MHSA Forums***

Priority Area: 4

Collaborative Partners: The Association of Regional Center Agencies, the Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities Collaborative, Sacramento County Children's Mental Health, RCs, Education, and DDS.

Project Background: The purpose of the *MHSA Forums* is to focus on identifying and promoting best practices and service approaches to effectively serve consumers with mental illness involved in the criminal justice system. The intent of these Forums is to provide a mechanism for effective system-wide collaboration among individuals working in the fields of probation, courts, child welfare services, mental health, education, and the RC. A local planning committee comprised of key staff from the RCs, mental health, and other entities meet regularly to organize the forums and promote attendance.

Project Update: In April and May of 2012, ACRC hosted two forums, *Putting the Puzzle Together: Collaboration in Services to Special Needs Youth in the Juvenile Justice System* and *Putting the Puzzle Together: Collaboration in Services to Special Needs Individuals in the Justice System*. In attendance were over 230 professionals working in the fields of education, law enforcement, children and adult protective services, mental

health, AOD, probation, district attorney's office, public defender's office, juvenile courts, and RCs attended. The Forums provided an opportunity to discuss existing collaboration and/or what barriers prevent collaboration. Participants identified the next steps and made a commitment towards improved collaboration. Subsequent meetings initiated work on on-going collaboration to serve consumers.

An initial planning meeting to discuss plans for Fiscal Years 2012-13 and 2013-14 will occur by September 2012. Forums for the next two years will highlight some of the successful projects from MHSA Cycle I. Participants will include consumers, families, direct service professionals, and clinicians.

### **Central Valley Regional Center (CVRC)**

Project Title: ***Foundations of Infant Mental Health Training Program***

Priority Areas: 1, 2, 3

Collaborative Partners: The Central California Children's Institute, the regional Infant Family Early Childhood Mental Health (IFECMH) Steering Committee (includes representatives from child-serving agencies from four of the eight San Joaquin Valley counties), and the Interagency IFECMH Training Council (includes representatives from CVRC, Fresno County Department of Social Services, Fresno and Merced County Offices of Education, Fresno and Tulare County Children's Services Networks, and Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health).

Project Website:

[http://www.csufresno.edu/ccchhs/institutes\\_programs/CCCI/imh/index.shtml](http://www.csufresno.edu/ccchhs/institutes_programs/CCCI/imh/index.shtml)

Project Background: *Foundations of Infant Mental Health Training Program*, based on the *Revised Training Guidelines and Personnel Competencies* for IFECMH, is designed for clinicians, service providers, and other professionals working in one of the six agencies in the CVRC catchment area. The goal of the program is to address the developmental needs of the professionals working at participating agencies.

Project Update: The Interagency IFECMH Training Council compiled and reviewed data collected from the training questionnaire, which had been administered to professionals. Results from the questionnaire revealed training needs in four domains:

- Supporting the Infant-Parent Relationship;
- Supporting the Social Emotional Development of the Child;
- Training Related to Reflective Practice; and
- Training in Diversity/Cultural Competency.

To date, the program application, schedule, and curriculum has been developed. The trainings will be held once per month beginning in October 2012, and will conclude in May 2013. Each training will consist of a six-hour lecture session and a two-hour small reflective learning pod. These learning pods will be composed to represent a variety of disciplines and agencies from the six counties. A minimum of 145 applicants will be selected based on their:

- Agency affiliation;

- County of residence;
- Race/ethnicity; and
- Years in training.

### **North Bay Regional Center (NBRC)**

Project Title: ***Building Bridges – Meeting the Needs of Individuals Diagnosed with a Mental Illness and a Developmental Disability***

Priority Areas: 1, 2, 3, 4

Collaborative Partners: Dr. Robert Fletcher, NADD; Napa, Solano, and Sonoma county mental health service providers; Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA); health services personnel; law enforcement; and other professionals.

Project Website: [www.nbrc.net/mhsa/mhsa.htm](http://www.nbrc.net/mhsa/mhsa.htm)

Project Background: NBRC is replicating San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center's (SG/PRC) MHSa Cycle I Project, which focused on best strategies for working with and supporting families of consumers who are at-risk of abuse and trauma.

Project Update: On March 7 and March 8, 2012, NBRC hosted the *Building Bridges – Meeting the Needs of Individuals Diagnosed with a Mental Illness and a Developmental Disability* conference. This conference introduced approximately 380 local professionals, families, and service providers to methods and resources for screening, identification, diagnosis, treatment, and discharge in a collaborative cross-system context.

During the conference, professionals from the mental health and developmental disabilities fields participated in small group activities and discussions. The groups identified goals for system improvement, seamless service delivery, improved communication, and increased use of technology. These discussions resulted in the creation of three regional inter-agency action planning groups.

Additionally, representatives from mental health agencies in Napa, Sonoma, and Solano counties met to review goals of the regional inter-agency action planning groups, and to discuss the next steps in bringing the regional taskforces together. At the first regional taskforce meeting to be held in August of 2012, representatives will identify two-to-three focus areas, per region, and will develop work plans.

Data from conference evaluations revealed a 32 percent increase in knowledge between the pre and post-test signifying participants overwhelmingly benefited from the conferences.

Project Title: ***Project Connect***

Priority Areas: 1, 2, 3, 4

Collaborative Partners: Napa County Office of Education, the Regional Interagency Collaborative (includes professionals from the areas of early childhood mental health, early intervention, childcare, education, foster care, home visiting services, primary healthcare, and family advocates), and the Leadership Council (consisting of key stakeholders comprised of professionals from the tri-county area with a background in early intervention, early childhood services, SELPAs, County Mental Health, First 5, and family advocacy).

Project Website: [www.projectconnectnbrc.net](http://www.projectconnectnbrc.net)

Project Background: *Project Connect* addresses barriers and gaps that exist across the early childhood mental health service systems in Napa, Sonoma, and Solano counties. *Project Connect* familiarizes agencies and professionals with the importance of the social-emotional well-being of young children. Training prepares professionals to support, evaluate, intervene, and treat the mental health needs of young children and to support their families. *Project Connect* also builds an on-going evaluation plan to measure progress towards ameliorating barriers.

Project Update: To allow for a broader community and stakeholder acceptance, Leadership Council members are expanding the membership to a group of 21 members from the prior five-to-eight person membership. This revised model incorporates an open-door policy allowing for outreach to additional members, if needed.

The Leadership Council members reviewed barriers, challenges, and gaps in early childhood mental health services in NBRC catchment area. Through a facilitated discussion, members consolidated 21 areas of concern and/or interest in five focus areas:

- Professional Development;
- Access to Services;
- Community Outreach;
- Universal Screening; and
- Best Practice Model.

The five Focus Area Task Teams met to recommend their specific action items and establish vision statements that:

- Define the scope, purpose, and/or intent of activities;
- Describe the relationship of the focus area to early childhood mental health; and
- Provide a general description of the focus area for public dissemination.

The Focus Area Task Teams will continue to meet throughout the summer of 2012 to refine and prioritize the action items and develop action plans. The Focus Area Task Teams will present their action plans at the September 2012 Leadership Council Meeting.

## San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center (SG/PRC)

Project Title: **PROJECT HOPE**

Priority Areas: 4

Collaborative Partners: SG/PRCs Bio-Behavioral Consultation Committee, comprised of a psycho-pharmacologist, a psychiatrist, and a behavior specialist; Alma Family Services; Board Resource Center; and Golden Gate Regional Center (GGRC).

Project Website: <http://www.sgprc.org/Resources/Resources.html>

Project Background: SG/PRC is replicating the GGRC *Anchor Project*, which established a treatment program for 30 “high risk” consumers with mental health challenges. *PROJECT HOPE* offers group and individual psychotherapy to an identified core group of adult consumers with a recent history of one or more psychiatric hospitalizations. These consumers receive training in anger management, social skills, human sexuality, and problem solving. The goal is for consumers, families, and providers to learn strategies that reduce problem behaviors and decrease the need for psychiatric hospitalization.

Alma Family Services provides semi-annual training for SG/PRC staff, families, residential providers, and other vendors. Training seeks to increase awareness of the signs and symptoms of mental health disorders, provide tips to enhance consumers’ coping abilities, and offer strategies to identify and de-escalate behaviors that might lead to psychiatric hospitalization.

Project Update: The Intake Form, tailored for consumers, and the Referral form, designed for service coordinators and support staff, are finalized. To date, 15 SG/PRC consumers have been referred to *PROJECT HOPE*.

The curriculum outline for the human sexuality, anger management, and social skills training are in the review stage, and will be finalized by August of 2012. The webcast trainings are in the development phase and the main concepts have been drafted.

## Westside Regional Center (WRC)

Project Titles: **Los Angeles Transition Age Youth Service Integration Project (LATAY SIP) & Tools for Assessing Quality of Services (TAQS)**

Priority Areas: 1, 2, 3

Collaborative Partners: North Los Angeles County Regional Center, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, the Child and Family Center, and the Task Force (comprised of consumers, family members, advocates, mental health and medical professionals, therapists, social workers, care providers, the Department of Children and Family Services, the Department of Rehabilitation, the Department of Probation, education, and vocation).

Projects' Website: [www.reachacrossla.org](http://www.reachacrossla.org)

Project Background: The *LATAY SIP* identifies needs, barriers, and patterns of services used among transition age youth (TAY) in the Los Angeles area. TAY and their families support the project by identifying services most frequently used; points of entry; strengths and weaknesses present at each agency; and barriers of multi-agency collaborative services. In-service training events address the needs of TAY and provide a forum for collaboration, exchange of information, and boost workforce competency. The *LATAY SIP* developed a user-friendly, culturally appropriate resource directory for TAY, families, case managers, agency personnel, and others.

The *TAQS* project identifies which assessment and treatment models are being utilized, develops quality assessment tools to evaluate best practices, and improves integrated systems of care for consumers with mental illness. The Interagency Collaborative has expanded its role to address current service needs, and will create tools based on administrative record reviews and surveys to enhance the quality of assessments and treatments for consumers with mental health challenges.

Project Update: Although the *LATAY SIP* and *TAQS* are two distinct projects, the activities/deliverables are almost parallel, and therefore have been completed simultaneously. As a result, the following project update relates to progress made on both projects.

The Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects approved WRC's two requests, for *LATAY SIP* and *TAQS*, to analyze administrative data on individuals with a dual diagnosis. The projects focused their research on consumer records from the Client Development Evaluation Report, Special Incident Reports, and Purchase of Service data. Demographic information was collected on all consumer records. This information included the age, gender, ethnicity, marital status, zip code of residence, residential placement, and diagnostic information. This data allowed the building of an initial broad profile of common demographic, educational, medical, and service factors of consumers with, or who are at risk for dual diagnosis. This profile will help create future best-practice tools and resources for the community.

After reviewing the records, initial findings revealed that the prevalence of dual diagnosis in the targeted populations were much lower than expected. Task Force members suggested the gap could be attributed to diagnostic overshadowing. Furthermore, members decided the use of behavior-modifying drugs would be used as a key indicator of dual diagnosis (aside from an official mental health diagnosis).

To follow-up, the *LATAY SIP* and *TAQS* research teams developed and distributed a survey to RC case managers in order to identify consumers who may have been overlooked during the aforementioned records review. The survey queried which of their consumers had a mental health diagnosis, and/or were currently taking behavior-modifying drugs. The survey allowed project staff to gain a more complete list of dually-diagnosed consumers, as well as a more comprehensive understanding of the needs of, and current service provision trends, for this population. The prevalence of those with or at risk for dual diagnosis increased after completion of the survey.

To confirm the reliability of the survey, *LATAY SIP* and *TAQS* staff is currently collecting data from consumer records, which will be completed by the end of summer 2012. This review will help identify specific participants for the final phase of the needs assessment. The final phase will likely include a combination of online surveys, focus groups, and/or key-informant interviews of consumers, families, providers, RC, DMH staff, and key community stakeholders.

Through the chart review process, the *LATAY SIP* research team has also collected quantitative data on issues faced by TAY and their families. One of the many issues facing TAY includes the difficulty in finding mental health professionals, particularly those fluent in Spanish.

In fall 2012, the *TAQS* research team will begin soliciting qualitative information regarding the provision of services and the quality of mental health care that consumers, families, and others have experienced.

The project teams recruited new behavioral and Department of Mental Health representatives for the Task Force and continue to reach out to community stakeholders for further expansion of the Collaborative.

The website is being updated quarterly to include:

- Additional general and local resources for health professionals, families, and individuals with co-occurring developmental disabilities and mental health disorders; and
- Additional quality assurance and quality of care presentations.