

**MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ACT CYCLE IV  
FISCAL YEARS 2017/18–2019/20  
PROGRESS REPORT  
Reporting Period: January 1, 2018 through June 30, 2018**

**BACKGROUND**

The Department of Developmental Services oversees the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) funding for innovative projects developed by regional centers. These projects focus on prevention, early intervention, and treatment for children and adults with dual diagnoses, as well as providing support for their families. Individuals with dual diagnoses refers to persons with developmental disabilities and co-occurring mental disorders.

**UPDATES ON REGIONAL CENTER PROJECT DELIVERABLES**

**HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER**

Project Title: ***Side by Side: Enriching Children’s Lives Through Parent-Provider Partnerships***

County: Los Angeles

Project Website: <http://www.harborrc.org/news/sidebyside>

**Project Background:** In collaboration with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH), the County of Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services, and other local community partners, the project convenes a planning and advisory board to identify local needs and system challenges. The project provides a training series for service providers and parents. This project is specifically:

- Developing and increasing competence of the early intervention workforce;
- Guiding future trainings on early intervention;
- Increasing parental knowledge of child development;
- Improving engagement with families;
- Improving progress in social and emotional development; and,
- Increasing collaboration and coordination of services.

**Update on Project Deliverables:** All project staff were successfully identified and recruited. A planning and advisory board was established and workgroup meetings were held to review the evaluation component of the grant and review project expectations. These meetings focused on marketing, speaker recruitment, and continuing education opportunities for providers. The project workgroup also addressed challenges involving confidentiality, eligibility status, additional workload, and referral and enrollment. The workgroup also created procedures to encourage families to participate in this training opportunity. Additionally, to encourage parent engagement, two Early Start Client Services Managers were identified as project liaisons to assist with establishing procedures for parent engagement.

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Harbor Regional Center (HRC) has collaborated with LACDMH, and they have agreed to provide continuing education units for licensed clinicians who attend the training series. Dates for trainings and venues were established, and the formal announcement and registration for the training series was developed. Information for the remaining training series will be released in September 2018.

Participants in the project during the reporting period included representatives from the following:

- HRC Early Start staff;
- HRC Assistive Technology and Family Resource Center;
- Department of Mental Health (Office of the Medical Director, Children’s Systems of Care), Service Area 8 Administration, Service Area 7 Administration;
- TIES for Families;
- Project ABC-Los Angeles;
- California Association of Infant Mental Health; and,
- University of Southern California Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities.

The project webpage development will be completed in August 2018.

**NORTH BAY REGIONAL CENTER**

Project Title: ***Social-Sexual Education Project***

Counties: Napa, Solano, and Sonoma

Project Website: <https://nbrc.net/the-social-sexual-education-project/>

**Project Background:** In collaboration with multi-disciplinary local partners, this project develops an evidence-based, social-sexual program based on the premise of safe relationship development and sexual behavior to reduce the risk of victimization and entrance into the criminal justice system. This project develops and provides a sharable web-based curriculum that will be available statewide.

**Update on Project Deliverables:** Essential components of the project have been conceptualized, created, and implemented. The project is partnering with local professionals (i.e., a licensed therapist and behaviorist, licensed Marriage and Family Therapists, school psychologists, a community outreach specialist, grant management specialists, and a psychologist specializing in abuse prevention for people with developmental disabilities) to discuss project logistics and evidence-based methodologies.

Input from this diverse group of experts has advanced training curricula, including lesson plans with activities and evidence-based interventions and sample Individual

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Education Plan goals. Once the curriculum was created, evaluation tools to assess the effectiveness of the established learning objectives, videos, and photos were developed.

During the reporting period, the project created picture and video consent forms, which were reviewed by the North Bay Regional Center legal department. The project was then able to create 100 educational pictures/photographs for the curriculum, which related to the learning objectives. Additionally, scenarios and scripts for curriculum videos were developed.

The project collaborated with local businesses, non-profit theater groups, local acting studios, universities, and junior colleges to obtain volunteer actors, and theater resources. The Redwood Theater Company is allowing the project access to their black box theater for filming scenes and video models. The project has also formed partnerships with local actors, actresses, and videographers, including a partnership with a local arts day program, Alchemia Performers. Consumers from Alchemia are trained in acting and musical theater. Additional partnerships include the Santa Rosa Junior College Disability Resources Department and Health Services Department, Community Action Partnership of Sonoma County, LGBTQ Connection, Oaks of Hebron, Definition Films and Verity.

The project also solidified a partnership with Flight, a design agency, to develop a web-based online application for generating photos to create a user-friendly, accessible online learning tool. During the reporting period, the project established a filming schedule, and all dates are confirmed with both the production team and film sites. To date, 89 volunteers have participated in the development of the project.

**SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES REGIONAL CENTER**

Project Title: ***Engaging High-Needs Families to Effectively Support Their Child's Social-Emotional Development***

County: Los Angeles

Project Website: under development

**Project Background:** In collaboration with the Eastern Los Angeles Family Resource Center, this project trains Early Start partners to provide evidence-based prevention and early intervention services to families and their children, including adult consumers with children at risk. This project improves identification of social and emotional delays, increases referrals, and implements evidence-based supports and services to enhance family relationships and improve social and emotional development.

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**Update on Project Deliverables:** During the reporting period, 18 representatives participated in two task force meetings. Task force representatives included professionals from the following:

- Local regional centers;
- Project ABC;
- University of Southern California Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities;
- Regional center Early Start program providers;
- Local mental health programs;
- Local Early Start family resource centers;
- Parents of Early Start eligible children; and,
- A consumer with a child served by Early Start.

SCLARC hired a Social Emotional Coordinator Specialist to support children and families identified as needing social and emotional supports. They established a subcontract with Eastern Los Angeles Family Resource Center, an evaluation consultant and a software developer.

The software developer made modifications to the agency's web-based chart management system. Additionally, they created a web-based referral form for Early Start service coordinators to refer children to the Social and Emotional Coordinator Specialist for support in accessing various social and emotional resources. The system generates reports that easily identify children with significant delays in the social and emotional domain.

During the reporting period, 25 professionals received training on administration of the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire*, a developmental screening tool used to identify children at risk for developmental delays. These professionals represented a variety of agencies, including local Early Head Start, local Head Start, family resource centers, Department of Public Health, local mental health social service agencies, First Five Los Angeles, Early Start providers, and parent education group leaders.

During the reporting period, 34 Early Start children were identified and received appropriate social and emotional services. These children were referred to either mental health services or parent education groups within SCLARC's catchment area.

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Project Title: ***Mental Health Assessment and Support Project***

County: Los Angeles

Project Website: under development

**Project Background:** The purpose of the project is to build effective referral pathways for mental health intervention and crisis prevention services and serve as a diversion from involuntary hospitalization and forensic services.

Through community collaboration, the project seeks to:

- 1) Increase internal and external identification of dually diagnosed consumers;
- 2) Train service coordinators in making appropriate referrals and recognizing mental health conditions;
- 3) Train vendors in recognizing characteristics of co-occurring diagnoses; and,
- 4) Increase the number of mental health clinicians capable of serving this population locally.

In collaboration with the California Institute of Health and Social Services, a triage team of specialized mental health professionals was created. The team provides person-centered case formulation, assessment, treatment planning, mental health services, and referral services to persons with developmental disabilities at risk for co-occurring mental disorders.

**Update on Project Deliverables:** In February 2018, the Mental Health Care Coordinator (MHCC) and Project Assistant were identified. The Mental Health Triage Team assembled and in March 2018 started meeting bi-monthly. The Mental Health Triage Team discussed duties, roles, project goals, and ways to train various stakeholders, such as internal staff, vendors, and community representatives. The Triage Team consists of 10 representatives from:

- Mental Health Care Coordinator;
- Psychiatric Hospital Tracker;
- Shields for Families;
- Behavioral Consultants;
- Psychologists;
- Mental Health Navigator for Service Area 6;
- Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) Full-Service Partnership for Service Area 6;
- Service Coordinators; and,
- Tessie Cleveland Outreach Team.

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As part of the internal process for treatment planning, referrals, and risk assessment, both a screening tool and risk assessment tool were developed. A software developer made a number of modifications to the agency's web-based client chart management system, including creating web versions of the screening tool and risk assessment tool. SCLARC also identified a contractor to create and maintain the MHSA Project webpage.

The MHSA team met with 12 regional center case management units and introduced the project. The MHSA team explained use of the screening tool, provided training on dual diagnoses, outlined the referral process, and offered information on upcoming trainings for improving referrals for mental health disorders.

Service coordinators were trained to identify consumers with high-risk profiles and make referrals to the triage team using the screening tool. The MHCC completes a risk assessment with the consumer, as well as a summary/impression reviewed by the triage team for assessment and treatment planning, including linkage to mental health services. Consumers are offered short-term therapy, and referrals are made for mental health counseling to address psychosocial stressors, depression, anxiety and linkage to community mental health services. Marriage and Family Therapists, mental health trainees, and the MHCC provide services as needed.

Training for staff, providers and community therapists was researched by the MHCC for identification of mental health disorders in consumers with dual diagnoses. The MHCC also met with community education institutions to discuss training opportunities for mental health therapists, trainees, and future therapists to provide mental health services to dually diagnosed consumers. In addition, the MHCC discussed collaboration with LACDMH to provide assessment, treatment planning and linkage to community mental health services.

The MHCC selected Dr. Darlene Sweetland, a clinical psychologist, to provide trainings for regional center staff and providers, focusing on co-occurring disorders. Topics consisted of developmental, emotional and cognitive considerations in treatment, presentation of mental health disorders in adults with intellectual disabilities, ways to adapt treatment interventions, and understanding the complicating factors of working with individuals with dual diagnoses.

During this reporting period, 50 consumers needing mental health intervention services were referred to the triage team, and 38 of those consumers received services. Training on dual diagnoses and screening tools was provided to 143 service coordinators.

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**VALLEY MOUNTAIN REGIONAL CENTER**

Title: ***Bridging the Gap: Co-occurring Disorders and Developmental Disability***

Counties: Amador, Calaveras, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tuolumne

Project Website: <https://www.vmrc.net/mentalhealth>

**Project Background:** In collaboration with multi-disciplinary local partners, this project conducts an annual two-day conference for the three-year project cycle. Each conference will include trained experts who will share information on understanding developmental disorders, application of therapeutic interventions, appropriate psychotropic interventions, crisis response, inpatient treatment, and collaboration on behavioral health goals for closing gaps in access and availability. Conferences will include multi-system providers and professionals engaging in table discussions collaboratively addressing the complex needs of individuals who are dually diagnosed.

**Update on Project Deliverables:** During the reporting period, project committee leaders were established to discuss conference goals, identify and secure conference speakers, research and review supplemental books/web courses, and establish project timelines.

Following the initial planning meeting, eight key project leaders and committee members were identified, and 39 Valley Mountain Regional Center staff members participated in the preparation. Each project leader was responsible for meeting with committee members to identify and complete goals. Project leaders were responsible for meeting with the project manager and other project leaders for project status updates, to resolve potential barriers, and to ensure coordination between committees. As of April, 17 committee and/or project leadership meetings have taken place.

Fifty-one professional entities participated in the project planning, including the following:

- Stanislaus County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services: Training Coordinator, Children’s System of Care Program Manager, Substance Abuse Program Coordinator, and Adult System of Care Assistant;
- Hester Wagner with Future Films, regarding possible consumer involvement of a videographic project; and,
- Valley Mountain Regional Center: service coordinators, office technicians, program managers and senior leadership.

The 2018 conference theme is *Establishing the Link: Assessment and Intervention of Children and Adults*. The conference offers a unique opportunity for community behavioral health professionals to convene with peers and experts to exchange ideas and explore solutions. Expert presenters will cover conducting assessments, using

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diagnostic manuals to guide diagnosis, and providing meaningful clinical interventions for children, adolescents, and adults with developmental disabilities and co-morbid mental health disorders.

The venue secured is Sutter Health Education and Conference Center in Modesto, on October 23 and 24, 2018. Five expert speakers, including the Founder and Chief Executive Officer Emeritus of the National Association for the Dually Diagnosed, are scheduled to present, and state-of-the-art training materials will be provided to all attendees. Additional conference activities are scheduled, including a reader's theatre presentation, art contest, event photography, and a potential videography project.

For additional information regarding each regional center project, please visit:  
<http://www.dds.ca.gov/HealthDevelopment/>.