

Department of Developmental Services  
Mental Health Services Act  
Final Progress Report  
Fiscal Year 2013-14  
January 1, 2014 through June 30, 2014

## **Background**

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) oversees eight innovative regional center (RC) projects designed to benefit consumers, families, direct service professionals, clinicians, and others. The Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Cycle II projects focused on the following priority areas:

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

## **Regional Center (MHSA) Updates**

### **Alta California Regional Center (ACRC)**

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

Priority Areas: 1, 2, 3, 4

Collaborative Partners: National Association on Alcohol, Drugs and Disability, Inc., and the Joint Task Force (includes consumers, families, courts, schools, hospitals, mental health, law enforcement, probation, and service providers).

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

Project Background: The *Substance Abuse Reduction* project developed a multi-agency task force to address substance abuse and developmental disabilities. RC staff and service providers received education regarding substance abuse in individuals with developmental disabilities. Through this project, consumers will have access to substance abuse classes focusing on prevention and wellness and a peer support group.

Project Update: Five training sessions convened during the reporting period. Approximately 45 RC service coordinators and clinical staff attended the first session on January 14, 2014. RC professionals learned the dynamics of substance abuse recovery and the active role of the individual in the process.

On February 27, March 28, April 7, and April 8, 2014, over 165 ACRC vendors participated in training. ACRC vendors learned basic tools to identify consumers experiencing problems with alcohol and other drugs (AOD) and strategies for discussing AOD problems with consumers, families, and planning teams. Vendors also learned about available treatment options and received an AOD Resource Directory.

The Mexican-American Addiction Program was selected to develop and implement the peer-mentoring program for ACRC consumers, and received full vendorization in May 2014.

The Joint Taskforce convened meetings on January 13, May 5, and June 30, 2014. Nine community AOD treatment agencies will continue to meet twice a year.

To date, 740 professionals have participated in the *Substance Abuse Reduction* project. The AOD directory, training curriculum/materials, taskforce meeting agendas/minutes, and other resources are available at [www.altaregional.org/resources/mhsagrant/sarp.cfm](http://www.altaregional.org/resources/mhsagrant/sarp.cfm).

Project Title: ***MHSA Forums***

Priority Area: 4

Collaborative Partners: The Mental Health/Developmental Disabilities Collaborative, Sacramento County Children's Mental Health, RCs, and others.

Project Background: ACRC hosted *MHSA Forums* to highlight successful projects from MHSA Cycles I and II. The *MHSA Forums* encouraged statewide replication and promoted the adoption of best practices and service approaches for consumers with dual diagnoses. The *MHSA Forums* also delivered tools for effective system-wide collaboration.

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

Project Update: The final *MHSA Forum, Unlocking the Secrets to Success II: Highlighting Collaborative Service Delivery for Adults with Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health Needs*, convened on April 29, 2014. Approximately 200 professionals, representing 60 agencies, participated in the forum. MHSA Cycle II projects, *Project HOPE* and *Tools for Assessing Quality Assurance (TAQS)*, highlighted the project. Two service providers, Creating Behavioral Educational Momentum (CBEM) and Omelegah Inc., presented their collaborative service models. Conference evaluations revealed that participants were able to network with other professionals and learn about successful collaboration models statewide.

Over 700 professionals statewide participated in four *MHSA Forums* during the three-year period. The conference booklets, including agendas, presentations, and other resources, are available at [www.altaregional.org/resources/mhsagrant/mfsaForums.cfm](http://www.altaregional.org/resources/mhsagrant/mfsaForums.cfm).

### **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, 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.fresnostate.edu/chhs/ccci/projects/imh/index.html>

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

Project Update: Over 140 professionals attended the last five sessions of the Year Two training program, convening on January 16, February 13, March 13, April 17, and May 8, 2014. Eleven of the 140 attendees participated in Year One and received endorsement in IFECMH during Year Two. Post surveys revealed that participants increased their understanding in all focus areas, developed solid networks from the content presented, and learned how to apply the material to their roles to improve services to consumers and families. Additionally, participants established new partnerships across organizations, businesses, and communities.

The IFECMH Training Council convened meetings on April 1 and June 24, 2014. Members evaluated the program's effectiveness and celebrated the completion of the training program.

During the three-year project, over 460 professionals participated in the *Foundations of Infant Mental Health Training Program*. The training schedule, program curriculum, training materials, and project blueprint are available on the project website at <http://www.fresnostate.edu/chhs/ccci/projects/imh/index.html>.

### **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; mental health service providers representing Napa, Solano, and Sonoma counties; Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA); health services personnel; law enforcement; and other professionals.

Project Website: <http://nbrc.net/community-resources/mhsa-grant-info/>

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

Project Update: Seventy-six professionals working within Napa county attended training on January 28, 2014, to increase collaboration efforts with NBRC. The training specifically addressed the support needs of consumers with dual diagnoses.

The collaboration between Napa county and NBRC resulted in improvements to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), referral process, and roles and responsibilities of each agency. The curriculum, *Myth Busters*, will serve as a blueprint for upcoming training in both Solano and Sonoma counties.

Sixty-five professionals attended *Mental Illness & Intellectual Disability: Guidelines for First Responders* on June 12, 2014. The professionals, from Napa and Solano counties, represented the fields of behavioral health, residential and vocational direct service providers, county sheriffs, and crisis intervention. Training provided key approaches in working with dually diagnosed consumers in the community.

NBRC, and its mental health partners from Napa and Solano counties, will continue to collaborate, convene cross training, and conduct combined monthly mental health team meetings. NBRC has initiated communication with two new liaisons from Sonoma County Mental Health. Meetings are being coordinated to update the MOU and organize cross training.

Over 520 professionals participated in *Building Bridges – Meeting the Needs of Individuals Diagnosed with a Mental Illness and a Developmental Disability* over the three-year period. The training materials, curriculum, presentations, project manual, and other resources are available at <http://nbrc.net/?s=mhsa>.

Project Title: ***Project Connect***

Priority Areas: 1, 2, 3, 4

Collaborative Partners: Napa County Office of Education (NCOE), 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 professionals from the Napa, Solano, and Sonoma area, representatives from SELPAs, county mental health, First 5, family advocacy, and professionals with a background in early intervention and early childhood services).

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

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

Project Update: The three Focus Area Task Teams (*Best Practice, Universal Screening, and Professional Development*) refined and piloted their early childhood mental health (ECMH) tools. These tools, *Community Planning, Universal Screening System Guidance (USS Guidance), Professional Development, and Self-Assessment*, were designed for use by counties and/or communities to improve and enhance one or more aspects of the ECMH systems. An update on each tool is summarized below:

- The *Community Planning Tool* identifies and prioritizes the elements of an evidence-based ECMH system in four categories. The elements assist communities in developing an overall representation of the existing ECMH system in their community. This will assist stakeholders in identifying which elements exist and how effectively the resources are used.

Leadership Council members and over 20 professionals from Napa, Solano, and Sonoma counties tested the tool. Each county group reported similar benefits and challenges, potential for growth, and difficulties with the complexity of the assessment and the specificity of the requested information. Specifically, primary areas of interest were creating strategies for engagement and buy-in of service providers and other stakeholders in the assessment process. The tool was redesigned to simplify the instrument and improve its usability based on feedback from Leadership Council members and county representatives.

- The *USS Guidance* was designed for agencies viewing early identification as a priority area for improvement. It also describes each of the elements of a universal screening system in greater detail compared to the *Community Planning Tool*. The *USS Guidance* also provides guidance on planning and implementing its elements, stakeholder engagement and collaboration, best practices for individual elements, and organizational and/or logistical considerations for planning and implementation.

Development of the *USS Guidance* coincided with the decision of the Napa County 27-member Socio-Emotional Wellness Collaborative to set implementation of universal screening as a top priority. This provided a unique opportunity for the Regional Interagency Collaborative to observe the application of the concepts and strategies from the start of the universal screening system initiative. The feedback from the pilot was positive, with consistent use of the *USS Guidance* and its resources. To date, the Regional Interagency Collaborative has used the *USS Guidance* as the basis for stakeholder identification, stakeholder engagement strategies, and short- and long-term action planning for creating and/or implementing the elements of a universal screening system.

- The *Professional Development Self-Assessment Tool* evaluates skills and knowledge across key competencies of an individual, agency, or community. It will assist individuals, agencies, and local communities in identifying key competencies and potential gaps in skills and knowledge. The *California Professional Development Standards*, established in 2011, was used as a foundation in the development of this tool.

The tool was piloted by Leadership Council members, as well as eight staff from Aldea Children and Family Services, one of Napa County's largest service providers. Overall impressions of the tool indicated difficulty with readability. Participants suggested that a post-assessment activity or tool would assist in setting goals and priorities for future professional development. There was consensus that the tool could enhance a broader community discussion of ECMH resources and capacity. Although a large percentage of the feedback was incorporated into the latest version, significant changes to the readability of the competency definitions were not included.

The Leadership Council agreed that significant modifications to the competency definitions should be completed in collaboration with the authors of the *California Professional Development Standards*.

The Leadership Council met on January 24 and May 16, 2014, to review the progress of the three aforementioned tools. After each meeting, 70 professionals attended a panel discussion, *Affordable Care Act and Covered California: Implications for ECMH*. Panelists represented Disability Rights California, Covered California, Partnership HealthPlan of California (PHC), Beacon Health Strategies, and the Department of Managed Health Care. An in-depth discussion addressed specifics of ECMH service coverage and the roles and responsibilities of the represented agencies in the context of ECMH. In addition to the information regarding the coverage structure for Covered California, the panelist from PHC provided details regarding the implementation plan for compliance with the mental health parity requirements.

Over 600 professionals and families participated in *Project Connect* during the three-year period. The training materials, including presentations, assessment and planning resources for an ECMH system of care, and the project framework/implementation manual are available at [www.projectconnectnbrc.net](http://www.projectconnectnbrc.net).

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

Project Title: ***PROJECT HOPE***

Priority Areas: 4

Collaborative Partners: SG/PRC's Bio-Behavioral Consultation Committee is comprised of a psychopharmacologist, psychiatrist, behavior specialist, and representatives from Alma Family Services, Board Resource Center, and Golden Gate Regional Center.

Project Website: <http://projecthopeca.com/>

Project Background: *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.

Alma Family Services provided semi-annual training for SG/PRC staff, families, residential providers, and other vendors. Training increased awareness of the signs and symptoms of mental health disorders, provided tips to enhance coping abilities, and offered strategies to identify and de-escalate behaviors leading to psychiatric hospitalization. The goal is for consumers, families, and providers to learn strategies that reduce problem behaviors and decrease the need for psychiatric hospitalization.

Project Update: As of June 30, 2014, 50 consumers have been referred to *PROJECT HOPE*. Of these referrals, over 30 consumers participated in one or more psychotherapy group sessions, including social skills, anger management, and human sexuality. Consumers have begun applying the strategies within their home and work environments.

The website, [www.projecthopeca.com](http://www.projecthopeca.com), was presented at several community events to RC staff, vendors, mental health providers, caregivers, community partners, and others. The website assists caregivers, families, and consumers in identifying the need for services and connecting with local mental health providers. The website also features short videos, forms, and a “How to Use Our Site” handbook.

Approximately 140 RC staff and vendors attended *Navigating the Mental Health System* on March 27, 2014. Participants learned how to access mental health services for consumers via the Affordable Care Act.

To date, over 1,000 professionals and consumers have participated in *PROJECT HOPE*. Training materials, curriculum, presentations, webcast videos, and other resources are available at [www.projecthopeca.com](http://www.projecthopeca.com).

### **Westside Regional Center (WRC)**

#### ***Tools for Assessing Quality Assurance (TAQS) & Los Angeles Transition Age Youth Service Integration Project (LATAY SIP)***

The *TAQS and LATAY SIP* Taskforce will convene its final meeting on July 9, 2014. Project staff will provide members with updates on completed trainings, development of the online resource directory, and progress on the transition age youth (TAY) Collaborative.

Project Title: **TAQS**

Priority Areas: 1, 2, 3

Collaborative Partners: North Los Angeles County Regional Center (NLACRC), Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (DMH), the Child and Family Center, and the Task Force (comprised of advocates, consumers, family members, professionals from the fields of education, medicine, and mental health, social workers, care providers, and designated staff from the Departments of Children and Family Services, Rehabilitation, and Probation).

Project Website: <http://www.reachacrossla.org/LATAQS.aspx>

Project Background: The *TAQS* project identified which assessment and treatment models are being utilized, developed quality assessment tools to evaluate best practices, and improved integrated systems of care for consumers with dual diagnoses. The Interagency Collaborative expanded its role to address current service needs. The Collaborative also created tools based on administrative record reviews and surveys to enhance the quality of assessments and treatments for consumers with mental health challenges.

Project Update: The Delphi Panel, comprised of consumers and family members, national and local experts, and stakeholders, evaluated the Quality Indicators (QI) in November 2013. The QIs assess how effectively mental health providers and related agencies deliver mental health services for consumers with dual diagnoses. The final version of the QIs was finalized in the spring of 2014. The QIs were adapted into a provider and family tool so mental health professionals, families, and care providers can

evaluate the quality of mental health care. These two tools served as the foundation for the following five community trainings and seminars:

- Forty-eight University of California Los Angeles physicians, from Pediatrics, Internal, and Family Medicine, attended seminars on April 9, April 16, and June 4, 2014. These seminars focused on developmental disabilities' education and co-occurring health disorders. The seminars also included information on how to understand an assessment and provided an overview of treatment methods.
- Twenty-three professionals from the TAY division of the Los Angeles County DMH and staff from two county contracted agencies, Didi Hirsch and Help Group, attended a training on June 18, 2014. This training focused on adaptations of evidence-based psychotherapy for consumers with dual diagnoses. Participants also received information on the detailed assessment processes in dual diagnosis and how cognitive behavioral therapy can be effectively used for consumers with anxiety disorders and other co-occurring mental disorders.
- On June 4, 2014, 47 families and care providers received an overview of the mental health system and mental illness, including topics on signs and symptoms, navigation of services to gain access, expectations in a mental health assessment, and evidence-based behavioral interventions.

Over 280 professionals, consumers, and family members participated in the TAQS project. The step-by-step program summary, QIs, training flyers, curriculum, provider tool, family tool, and other materials and resources are available at [www.reachacrossla.org/LATAQS.aspx](http://www.reachacrossla.org/LATAQS.aspx).

Project Title: **LATAY SIP**

Priority Areas: 1, 2, 3

Collaborative Partners: NLACRC, DMH, the Child and Family Center, and the Task Force (comprised of advocates, consumers, family members, professionals from the fields of education, medicine, and mental health, social workers, care providers, and designated staff from the Departments of Children and Family Services, Rehabilitation, and Probation).

Project Website: <http://www.reachacrossla.org/LATAYSIP.aspx>

Project Background: The *LATAY SIP* identified needs, barriers, and patterns of services used among TAY in the Los Angeles area. These included points of entry, strengths and weaknesses present at each agency, and barriers to multi-agency services. TAY and their families supported the project by identifying services most frequently used. In-service training events addressed the needs of TAY, provided a forum for collaboration and exchange of information, and boosted workforce competency. The *LATAY SIP* developed a user-friendly, culturally appropriate resource directory for TAY, families, case managers, agency personnel, and others.



Project Update: Project staff continue to accept referrals to the TAY Collaborative and coordinate monthly meetings. The TAY Collaborative supports service providers by bringing professionals together from education, mental health, probation, RC, the medical field, and others, to problem solve complexities of care resulting from challenging conditions. The service coordinators work with TAY consumers and their families and assist with assessment, planning, and linkages to resources. The TAY Collaborative also convened cross-training events for community partners to enhance cross-system collaboration and communication.

Approximately 60 service coordinators from NLACRC participated in *Motivational Interviewing: A Tool to Engage Transition Age Youth & their Families (MI)* trainings on May 21-22, June 9-10, and June 16-17. Two *MI* reference guides, “*Roadmap to Motivational Interviewing*” and “*Things to Remember*,” were distributed to all training participants.

To date, approximately 340 professionals, consumers, and family members participated in the *LATAY SIP*. The project blueprint, online resource directory, *MI* reference guides, TAY Collaborative referral form, and other materials and resources are available on the project website at <http://www.reachacrossla.org/LATAYSIP.aspx>.